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To many people, Russia remains as enigmatic today as it was during the Iron Curtain era. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the country had an opportunity to face its tortured past. Here, Brent asks - why didn't this happen? To answer such a question, he draws on 15 years of unprecedented access to high level Soviet archives. He shows readers a Russia where, in 1992, women sold used toothbrushes on the street to survive, yet now the shops are filled with luxury goods. Brent encounters Stalin's spectre through these changes and takes readers deep inside his archives. This intriguing book, based on recently accessible Soviet primary sources, is the first to explain the emergence of the Cold War and its development in Stalin's lifetime from the perspective of Soviet policy-making. It pays particular attention to the often-neglected societal dimension of Soviet foreign policy as a crucial element of the genesis and development of the Cold War. Gerhard Wettig provides readers with new insights into Stalin's willingness to initiate crisis with the West while still avoiding military conflict. A prize-winning historian reveals how Stalin—not Hitler—was the animating force of World War II in this major new history. World War II endures in the popular imagination as a heroic struggle between good and evil, with villainous Hitler driving its events. But Hitler was not in power when the conflict erupted in Asia—and he was certainly dead before it ended. His armies did not fight in multiple theaters, his empire did not span the Eurasian continent, and he did not inherit any of the spoils of war. That central role belonged to Joseph Stalin. The Second World War was not Hitler's war; it was Stalin's war. Drawing on ambitious new research in Soviet, European, and US archives, Stalin's War revolutionizes our understanding of this global conflict by moving its epicenter to the east. Hitler's genocidal ambition may have helped unleash Armageddon, but as McMeekin shows, the war which emerged in Europe in September 1939 was the one Stalin wanted, not Hitler. So, too, did the Pacific war of 1941–1945 fulfill Stalin's goal of unleashing a devastating war of attrition between Japan and the "Anglo-Saxon" capitalist powers he viewed as his ultimate adversary. McMeekin also reveals the extent to which Soviet Communism was rescued by the US and Britain's self-defeating strategic moves, beginning with Lend-Lease aid, as American and British supply boards agreed almost blindly to every Soviet demand. Stalin's war machine, McMeekin shows, was substantially reliant on American matériel from warplanes, tanks, trucks, jeeps, motorcycles, fuel, ammunition, and explosives, to industrial inputs and technology transfer, to the foodstuffs which fed the Red Army. This unreciprocated American generosity gave Stalin's armies the mobile striking power to conquer most of Eurasia, from Berlin to Beijing, for Communism. A groundbreaking reassessment of the Second World War, Stalin's War is essential reading for anyone looking to understand the current world order. Monografie over de laatste maanden in het leven van Stalin en de periode daarna. From the author of the international bestseller On Tyranny, the definitive history of Hitler's and Stalin's politics of mass killing, explaining why Ukraine has been at the center of Western history for the last century. Americans call the Second World War "the Good War." But before it even began, America's ally Stalin had killed millions of his own citizens—and kept killing them during and after the war. Before Hitler was defeated, he had murdered six million Jews and nearly as many other Europeans. At war's end, German and Soviet killing sites fell behind the Iron Curtain, leaving the history of mass killing in darkness. Assiduously researched, deeply humane, and utterly definitive, Bloodlands is a new kind of European history, presenting the mass murders committed by the Nazi and Stalinist regimes as two aspects of a single story. With a new afterword addressing the relevance of these events to the contemporary decline of democracy, Bloodlands is required reading for anyone seeking to understand the central tragedy of modern history and its meaning today. On June 22, 1941, just less than two years after signing the Nazi-Soviet Agreements, Adolf Hitler's German army invaded the Soviet Union. The attack hardly came as a surprise to Josef Stalin; in fact, history has long held that Stalin spent the two intervening years building up his defenses against a Nazi attack. With the gradual declassifying of former Soviet documents, though, historians are learning more and more about Stalin's grand plan during the years 1939-1941. Longtime Soviet expert Albert L. Weeks has studied the newly-released information and come to a different conclusion about the Soviet Union's pre-war buildup—it was not precaution against German invasion at all. In fact, Weeks argues, the evidence now suggests Soviet mobilization was aimed at an eventual invasion of Nazi Germany. The Soviets were quietly biding their time between 1939 and 1941, allowing the capitalist powers to destroy one another, all the while preparing for their own Westward march. Stalin, Weeks shows, wasn't waiting for a Nazi attack_Hitler simply beat him

to the punch. 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. "The material contained in this book is drawn from lectures, some of which were delivered in 1957-1958 in the schools at Oxford University, others — in the spring of 1960 — at Harvard University... This is a study of the relationship between the Soviet Union and the major Western countries, from the inception of the Soviet regime in 1917 to the end of World War II. It is not intended as a chronological account of the happenings in this phase of diplomatic history, but rather as a series of discussions of individual episodes or problems." — George F. Kennan, *Russia and the West Under Lenin and Stalin* Kennan describes the diplomatic dilemmas that grew out of ignorance and mutual distrust, beginning with the Allied intervention in Russia in 1918, through World War I, the Versailles conference, Stalin's bloody purges of 1934-1938, the Soviet-German Nonaggression Pact of 1939, the end of World War II, and the meeting in Yalta between Churchill, Stalin, and Roosevelt. "It is not often that a book as instructive as this one manages at the same time to be so engrossing that it is bound to keep even general readers fascinated long past their bedtimes. The book's message is a stern one; the pleasure in reading it derives from the elegant and yet fresh prose style that is one of the many gifts of [the author who] is an artist as well as an experienced diplomat; a moralist as well as a consummate historian. With superb felicity and grace, he here unfolds a historical narrative rich in prophetic judgments — prophetic in the Biblical sense of the word. Not everyone, of course, will agree with all of Mr. Kennan's conclusions, but there is so much that is useful in this volume that even those who have reservations about one or another of the judgments in it will welcome it warmly as a significant contribution in several ways." — Marshall D. Shulman, *The New York Times* "Superbly concise, meaty, and lucid. It surveys the whole fascinating, involved drama of Communism's rise to world power." — *Newsweek* "Every adult American ought to read it." — William L. Shirer "Surely one of the most important books since the end of the last war... an over-all view that transcends the provinciality of so much of our foreign policy and embraces the whole immense area from Washington to Peking." — *The New Yorker* "An important, a disturbing, a deeply moving book." — *New York Herald Tribune Book Review* "Not only Mr. Kennan's finest book, but also the best that has been written on Russia in this century." — Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart "In this absorbing and eloquent book... Mr. Kennan reviews with much perception and sensitivity the ragged course of relations between the Soviet Union and the West from 1917 to 1945. While there is much in Western understanding and action to be criticized in the early years, during the inter-war period and during World War II, Mr. Kennan is keenly aware of the intense hostility of the Communist stance which exacerbated all problems." — *Foreign Affairs* "Kennan, a fine writer as well as historian and diplomat, has made a magnificent attempt to put into order the chaotic relations between Russia and the West from the Communist Revolution to the end of World War II... A most important book, deserving the widest possible readership." — Kirkus "[A] remarkable 'best-seller.' This fact is a tribute to both the author and the subject with which he deals. It is superfluous to comment on Mr. Kennan's authority or on the brilliance of his lucid prose, which are again in evidence in this work. It is a volume not easily put aside as a mere purveyor of information; it solicits judgments and proffers them lavishly, inviting agreement or dissent." — *Slavic Review* "[A] valuable volume. It is full of flashes of insight, into both Soviet and Western attitudes and policies, and it reveals the painful dilemmas Wilson, Roosevelt, and other Western leaders faced in dealing with this new state and system." — *The Slavic and East European Journal* "Mayme Sevander and Laurie Hertzell tell a poignant tale of a hidden corner of U.S. and Soviet history. Tracing the hopes and hardships of one family over two continents, *They Took My Father* explores the boundaries of loyalty, identity, and ideals." -Amy Goldstein, *Washington Post* "What makes Mayme's story so uniquely-almost unbelievably-tragic is that her family chose to move from the United States to the Soviet Union in 1934, thinking they were going to help build a 'worker's paradise.' They found, instead, a deadly nightmare." -St. Paul Pioneer Press "This gripping and timely book traces the beginnings of communism not as dry history but as a fascinating personal drama that spreads across Russia, Finland, and the mining towns of Upper Michigan and the Iron Range of Minnesota. . . . An important and largely ignored part of history comes alive in one woman's story of her tragic family, caught up in the all-consuming struggle of the twentieth century." -Frank Lynn, political reporter, *New York Times* Mayme Sevander (1924-2003) was born in Brule, Wisconsin, and emigrated with her family to the Soviet Union in 1934. Laurie Hertzell is a journalist at the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. This informative study explores the Soviet invasion of Finland, detailing the events of the Winter War of November 1939 to March 1940. The invasion was expected to be swift and decisive, however, the fighting qualities of the Finnish Army blunted the Soviet advance and inflicted high numbers of casualties. A combination of difficulties caused by the weather, the terrain, the Mannerheim Line defences and Finnish tactics resulted in a fascinating David vs Goliath type struggle. On 23 August 1939, a secret protocol was appended to the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact; as part of this, Finland was assigned to the Soviet sphere of influence. On 30 November that year, in an effort to protect against renewed German aggression in the East, the Soviet Union attacked Finland, beginning what became known as the Finnish-Soviet Winter War. This long-awaited addition to the Campaign series explores the events of the war of November 1939 to March 1940. Set against the background of the developing global conflict, the conflict saw the Finnish Army thwart the plans of the sizeable Soviet forces assembled against it, before finally being forced to concede. The major battles of the war, which took place in harsh winter conditions, are covered in detail, including the Mannerheim Line, the fighting in Ladoga Karelia and Kollaa, and the clashes in Finnish Lapland. Kenny Sansom considers himself a lucky man. But he also knows he's pushed that luck. As a footballer he soared to great heights—but as an individual he also sank to life-threatening lows. The fans in the Highbury terraces may have sung "There's only one Kenny Sansom" but no one ever really knew the whole truth about one of English football's best-loved icons. Kenny was a firm fixture in the cup-winning Arsenal and England defenses for most of the 1980s. He won a record-breaking 86 international caps at left-back and was there to witness the real truth behind Maradona's controversial "Hand of God" goal that broke English hearts and robbed the team of a place in the 1986 World Cup final. But the addictive side of Kenny's personality threatened to destroy not only his career but his rock-solid family life too. He has since found the strength to fight back and defeat the demons of drink and gambling. Laying his soul bare for the first time, his searing story reveals the highs and lows of a man at the peak of professional achievement yet dangerously close to losing it all. When Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin met in Yalta in February 1945, Hitler's armies were on the run, and victory was imminent. The Big Three wanted to draft a blueprint for a lasting peace—but instead they set the stage for a forty-four year division of Europe into Soviet and Western spheres of influence. After fighting side by side for nearly four years, their political alliance was beginning to fracture. Although the most dramatic Cold War confrontations such as the Berlin airlift were still to come, a new struggle for global hegemony had got underway by August 1945 when Truman used the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Six Months in 1945 brilliantly captures this momentous historical turning point while illuminating the aims and personalities of larger-than-life political giants. I WISH TO RESTORE to public memory certain features of a man endowed with great goodness of spirit, a passionate interest in people, and a miraculous gift for depicting them." So begins A. N. Pirozhkova's moving memoir of her life with Isaac Babel, perhaps the Soviet Union's greatest writer, and one of the literary world's most lively and endearing characters. Pirozhkova was the only female engineer working on Stalin's grand Moscow subway project when she met Babel in 1932 and they spent the next eight years as husband and wife. At His Side is populated with Babel's wide circle of friends - among them Maxim Gorky, Sergey Eisenstein, and André Malraux - and includes some wonderful vignettes, as when Babel accompanies a cantankerous Boris Pasternak on a long train ride to Germany to receive a literary prize. But it is Babel himself, the affable and always witty writer, who is given vivid life on this pages. And then, in 1940, Stalin's secret police arrive at the door to take Babel away, and there begins the long and sorrowful aftermath to the story. After a mock trial, Babel was summarily executed, but his fate was kept from Pirozhkova and for years she was led to believe he was alive - and writing - in a Siberian prison camp. It was not until 1952 that she learned that Babel was dead, but even then the authorities played with the truth, claiming he'd died of a heart attack. It was only after the collapse of the Soviet Union that Pirozhkova learned the true circumstances of Babel's murder. "Babel lives in his wife's lucid yet adoring prose. We are with her, at his side"--*New York Times Book Review* "This glimpse into Babel's last few years on earth, written by the person closest to him, will be a treasured possession" --Richard Bernstein *The New York Times* How the author escapes... to make her way to 'the blessed shores of America,' provides a stirring conclusion to an entirely powerful and illuminating book. --Booklist A bestseller in Germany, Michael Wieck's account of his childhood in Königsberg recalls a German city obliterated by fire-bombing during the Second World War. As the child of a Jewish mother and Gentile father, Wieck was persecuted first as a "certified Jew" by the Nazis, then as a German by the Russian occupiers, including horrific internment in the Rothenstein concentration camp. His emigration to the West in 1948 marked the end of the 408-year history of the Jewish community in Königsberg. From the earliest delights of a childhood filled with music, family, and the smell of pines and the sea, Wieck retraces his life. He tells of his school days and their sudden end, the shock of Kristallnacht, his Aunt Fanny being sent by train to a destination unknown, the chemical factory where Jewish workers gradually disappeared, the bombs falling on Königsberg. The Russian occupation was anything but the expected delivery from the horrors of the war. In the midst of privation, savagery, and death, there were moments of absurdity, and Wieck powerfully depicts them in this unforgettable memoir. Often referred to as "The Forgotten War," the Korean War was the only post-World War II combat between major powers. According to evidence provided in this study, it was also a crucial episode of the Cold War--more crucial, perhaps, than the war in Vietnam. This military and political history of the Korean War endeavors to give a fresh and less than fashionable account of the war. Utilizing both immediately postwar impressions and newly available evidence from Communist sources, it places the events in Korea into the larger framework of the early 1950s period of the Cold War. Beginning chapters discuss the escalation of early Cold War-era world events, from the final days of World War II to the first days of the Korean War, and detail the inevitability of Western intervention in the Korean conflict. The chapters that follow supply a broad account of the military aspect of the war, focusing on its "grand

strategy," what is now known of the Communist side in Korea, the problems and achievements of the South Korean forces, and the often underestimated war in the air. Considerable attention is also given to matters in Europe and elsewhere, such as German rearmament and the Japanese peace treaty, that are revealed to have been not far removed from Korea. The author espouses several original theories regarding Stalin's interpretation of the Korean conflict as a preliminary phase of World War III and the probability that the Communists did intend to extend the war beyond both the confines of Korea and the armistice negotiations of 1951. Concluding commentary attributes the end of the first phase of the Cold War to the Korean armistice, but the nature of the remaining phases to the polarization of powers that was intensified by the fight for ideological dominance in Korea. The battle for Moscow was the biggest battle of World War II -- the biggest battle of all time. And yet it is far less known than Stalingrad, which involved about half the number of troops. From the time Hitler launched his assault on Moscow on September 30, 1941, to April 20, 1942, seven million troops were engaged in this titanic struggle. The combined losses of both sides -- those killed, taken prisoner or severely wounded -- were 2.5 million, of which nearly 2 million were on the Soviet side. But the Soviet capital narrowly survived, and for the first time the German Blitzkrieg ended in failure. This shattered Hitler's dream of a swift victory over the Soviet Union and radically changed the course of the war. The full story of this epic battle has never been told because it undermines the sanitized Soviet accounts of the war, which portray Stalin as a military genius and his people as heroically united against the German invader. Stalin's blunders, incompetence and brutality made it possible for German troops to approach the outskirts of Moscow. This triggered panic in the city -- with looting, strikes and outbreaks of previously unimaginable violence. About half the city's population fled. But Hitler's blunders would soon loom even larger: sending his troops to attack the Soviet Union without winter uniforms, insisting on an immediate German reign of terror and refusing to heed his generals' pleas that he allow them to attack Moscow as quickly as possible. In the end, Hitler's mistakes trumped Stalin's mistakes. Drawing on recently declassified documents from Soviet archives, including files of the dreaded NKVD; on accounts of survivors and of children of top Soviet military and government officials; and on reports of Western diplomats and correspondents, The Greatest Battle finally illuminates the full story of a clash between two systems based on sheer terror and relentless slaughter. Even as Moscow's fate hung in the balance, the United States and Britain were discovering how wily a partner Stalin would turn out to be in the fight against Hitler -- and how eager he was to push his demands for a postwar empire in Eastern Europe. In addition to chronicling the bloodshed, Andrew Nagorski takes the reader behind the scenes of the early negotiations between Hitler and Stalin, and then between Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill. This is a remarkable addition to the history of World War II. A biography as well as an intellectual portrait, this book explores all aspects of Stalin's tumultuous life and politics, told through his personal library. Stalin, an avid reader from an early age, amassed a surprisingly diverse personal collection of thousands of books, many of which he marked and annotated revealing his intimate thoughts, feelings, and beliefs. Joseph Stalin was one of the most frightening figures of the twentieth century. His name brings to mind brutal terrorism and ruthless oppression. Yet, as New York Times bestselling author Ian Grey shows, at the core of the Man of Steel was a humble, puritanical Georgian peasant. What set him above others was his intelligence, discipline, perception, indomitable will, and above all, a messianic determination to lead Russia to a grand destiny. Grey's comprehensive biography portrays Stalin as a complex, paradoxical figure - a leader whose power was rooted in the tsarist traditions he abhorred and whose tyranny was based on an ambition to ensure the strength of his party. In his single-minded dedication to the growth of Russia under communism, Stalin was able to disregard all sense of morality. Yet, through his magnetism, he commanded the respect of his colleagues and the adulation of his people. Even Winston Churchill held him in awe. Stalin is a powerful history of Russia's evolution from backward nation to world power, as well as a dramatic portrait of a man who was called both "The Implacable" and "Beloved Father." Explanatory Note -- Glossary -- The Team Emerges -- The Great Break -- In Power -- The Team on View -- The Great Purges -- Into War -- Postwar Hopes -- Aging Leader -- Without Stalin -- End of the Road -- Biographies "This memoir conveys us back to Draitser's childhood and adolescence and provides a unique account of post-Holocaust life in Russia. We live side by side with young Draitser as he struggles to reconcile the harsh values of Soviet society with the values of his working-class Jewish family. Despite the waves of anti-Jewish campaigns, which swept over the country and climaxed in the infamous "Doctors' Plot," we feel the Draitser's loving family life - lively, evocative, and rich with humor. This intimate story ends with the death of Stalin and, through the author's anecdotes about his ancestors, presents a sweeping panorama of two centuries of Jewish history in Russia."--BOOK JACKET. In this "extraordinary family memoir,"* the National Book Award-winning author of *The Future Is History* reveals the story of her two grandmothers, who defied Fascism and Communism during a time when tyranny reigned. *The New York Times Book Review In the 1930s, as waves of war and persecution were crashing over Europe, two young Jewish women began separate journeys of survival. Ester Goldberg was a rebel from Bialystok, Poland, where virtually the entire Jewish community would be sent to Hitler's concentration camps. Ruza Solodovnik was a Russian-born intellectual who would become a high-level censor under Stalin's regime. At war's end, both women found themselves in Moscow. Over the years each woman had to find her way in a country that aimed to make every citizen a cog in the wheel of murder and repression. One became a hero in her children's and grandchildren's eyes; the other became a collaborator. With grace, candor, and meticulous research, Masha Gessen, one of the most trenchant observers of Russia and its history today, peels back the layers of time to reveal her grandmothers' lives—and to show that neither story is quite what it seems. Praise for Masha Gessen "One of the most important activists and journalists Russia has known in a generation."—David Remnick, *The New Yorker* "Masha Gessen is humbly erudite, deftly unconventional, and courageously honest."—Timothy Snyder, author of *On Tyranny* Of all the extraordinary individual accounts that have come out of the Second World War and its aftermath, few can compare with that of Eric Pleasants, a member of the 'bastard' British wing of Hitler's SS - the British Free Corps. In this compelling autobiography, Pleasants writes of the bizarre and traumatic years he spent as a prisoner of the twentieth century's most notorious dictators. A life-long pacifist, Pleasants spent the early years of the war on occupied Jersey. He was imprisoned by the Nazis for petty crimes and the years that followed held a whirlwind of unexpected turns. He lived life on the run in occupied Paris, was captured and recruited into the British Free Corps of the Waffen SS, found love with a young German woman, witnessed the bombing of Dresden and attempted to escape from Soviet troops along the sewers of Berlin. When the war ended, Pleasants found himself on the Communist side of the Iron Curtain. By now a strong man in a travelling circus, he was arrested by the KGB on charges of espionage and sentenced to 25 years' slave labour in the notorious camps of Arctic Russia. Only with Stalin's death in 1953 was Pleasants finally released from his unique kind of purgatory, after nearly half a lifetime of peripatetic nightmare. He died in 1998 at the age of 87. Hitler's Bastard remains a remarkable testimony to his imperishable will to survive. It's the summer of 1953. Calvin Jefferson Coolidge is thirteen years old when the ghost of Joseph Stalin appears to him in his Aunt Evelyn's cluttered Cleveland attic and wants to dictate his memoirs to him. "I want to tell my side of the story," Uncle Joe tells him. "They're giving me one year to set the record straight, so we need to get started right away." Calvin's life is falling apart at the seams. He's a misfit and loner whose only friends are famous dead people. He loves polka music and Westerns and sometimes wonders what it would be like to kiss a girl. His con man father is in Florida looking for his bipolar runaway mother. His cousin Buck is abducted and experimented on by aliens. The lady next door wants to coach him in the ways of love. His pastor thinks he's headed straight for Hell. His English teacher thinks he's a savant. The school psychologist wants to have him committed. His shrink thinks he's just plain nuts. Sometimes, Calvin believes it too. Everybody's trying to figure out what makes Calvin tick in this quirky, fast-paced metaphysical romp through the heart and soul of 1950's America. The memoir of Lyudmila Pavlichenko, the Russian woman who was WWII's most accomplished sniper—and a friend of Eleanor Roosevelt. In June 1941, when Hitler launched Operation Barbarossa, Lyudmila Pavlichenko left her university studies, ignored the offer of a position as a nurse, and became one of Soviet Russia's two thousand female snipers. Less than a year later, she had 309 recorded kills, including 29 enemy sniper kills. By the time she was withdrawn from active duty due to injury, she was regarded as a key heroic figure for the war effort. To continue serving the war effort, Pavlichenko spoke at rallies in Canada and the United States. She toured the White House with FDR, and the folk singer Woody Guthrie wrote a song, "Miss Pavlichenko," about her exploits. An advocate for women's rights, she befriended Eleanor Roosevelt and toured England to raise money for the Red Army. Never returning to combat, Pavlichenko trained other snipers. After the war, she finished her education at Kiev University and began a career as a historian. Today, she remains a revered hero in Russia, where the 2015 film, *Battle for Sevastopol*, was made about her life. How did Germany come to be divided during the Cold War? The renowned German historian Wilfried Loth has examined the archives of the Eastern side and comes to fascinating conclusions. He demonstrates that Stalin wanted neither a separate state on the soil of the Soviet Occupation Zone nor a socialist state in Germany at all. Instead, Stalin sought a joint administration of Germany by the victorious powers, a Germany along the lines of the Weimar Republic. The socialist separate state of the GDR is primarily the product of Walter Ulbricht's revolutionary zeal, which was able to unfold in the context of the Western walling-off policy. "A wide-ranging and detailed account of the design and development of what was arguably the best tank of World War II." —Miniature Armoured Fighting Vehicles Association Although the Red Army suffered continual heavy tank losses, the rugged and reliable T-34 was an immense success story and was ultimately instrumental in turning the tide of the war. This photographic history follows the story of this exceptional armored vehicle from its disastrous first action during Operation Barbarossa to its miraculous defense of Moscow, its envelopment of the Axis forces at Stalingrad and victory at Kursk, and finally, the advance to the gates of Warsaw then on to Berlin. Packed with a wealth of images, including rare archive photographs and photographs of surviving examples, this is an extraordinary record of both the tank and its personnel. The accompanying text features an in-depth technical evaluation outlining the differences in the myriad of models, including detailed plans of each type, alongside a gripping breakdown of the tank's entire operational history. "I totally recommend this book for all who love Russian armor or what was one of the hardest and biggest tank battles during World War 2 at Kursk, superb book." —Armorama "A thoroughly definitive study of one of the world's historic engines of war." —The Army Rumour Service (ARRSE) "This is about as comprehensive as anybody could want in tracing the development, production,

operational deployment and technical elements of the T-34 and its derivatives. Whatever you might want to know about the tank is here. Supplemented by drawings, copious images and tables it is a go-to reference book.” —Michael McCarthy, battlefield guide The interpreter for both Stalin and Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov offers the Soviet perspective of the events of World War II “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. Stalin’s Defectors is the first systematic study of the phenomenon of frontline surrender to the Germans in the Soviet Union’s ‘Great Patriotic War’ against the Nazis in 1941–1945. No other Allied army in the Second World War had such a large share of defectors among its prisoners of war. Based on a broad range of sources, this volume investigates the extent, the context, the scenarios, the reasons, the aftermath, and the historiography of frontline defection. It shows that the most widespread sentiments animating attempts to cross the frontline was a wish to survive this war. Disgruntlement with Stalin’s ‘socialism’ was also prevalent among those who chose to give up and hand themselves over to the enemy. While politics thus played a prominent role in pushing people to commit treason, few desired to fight on the side of the enemy. Hence, while the phenomenon of frontline defection tells us much about the lack of popularity of Stalin’s regime, it does not prove that the majority of the population was ready for resistance, let alone collaboration. Both sides of a long-standing debate between those who equate all Soviet captives with defectors, and those who attempt to downplay the phenomenon, then, over-stress their argument. Instead, more recent research on the moods of both the occupied and the unoccupied Soviet population shows that the majority understood its own interest in opposition to both Hitler’s and Stalin’s regime. The findings of Mark Edelen in this study support such an interpretation. An award-winning historian plumbs the depths of Hitler and Stalin’s vicious regimes, and shows the extent to which they brutalized the world around them. Two 20th century tyrants stand apart from all the rest in terms of their ruthlessness and the degree to which they changed the world around them. Briefly allies during World War II, Adolph Hitler and Josef Stalin then tried to exterminate each other in sweeping campaigns unlike anything the modern world had ever seen, affecting soldiers and civilians alike. Millions of miles of Eastern Europe were ruined in their fight to the death, millions of lives sacrificed. Laurence Rees has met more people who had direct experience of working for Hitler and Stalin than any other historian. Using their evidence he has pieced together a compelling comparative portrait of evil, in which idealism is polluted by bloody pragmatism, and human suffering is used casually as a political tool. It’s a jaw-dropping description of two regimes stripped of moral anchors and doomed to destroy each other, and those caught up in the vicious magnetism of their leadership. In this revelatory chronicle of World War II, Laurence Rees documents the dramatic and secret deals that helped make the war possible and prompted some of the most crucial decisions made during the conflict. Drawing on material available only since the opening of archives in Eastern Europe and Russia, as well as amazing new testimony from nearly a hundred separate witnesses from the period—Rees reexamines the key choices made by Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt during the war, and presents, in a compelling and fresh way, the reasons why the people of Poland, the Baltic states, and other European countries simply swapped the rule of one tyrant for another. Surprising, incisive, and endlessly intriguing, World War II Behind Closed Doors will change the way we think about the Second World War. antly, the pact laid the groundwork for Soviet control of Eastern Europe, a power grab that would define the post-war order. Drawing on memoirs, diaries, and official records from newly opened Soviet archives, The Devils’ Alliance is the authoritative work on one of the seminal episodes of World War II. In his characteristically rich and detailed prose, Moorhouse paints a vivid picture of the pact’s origins and its enduring influence as a crucial turning point, in both the war and in modern history. A tight, captivating story of a naive child’s encounters with a Soviet dictator, the 20th novel by Robert Littell Leon Rozental—ten and a half, intellectually precocious, and possessing a disarming candor—is suddenly alone after the death of his nuclear physicist father and the arrest of his mother during the Stalinist purge of Jewish doctors. Now on his own and hiding from the NKVD in the secret rooms of the House on the Embankment, the massive building in Moscow where many Soviet officials and apparatchiks live and work, Leon starts to explore. One day, after following a passageway, Leon meets Koba, an old man whose apartment is protected by several guards. Koba is a high-ranking Soviet official with troubling insight into the thoughts and machinations of Comrade Stalin. In this taut and layered novel, New York Times bestselling author Robert Littell deploys his deep knowledge of this complex period in Russian history and masterful talent for captivating storytelling to create a nuanced portrayal of the Soviet dictator, showing Stalin’s human side and his simultaneous total disregard for and ignorance of the suffering he inflicted on the Russian people. The charm and spontaneity of young Leon make him an irresistible narrator—and not unlike Holden Caulfield, whom he admits to identifying with—caught in the spider’s web of the story woven by this enigmatic old man. The definitive biography of the Pulitzer Prize-winning New York Times journalist who helped cover up the crimes of the Stalinist regime. Born into a family of nomadic Kazakh herdsman in 1922, Mukhamet Shayakhmetov’s father was imprisoned as an ‘enemy of the people’ as Soviet rule spread across his people’s vast steppe-land in central Asia. In this book, Shayakhmetov recalls the scale of suffering in his homeland under Stalin’s rule. Many children growing up in the Soviet Union before World War II knew the meaning of deprivation and dread. But for the son of an “enemy of the people,” those apprehensions were especially compounded. When the secret police came for his father in 1938, ten-year-old Anatole Konstantin saw his family plunged into a morass of fear. His memoir of growing up in Stalinist Russia re-creates in vivid detail the daily trials of people trapped in this regime before and during the repressive years of World War II—and the equally horrific struggles of refugees after that conflict. Evicted from their home, their property confiscated, and eventually forced to leave their town, Anatole’s family experienced the fate of millions of Soviet citizens whose loved ones fell victim to Stalin’s purges. His mother, Raya, resorted to digging peat, stacking bricks, and even bootlegging to support herself and her two children. How she managed to hold her family together in a rapidly deteriorating society—and how young Anatole survived the horrors of marginalization and war—form a story more compelling than any novel. Looking back on those years from adulthood, Konstantin reflects on both his formal education under harsh conditions and his growing awareness of the contradictions between propaganda and reality. He tells of life in the small Ukrainian town of Khmelnyk just before World War II and of how some of its citizens collaborated with the German occupation, lending new insight into the fate of Ukrainian Jews and Nazi corruption of local officials. And in recounting his experiences as a refugee, he offers a new look at everyday life in early postwar Poland and Germany, as well as one of the few firsthand accounts of life in postwar Displaced Persons camps. A Red Boyhood takes readers inside Stalinist Russia to experience the grim realities of repression—both under a Soviet regime and German occupation. A moving story of desperate people in desperate times, it brings to life the harsh realities of the twentieth century for young and old readers alike. Concentrating on the formative years of the Cold War from 1943 to 1957, Patryk Babiracki reveals little-known Soviet efforts to build a postwar East European empire through culture. Babiracki argues that the Soviets involved in foreign cultural outreach tried to use “soft power” in order to galvanize broad support for the postwar order in the emerging Soviet bloc. Populated with compelling characters ranging from artists, writers, journalists, and scientists to party and government functionaries, this work illuminates the behind-the-scenes schemes of the Stalinist international propaganda machine. Based on exhaustive research in Russian and Polish archives, Babiracki’s study is the first in any language to examine the two-way interactions between Soviet and Polish propagandists and to evaluate their attempts at cultural cooperation. Babiracki shows that the Stalinist system ultimately undermined Soviet efforts to secure popular legitimacy abroad through persuasive propaganda. He also highlights the limitations and contradictions of Soviet international cultural outreach, which help explain why the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe crumbled so easily after less than a half-century of existence. “A book of great importance; it surpasses all others in breadth and depth.”—Commentary If the past century will be remembered for its tragic pairing of civilized achievement and organized destruction, at the heart of darkness may be found Hitler, Stalin, and the systems of domination they forged. Their lethal regimes murdered millions and fought a massive, deadly war. Yet their dictatorships took shape within formal constitutional structures and drew the support of the German and Russian people. In the first major historical work to analyze the two dictatorships together in depth, Richard Overy gives us an absorbing study of Hitler and Stalin, ranging from their private and public selves, their ascents to power and consolidation of absolute rule, to their waging of massive war and creation of far-flung empires of camps and prisons. The Nazi extermination camps and the vast Soviet Gulag represent the two dictatorships in their most inhuman form. Overy shows us the human and historical roots of these evils.

