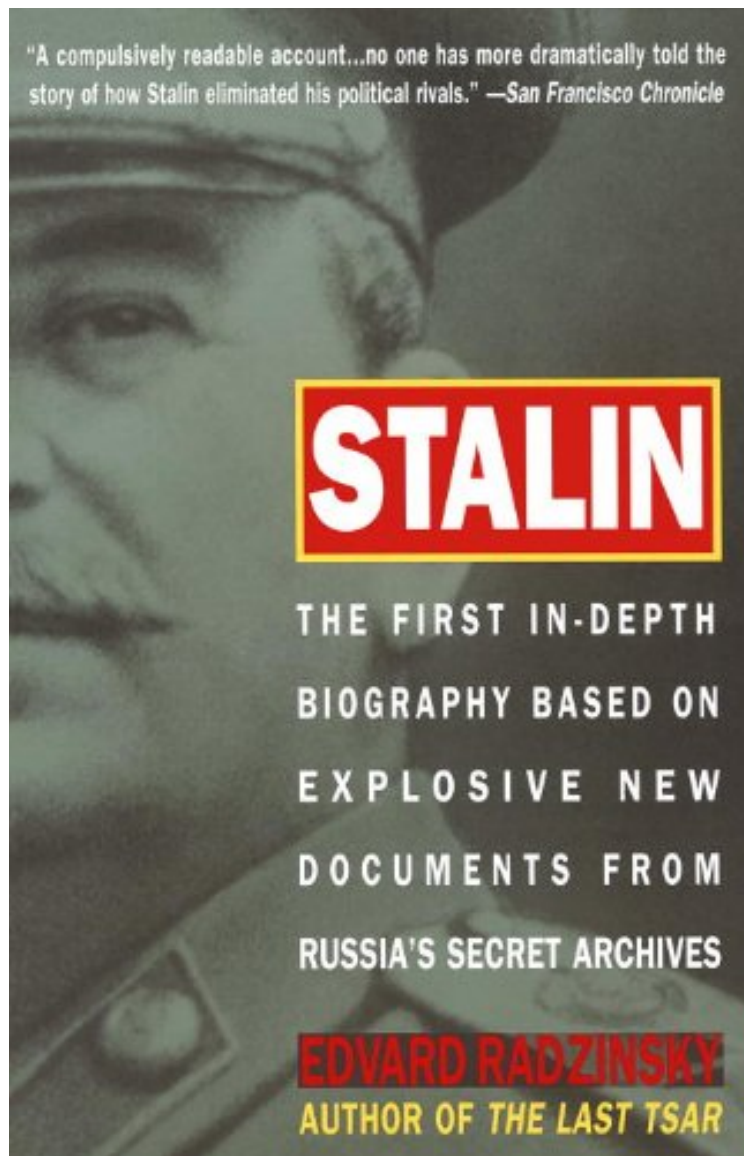


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## Stalin: The First In-depth Biography Based on Explosive New Documents from Russia's Secr

Von Edvard Radzinsky

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Von Edvard Radzinsky : Stalin: The First In-depth Biography Based on Explosive New Documents from Russia's Secr before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Stalin: The First In-depth Biography Based on Explosive New Documents from Russia's Secr:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. AN ENLIGHTENING ACCOUNT OF STALIN AND FRIENDSVon TED B.Despite the problems that a previous reviewer or two had about this book, I found it fascinating and easy to read for several reasons:1) it is written in the "I" first person, so we can follow Radzinsky as he progresses through the research of his narrative;2) it is very revealing since it is based on Soviet archives that have just now been opened after 50 years or so;3) it takes the reader from Stalin's childhood, through his ascendancy, and finally to his supremacy in the Soviet; and4) it reports rather than analyzes, forcing the reader to listen to the "facts" and come up with conclusions of his/her own, creating a less "preachy" story.The only difficulty in the reading is the Russian names, but that can't be helped.As another reviewer has said, the story has something for everyone from the general reader to the student of Soviet history. I read the book since I didn't have a general understanding of the Soviet Union under Stalin, and now I feel I have a good grasp of what went on, both on the Leninist/Stalinist organizational level, and on the personal level of not only Stalin, but many of those who were liquidated.If the book was originally written in Russian, this is then a very good translation: easy to read and no clumsy expressions. I had a hard time putting it down. As far as content, I feel I "learned" a lot, not just about the personality of Stalin, but also that of Lenin, Lenin's wife, Trotsky, Motolov, Stalin's wives, his children, and others, all very surprising, intimate and interesting stuff.An excellent, smooth flowing account about people and their character. I give it a strong five star rating.0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Clearly, the definitive account of Joseph Stalin.Von Yuli MartovIn addition to being a masterful playwright, Edvard Radzinsky is also a truly gifted writer. He, like no other biographer of Stalin has done thus far, did not believe all of the myths that surround Joseph Stalin, such as the idea that Stalin was a paranoid schizophrenic, that Stalin was an intellectual bantamweight who paled in comparison to Lenin and Trotsky, and that Leon Trotsky was closer to Lenin than Stalin could ever have been. Radzinsky's biography does justice to perhaps the greatest politician who has ever set foot on Planet Earth. And living through Stalinism, he is more qualified to write a biography of Stalin than any American such as Robert Conquest, Adam Ulam, Robert Tucker, or Richard Lourie could ever be.Radzinsky generalizes Stalin's life into three distinct periods, that of Soso(the young and innocent Joseph Djughashvili, who his mother hoped would become a clergyman), Koba(the terrorist, who acted as Lenin's right hand man, doing all of the real work for the Bolshevik party, the type of work that an idealist such as Trotsky could never do), and Stalin(the ruthless politician, who had no problem with annihilating political opponents by any means necessary). The reader comes to understand a fact that would seem self evident to most people, but doesn't really resonate easily in their minds, that Stalin epitomized the Leninist idea. Many would like to believe that Stalin betrayed the Russian Revolution, by ending the NEP, by annihilating the men who were essential to the success of the October coup(Trotsky, Antonov-Anseeko, Tomsy), and by instigating class warfare on an unprecedented scale. But I think Radzinsky's book pretty much shatters this notion.Many Trotskyists point to "Lenin's will" as proof that he did not want Stalin to replace him as the maximum leader of the USSR, but as Radzinsky points out, none of the leaders wanted to make Lenin's will public, Lenin wrote a negative sketch of every prospective leader(Lenin wrote Trotsky was arrogant, Stalin was too rude, he say Bukharin was the party's favorite, and the foremost theorist[but in the next line, he says Bukharin doesn't understand dialectics!]). Of course, Radzinsky provides an interesting scenario where Lenin left a will, ordering the demotion of Stalin from the post of General Secretary, in his office, but before his wife Nadezhda Krupskaya, or Leon Trotsky could find it, Stalin found, and falsified it. In addition, many Trotskyists believe that Lenin had a more favorable opinion of Leon Trotsky than Joseph Stalin, which as Radzinsky points out, is absolutely absurd. Lenin, like Stalin, hated Trotsky, which is why Lenin encouraged Stalin to promote anti-Trotskyist feelings within the Bolshevik party. Although I feel Trotsky was more intelligent than anyone in the Bolshevik party, I don't really buy the idea that the Bolsheviks would accept a man who feuded with them for roughly fifteen years.After reading this book, I felt even more respect for Leon Trotsky(I already thought he was the preeminent genius of the twentieth century[excluding men of science like Albert Einstein and Stephen Hawking of course!]), for overlooking the fact Lenin despised him, and keeping up the good fight until one of Stalin's GPU agents murdered him in 1940. And I also came to respect the genius of Joseph Stalin, he politically(and literally) destroyed more intellectual opponents, such as Lev Kamenev, Gregory Zinoviev, Leon Trotsky, Nikolai Bukharin, and of course the old man Lenin himself. A person will not understand the reasons behind the terror that Russians lived under for 30 years until they read this book, you will no longer believe the ridiculous myths that American biographers of Stalin have concocted, Stalin was an incredibly gifted politician(and was almost certainly not psychotic as many have suggested!), why else would he have ruled the first workers and peasants state for thirty years? This book will make any American appreciate the ruthlessness of Stalin's henchmen, Malenkov, Beria, and Molotov, for preventing medical attention for Stalin after the stroke he suffered in 1953(he likely would have lived if he would have received medical attention immediately), because had Stalin lived for at least another ten years, Americans would likely be living under the banner of Stalinism right now.0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A portrait of a monsterVon Gene BrombergThe common view of Stalin is that he was a paranoid psychopath who murdered tens of millions due to his own insecurities. Radzinsky's view is different-- he believes that every move Stalin made during his long, bloody career was carefully calculated, that he always stayed a few steps ahead of his foes. He makes the quite convincing case that Stalin instilled terror as

the primary characteristic of the Soviet regime because Stalin recognized early on that terror alone could keep the people and the Party obedient. The Stalin Radzinsky presents is a far more sinister and frightening figure than a mere psychotic. It describes a man of extraordinary evil, not just a psychological case study. Even if you don't buy all the theories that the author presents, Radzinsky's writing is so energetic and dramatic that you can't help but be fascinated, horribly fascinated by this man who probably murdered more people than anyone in history. While many people prefer to think of Stalin as insane, Radzinsky presents compelling evidence to support his view. This was, after all, a man who seized power from some very ambitious men who were enormously skilled at treachery. He took power and then over the course of 30 years ruthlessly and methodically crushed anyone who even vaguely threatened his position. He killed his enemies, his friends, his family-- no one was safe. And he didn't just destroy these people-- he made them destroy themselves. Radzinsky's descriptions of the great show trials are the most interesting part of the book, because archives show that Stalin not only orchestrated the trials but also even wrote much of the dialogue the condemned men happily parroted from the dock. That these once-powerful men (like Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Bukharin) collapsed so completely and yet naively believed that Stalin would spare them if they confessed completely shows how rotten at its core the Soviet system was. Only during the war was Stalin's rule threatened, first by Hitler (though the author argues that Stalin was actually planning a sneak attack on Germany) and later by Zhukov and the rest of the general staff, who enjoyed a measure of freedom as they beat back the Nazis. Stalin relaxed the terror to inspire a patriotic fury in his people as they fought the invaders, but once the danger passed he clamped down as hard as ever. Cold, ruthless acts like these lend weight to Radzinsky's idea of Stalin as the master puppeteer. Stalin died in 1953 and the controversial part of this book focuses on what may have happened had Stalin lived. It did appear that Stalin was preparing another purge, yet another bloodletting that would send millions to the camps and the grave. This initial culprits were seven Jewish doctors, and Radzinsky raises the possibility that Stalin was preparing a Holocaust of his own. By now Stalin had the hydrogen bomb, and Radzinsky theorizes that perhaps Stalin was thinking about using the Bomb, thinking about starting World War III. This theory stretches the available information to the breaking point but the author does make his case strongly enough to get the hairs on the back of your neck standing up. Would a man who murdered millions of his own people shrink before killing millions of Americans, British, Chinese, etc? Stalin himself once said, "A single death is a tragedy, a million deaths are a statistic." Brilliantly written, painstakingly researched, Radzinsky's book is well worth reading even if you don't accept every new theory he puts forth. Stalin was doubtless a monster, and this book superbly details his crimes

Kurzbeschreibung From the author of *The Last Tsar*, the first full-scale life of Stalin to have what no previous biography has fully obtained: the facts. Granted privileged access to Russia's secret archives, Edvard Radzinsky paints a picture of the Soviet strongman as more calculating, ruthless, and blood-crazed than has ever been described or imagined. Stalin was a man for whom power was all, terror a useful weapon, and deceit a constant companion. As Radzinsky narrates the high drama of Stalin's epic quest for domination--first within the Communist Party, then over the Soviet Union and the world--he uncovers the startling truth about this most enigmatic of historical figures. Only now, in the post-Soviet era, can what was suppressed be told: Stalin's long-denied involvement with terrorism as a young revolutionary; the crucial importance of his misunderstood, behind-the-scenes role during the October Revolution; his often hostile relationship with Lenin; the details of his organization of terror, culminating in the infamous show trials of the 1930s; his secret dealings with Hitler, and how they backfired; and the horrifying plans he was making before his death to send the Soviet Union's Jews to concentration camps--tantamount to a potential second Holocaust. Radzinsky also takes an intimate look at Stalin's private life, marked by his turbulent relationship with his wife Nadezhda, and recreates the circumstances that led to her suicide. As he did in *The Last Tsar*, Radzinsky thrillingly brings the past to life. The Kremlin intrigues, the ceaseless round of double-dealing and back-stabbing, the private worlds of the Soviet Empire's ruling class--all become, in Radzinsky's hands, as gripping and powerful as the great Russian sagas. And the riddle of that most cold-blooded of leaders, a man for whom nothing was sacred in his pursuit of absolute might--and perhaps the greatest mass murderer in Western history--is solved. deGranted privileged access to Russia's secret archives, Edvard Radzinsky has broken down the iron curtain of myth, secrecy and lies that has surrounded Stalin's life and career, painting a picture of the Soviet strongman as more calculating, ruthless and blood-crazed than has ever been described or imagined. comGranted privileged access to Russia's secret archives, Edvard Radzinsky has broken down the iron curtain of myth, secrecy and lies that has surrounded Stalin's life and career, painting a picture of the Soviet strongman as more calculating, ruthless and blood-crazed than has ever been described or imagined.