

Grand Delusion



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This important book draws on vital new archival material to unravel the mystery of Hitler's invasion of Russia in 1941 and Stalin's enigmatic behavior on the eve of the attack. Gabriel Gorodetsky challenges the currently popular view that Stalin was about to invade Germany when Hitler made a preemptive strike. He argues instead that Stalin was actually negotiating for European peace, asserting that Stalin followed an unscrupulous Realpolitik that served well-defined geopolitical interests by seeking to redress the European balance of power. Gorodetsky substantiates his argument through the most thorough scrutiny ever of Soviet archives for the period, including the files of the Russian foreign ministry, the general staff, the security forces, and the entire range of military intelligence available to Stalin at the time. According to Gorodetsky, Stalin was eagerly anticipating a peace conference where various accords imposed on Russia would be revised. But the delusion of being able to dictate a new European order blinded him to the lurking German danger, and his erroneous diagnosis of the political scene-colored by his perennial suspicion of Great Britain-led him to misconstrue the evidence of his own and Britain's intelligence services. Gorodetsky highlights the sequence of military blunders that resulted from Stalin's determination to appease Germany-blunders that provide the key to understanding the calamity that befell Russia on 22 June 1941.

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