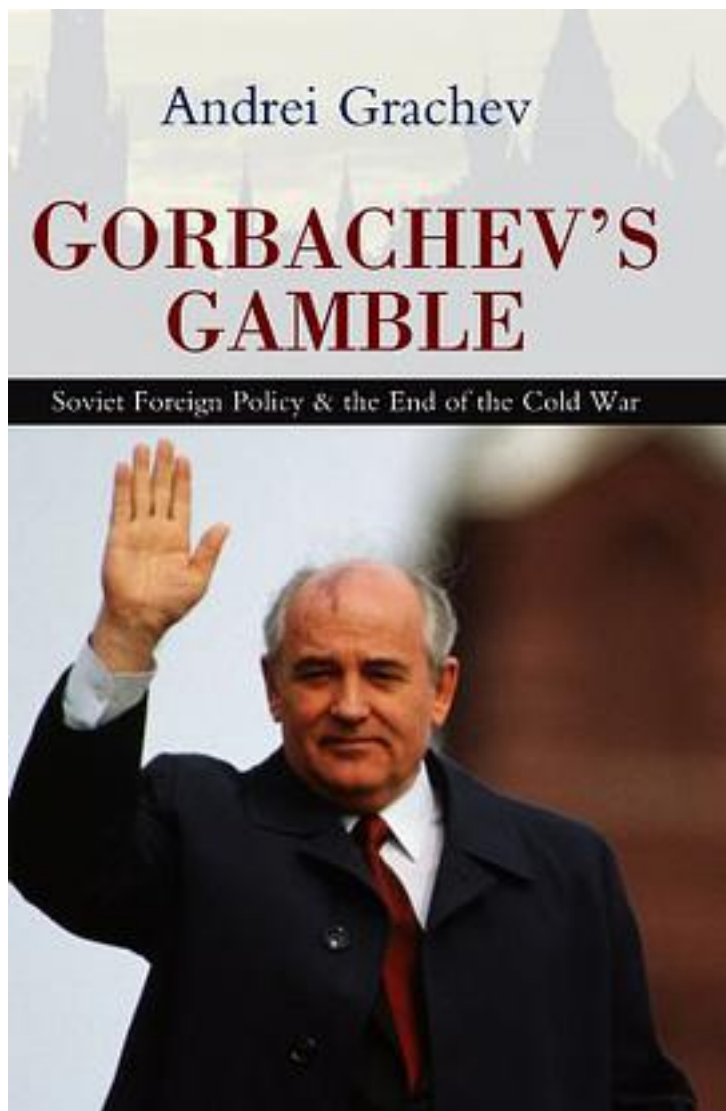


Gorbachev's Gamble



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The sudden ending of the Cold War, surely the dominant feature of the second half of the 20th century, continues to be one of the most unexpected and perplexing events of our time. Explanations provided by the winners and losers in the Cold War differ considerably and often contradict each other. Even taken together they do not provide a compelling answer to the key question: why did it happen?

Gorbachev's Gamble offers a new and more convincing answer to this question by providing the missing link between the internal and external aspects of Gorbachev's perestroika. Andrei Grachev shows that the radically transformed Soviet foreign policy during the Gorbachev years was an integral part of an ambitious project of internal democratic reform and of the historic opening of Soviet society to the outside world.

Grachev explains the motives and the intentions of the initiators of this project and describes their hopes and their illusions. He recounts the story of the internal debates and struggles in the Kremlin and behind-the-scene decisions that led to the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the break-up of the Warsaw Pact and eventually the demise of the Soviet Union itself.

The book is based on exclusive interviews with the leaders of the Soviet Union including Gorbachev, personal notes and diaries of their assistants and advisers and transcripts of the discussions inside the Politburo and Secretariat of the Central Committee. Together they constitute a multi-voice political confession of a whole generation of decision-makers and opinion leaders of the Soviet Union that enables us better to understand the origin and the breathtaking trajectory of the events that led to the end of the Cold War and the unprecedented transformation of world politics in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

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目录:

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