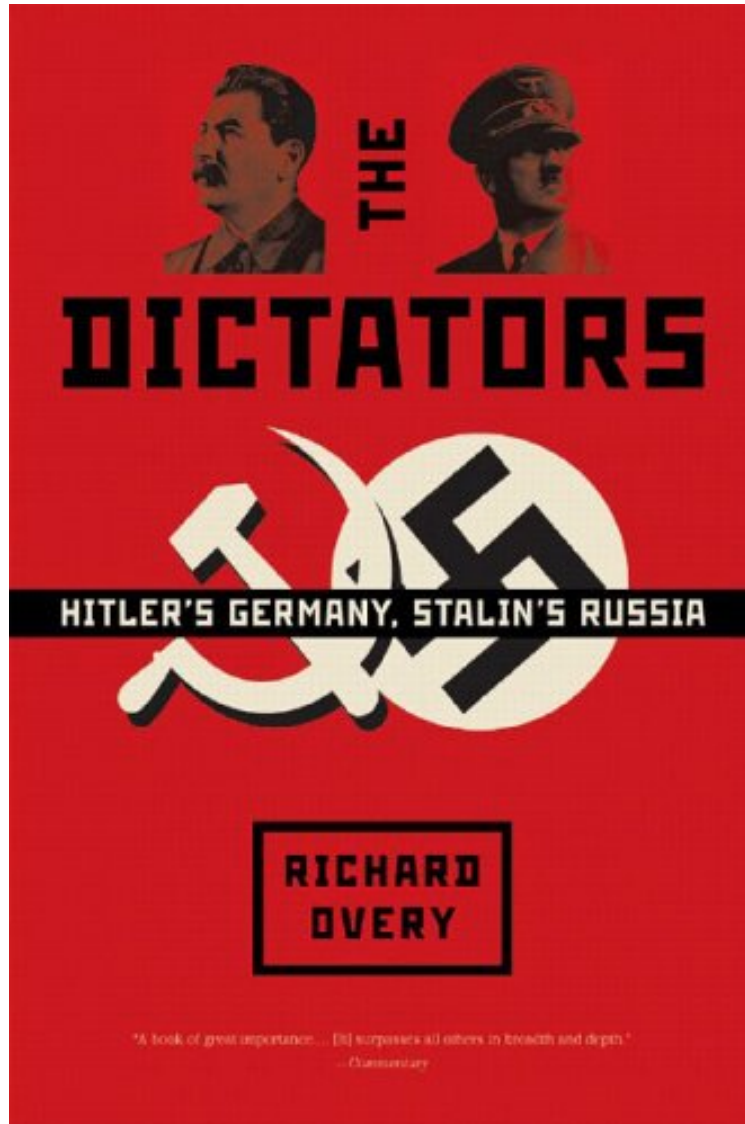


(Mobile book) The Dictators: Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia

The Dictators: Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia

Richard Overy Ph.D.

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Richard Overy Ph.D. : The Dictators: Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Dictators: Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia:

12 of 14 people found the following review helpful. OutstandingBy Francis McInerneyOvery is more than a scholar; he is a deep thinker. There is a world of difference. "The Dictators" is a seminal work comparing how the two greatest dictators of all time exercised control over their political, economic, and military systems all while laying out the implications of this control.It is the painstaking comparison, often paragraph-by-paragraph, that gives this work its magisterial quality. But what really makes "The Dictators" work is how it builds on Overy's previous work, "Why the

Allies Won," which assumed that the Allied victory was not a forgone conclusion in 1940 and asked, and answered, probing questions about comparative command structures, production economies, and capital sources. Without this base, Overy's latest could have become just another book on Hitler and Stalin. And a boring one at that. With it, however, we get insights unavailable elsewhere. Having studied Marxism, Leninism, and the Soviet Union for forty years, I was deeply impressed. The next step in this line of scholarship is to put it in the context of falling information costs. Wealth is created when increasing amounts of ever cheaper information can be substituted for other resources like land, labor, and capital. "The Dictators" describes how Hitler and Stalin did the opposite, systematically lowering the cost of information or themselves and raising it for everyone else. Following Overy's reasoning in "Why the Allies Won" the question is, absenting world war, was the Dictator system sustainable? If so, for how long? This question is critical to understanding the future of China as it tries to contain falling information costs and keep some semblance of Party leadership. And critical to us in trying to manage our relationship with China. Next book Mr. Overy? Editing: Five Stars. Comparing two systems across so many functions page-by-page and often paragraph-by paragraph can quickly become unwieldy and most would advise strongly against it. Better to keep each leader to his own chapter. But Overy carries this off and his editor wisely let him proceed. Copy Editing: Five Stars 32 of 37 people found the following review helpful. An interesting thesis By 1. Overy makes the controversial thesis that Hitler's regime was more revolutionary than Stalin's Russia. Overy claims that the Nazi party began to take over areas of the German economy while Stalin after the nineteen thirties left the economy in the hands of economist and engineers. Also during the war years the Nazi party was taking over control of military operations, but Stalin was ceding control to his generals. The Gestapo was not constrained by any law while the Soviet NKVD in the early forties was scrutinized by some judicial oversight. Finally the Nazis eliminated ethnic groups based on their race and the Soviets judged other ethnic groups based on their loyalty to the Soviet state. The main weakness of Overy's book is that he skims over Stalin's collectivization drive and how it resulted in the deaths of millions of Soviet citizens through starvation and repression. Despite this weakness, I would recommend this book for anyone interested in a comparison of these two regimes. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Masterpiece By Yoda This book does an extraordinary job at comparing the similarities in the means used by Nazi and Stalinist regimes. The use of mass media, the police (both secret and non-political), the use of prisons, cults of personality, etc. was remarkably similar between these two regimes. Dr. Overy documents their overlap in great detail and makes the case, at least from the perspective of means and tools, they were flip sides of the coin. On the negative side the book is weak at the fundamental differences between the regimes in terms of ideology and the persons of Hitler and Stalin. The Nazi state was based on the importance and centrality of the ethnos while the Soviet was based, in an ill-defined way, on Marxist-Leninist ideology (whatever that may mean – even the Communist Party of the Soviet Union could not define this). In addition, the distinct personalities of Hitler and Stalin played a unique role in the Nazi and Stalinist regimes. With respect to Hitler, it seems doubtful if Nazism could have come into existence or continued without Hitler (or at least in the vicious form that it did). On the other hand, the Soviet Union's Orwellian regime would probably have existed in more or less the same form whether or not Stalin had existed or not. The Communist Party's leadership in the Soviet Union consisted primarily of individuals who had a mindset, particularly in terms of ideology, ruthlessness and worldview very similar to Stalin's. Despite these weaknesses this is still an extraordinary book in its comparison of the two regimes. Very highly recommended.

"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. 16 pages of illustrations

From Publishers Weekly Comparisons between Hitler and Stalin and their regimes are nothing new, but this dense, comprehensive, scholarly investigation is more nuanced than most. Overy sidesteps the simplistic debate over which dictator was more evil and focuses on how they, and the systems they created, were similar and different. He delves into their regimes thematically, in topics ranging from police states and economic systems to wartime behavior. The results yield intriguing historical insights, although the book demands a careful reading. For instance, Overy notes that both Hitler and Stalin created cults of personality, but for Hitler "personality was the defining criterion of leadership"; Stalin, on the other hand, emphasized Communist ideology first and embraced a personality cult only when he realized it could cement his stranglehold on power. Interestingly, while the Nazi Party increasingly relied on workers' support and ideology, Stalin's Communist Party—the "vanguard of the proletariat"—relied more and more on middle-class

technocrats. At times Overy restates points long known to historians, e.g., both leaders pursued negative utopias, but from different bases: class warfare was Stalin's justification, while Hitler chose biological purity. But when he points out the differences in their policies toward minorities and nationalities—Hitler adhered to a racial ladder, while Stalin, a Georgian, flip-flopped to suit his political goals—Overy's analytical strength and depth of knowledge emerges. 32 pages illus.; maps. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Conceding that Alan Bullock's *Hitler and Stalin* (1991) is the standard dual biography, Overy tackles an old controversy about Hitlerism and Stalinism: the degree to which they are similar. Assessing kinship may strike nonhistorians as impertinent in the context of each system's mountain of victims, but Overy explains this work as a necessary empirical foundation for the historiography of the two dictatorships. The dictators' personalities are brought forward only as they pertain to their governing and propaganda apparatuses; most pertinent of all is the way each man regarded himself as a world-historical actor with a "redemptive" mission. Overy spreads that insidiously essential aspect of the Hitler and Stalin dictatorships across the divisions of his analysis, which include the cultlike panegyrics to the leader; their popular support; their military buildups; and, crucially, their fantasy ideologies, without which their crimes and World War II are difficult to imagine occurring. From a notable historian of WWII, this serious integration of extant scholarship will be of use to student and professional researchers. Gilbert Taylor Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved. "The most comprehensive, up-to-date and cogently argued comparison yet published. ... A richly insightful study."