like his own son, were expected to serve on the front lines and there would be no trades if captured.

It is difficult to put together an account of the inner circle from the limited official material we have on hand. Fitzpatrick uses the copious correspondence of Stalin with Molotov and Kaganovich as a primary source, as well as post-Stalin memoirs of principals such as Mikoian, Molotov and Kaganovich. Mikoian's memoir largely avoids discussion of purges and focuses instead on mundane issues of economic, trade, and foreign policy. Molotov and Kaganovich's memoirs are devoted to justification of their own actions and support for Stalinism. Fitzpatrick also uses the memoirs of children of the Kremlin, such as the sons of Mikoian and Beria, understanding that they were written with a slant towards rehabilitating their fathers.

Fitzpatrick remains cautious on some of the more controversial stories concerning Stalin's Russia. She does not subscribe the Stalin-killed-Kirov school. She believes Stalin's affection for Kirov was genuine and seemed content to let him run his show from distant Leningrad. Fitzpatrick writes that Stalin did not hesitate to remove his enemies on the pretext of solving Kirov's murder, however. She does not subscribe to the sensational story that Stalin expected to be arrested by the Politburo for his failure to anticipate the German invasion. Instead, the Politburo came to the dacha to ask him to carry on, although some hints from the Mikoian side suggest otherwise. She raises doubt about the depth of Lavrenty Beria's sexual perversions, suggesting they may have been exaggerated for his trial. Fitzpatrick doubts that Stalin was murdered by someone in his inner circle. It would have had to be "a joint action," (222) which none of them ever disclosed. The removal of Stalin's personal secretary and personal bodyguard shortly before Stalin's death, however, does raise certain suspicion.

Fitzpatrick's book summarizes a broad range of literature. It does not change in a fundamental way our understanding of how Russia was ruled. Its contribution rather is to take the reader, as much as is possible, inside the Kremlin walls, inside the Near Dacha, or to a family dinner in a cramped Kremlin apartment to give a sense of time and place that is lacking from most accounts.

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Barbarossa 1941: Reframing Hitler's Invasion of Stalin's Soviet Empire. By Frank Ellis. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2015. xxviii, 568 pp. Appendixes. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. Figures. Tables. $39.95, hard bound.
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There are few events as significant in Soviet history as the launching of Operation Barbarossa. The German invasion, beginning June 22, 1941, dragged the Soviet Union into a devastating total war that wreaked havoc and mass destruction across Soviet state and society, the effects of which continue to shape Russia today. For this reason, Barbarossa and the ensuing conflict on the eastern front have been the focus of numerous studies. Frank Ellis seeks to add to this voluminous literature by reframing the German invasion of the Soviet Union.

Barbarossa 1941 is structured as a series of discreet essays focusing on different aspects of the invasion. Among others, the book covers German planning and Soviet military doctrine; the notorious Nazi Commissar Order; diplomatic relations and

Soviet intelligence assessments before June 1941; and Soviet war literature. Some chapters seem out of place in a book seeking to reframe Barbarossa. Ellis devotes a chapter to discussing Viktor Suvorov's 'icebreaker' thesis even though this was discredited in the 1990s. Another chapter contains a useful translation of a diary account written by a Gefreiter from the 20th Panzer Division, but this adds little to rethinking our understanding of Barbarossa. Moreover, Ellis draws upon no new archival materials. The book is based on published documents that have long been available to historians.

Throughout his examination of Barbarossa, Ellis highlights where he sees similarities between the Nazi and Soviet regimes. This is the most prominent theme in the book. Comparative history of the Nazi and Stalinist regimes is a valuable area of research; however, Ellis's treatment takes us back to well-worn interpretations: Stalin was a "psychopathically" suspicious dictator and his behavior was shaped by a murderous and ideological paranoia (419). Recent research on the Stalin period has tended to focus on where Stalin's suspicions stemmed from exactly and recognizes a need to move beyond armchair psychological diagnosis. This dated treatment extends to Ellis's discussion of the wider Soviet system. The Bolsheviks are presented as presiding over little more than a terrorist regime that had always been "fully committed" to violence (xxii). Indeed, for Ellis, the extermination of enemies was the "default position" of the Soviet leadership (99). Debates about the nature of the Russian Revolution, its subsequent fate, what forces ushered in a totalitarian dictatorship, and the complexities behind the use of Soviet state violence, are absent from the book. References to the character of popular support for the Stalinist regime are particularly sweeping. We are told that political workers, party members, NKVD officials, and Komsomol members "all unconditionally accepted the Communist Party clichés about class war and enemies of the people" (97).

A central goal of *Barbarossa 1941* is to establish connections between the violence and atrocities committed by Germans on the eastern front and the behavior of the Soviet state. Ellis argues that neither National Socialist ideology nor longer trends going back to Imperial Germany can fully account for Nazi violence. German perceptions of a repressive Soviet state—and how these perceptions in turn shaped German behavior—must be factored into the picture. However, this is where the argument is at its weakest. Ellis does not present compelling evidence that German actions—such as the Nazi Commissar Order—were inspired (at least partly) by the actions of the Soviet regime. Ellis claims that the German wartime occupation regime was "based on a model of genocide established by the Communist Party" (65). For example, he speculates that German planners' food-seizure policies and the treatment of Soviet prisoners of war "may well" have been partly inspired by Soviet war communism and the Ukrainian "genocide" famine (59). Whether the Germans were influenced by the Katyn massacre and Soviet deportations following the invasion of Poland in 1939 is also touched upon. In broader terms, Lenin's sanctioning of class violence is said to have "prepared the way" for Hitler's brand of ideological war (95). What connections existed between the Nazi and Soviet regimes—and what connected, inspired, and influenced Lenin, Stalin, and Hitler—are important questions. However, Ellis does not go beyond a speculative and, in the end, unconvincing discussion.

Taken as a whole, *Barbarossa 1941* offers little that is new about the German invasion of the Soviet Union. This effort to reframe the war on the eastern front is flawed by superficial comparisons and speculative connections between the Nazi and Soviet regimes.

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