



Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him

By Donald Rayfield

Download now

Read Online ➔

Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him By Donald Rayfield

Stalin did not act alone. The mass executions, the mock trials, the betrayals and purges, the jailings and secret torture that ravaged the Soviet Union during the three decades of Stalin's dictatorship, were the result of a tight network of trusted henchmen (and women), spies, psychopaths, and thugs. At the top of this pyramid of terror sat five indispensable hangmen who presided over the various incarnations of Stalin's secret police. Now, in his harrowing new book, Donald Rayfield probes the lives, the minds, the twisted careers, and the unpunished crimes of Stalin's loyal assassins.

Founded by Feliks Dzierzynski, the Cheka—the Extraordinary Commission—came to life in the first years of the Russian Revolution. Spreading fear in a time of chaos, the Cheka proved a perfect instrument for Stalin's ruthless consolidation of power. But brutal as it was, the Cheka under Dzierzynski was amateurish compared to the well-oiled killing machines that succeeded it. Genrikh Iagoda's OGPU specialized in political assassination, propaganda, and the manipulation of foreign intellectuals. Later, the NKVD recruited a new generation of torturers. Starting in 1938, terror mastermind Lavrenti Beria brought violent repression to a new height of ingenuity and sadism.

As Rayfield shows, Stalin and his henchmen worked relentlessly to coerce and suborn leading Soviet intellectuals, artists, writers, lawyers, and scientists. Maxim Gorky, Aleksandr Fadeev, Alexei Tolstoi, Isaak Babel, and Osip Mandelstam were all caught in Stalin's web—courted, toyed with, betrayed, and then ruthlessly destroyed. In bringing to light the careers, personalities, relationships, and “accomplishments” of Stalin's key henchmen and their most prominent victims, Rayfield creates a chilling drama of the intersection of political fanaticism, personal vulnerability, and blind lust for power spanning half a century.

Though Beria lost his power—and his life—after Stalin's death in 1953, the fundamental methods of the hangmen maintained their grip into the second half of the twentieth century. Indeed, Rayfield argues, the tradition of terror, far from disappearing, has emerged with renewed vitality under Vladimir Putin. Written

with grace, passion, and a dazzling command of the intricacies of Soviet politics and society, *Stalin and the Hangmen* is a devastating indictment of the individuals and ideology that kept Stalin in power.

From the Hardcover edition.

 [**Download** Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who K...pdf](#)

 [**Read Online** Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who...pdf](#)

Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him

By Donald Rayfield

Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him By Donald Rayfield

Stalin did not act alone. The mass executions, the mock trials, the betrayals and purges, the jailings and secret torture that ravaged the Soviet Union during the three decades of Stalin's dictatorship, were the result of a tight network of trusted henchmen (and women), spies, psychopaths, and thugs. At the top of this pyramid of terror sat five indispensable hangmen who presided over the various incarnations of Stalin's secret police. Now, in his harrowing new book, Donald Rayfield probes the lives, the minds, the twisted careers, and the unpunished crimes of Stalin's loyal assassins.

Founded by Feliks Dzierzynski, the Cheka—the Extraordinary Commission—came to life in the first years of the Russian Revolution. Spreading fear in a time of chaos, the Cheka proved a perfect instrument for Stalin's ruthless consolidation of power. But brutal as it was, the Cheka under Dzierzynski was amateurish compared to the well-oiled killing machines that succeeded it. Genrikh Iagoda's OGPU specialized in political assassination, propaganda, and the manipulation of foreign intellectuals. Later, the NKVD recruited a new generation of torturers. Starting in 1938, terror mastermind Lavrenti Beria brought violent repression to a new height of ingenuity and sadism.

As Rayfield shows, Stalin and his henchmen worked relentlessly to coerce and suborn leading Soviet intellectuals, artists, writers, lawyers, and scientists. Maxim Gorky, Aleksandr Fadeev, Alexei Tolstoi, Isaak Babel, and Osip Mandelstam were all caught in Stalin's web—courted, toyed with, betrayed, and then ruthlessly destroyed. In bringing to light the careers, personalities, relationships, and “accomplishments” of Stalin's key henchmen and their most prominent victims, Rayfield creates a chilling drama of the intersection of political fanaticism, personal vulnerability, and blind lust for power spanning half a century.

Though Beria lost his power—and his life—after Stalin's death in 1953, the fundamental methods of the hangmen maintained their grip into the second half of the twentieth century. Indeed, Rayfield argues, the tradition of terror, far from disappearing, has emerged with renewed vitality under Vladimir Putin. Written with grace, passion, and a dazzling command of the intricacies of Soviet politics and society, *Stalin and the Hangmen* is a devastating indictment of the individuals and ideology that kept Stalin in power.

From the Hardcover edition.

Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him By Donald Rayfield
Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #536203 in Books
- Brand: Rayfield, Donald
- Published on: 2005-12-13
- Released on: 2005-12-13

- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.00" h x 1.50" w x 5.30" l, .90 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 592 pages

 [Download Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who K ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online *Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him* By Donald Rayfield

Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This investigation of Stalin and his coterie is at its best when it focuses on the latter—henchmen such as Feliks Dzierzynski, Viacheslav Molotov and Lavrenti Beria—showing that it was their "spellbound submission" that made it possible for tens of millions of Soviet citizens to be killed, while the account adds nuance to our understanding of how the brutality of the U.S.S.R. was possible. As Rayfield (*Anton Chekhov*), a professor of Russian and Georgian at the University of London, shows, the leaders Stalin appointed also needed no direct instructions to turn their hands to violence; Beria, for instance, who took over the secret police in 1938, was a "vindictive sadist" who combined "unscrupulousness" with "finesse." Rayfield focuses less than Moses Montefiore in his recent biography of Stalin on the personal lives of top Soviet officials, and more on their policies. When Rayfield concentrates on Stalin, however, while some of the details are new, the picture overall is familiar. By focusing on Stalin's tactics and network of violent underbosses, though, Rayfield makes an important argument: discussions of Stalin's ideology should be secondary to the brutal means he used to remain in power for 30 years. 32 pages of photos, maps, not seen by PW.

Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From the Inside Flap

Stalin did not act alone. The mass executions, the mock trials, the betrayals and purges, the jailings and secret torture that ravaged the Soviet Union during the three decades of Stalin's dictatorship, were the result of a tight network of trusted henchmen (and women), spies, psychopaths, and thugs. At the top of this pyramid of terror sat five indispensable hangmen who presided over the various incarnations of Stalin's secret police. Now, in his harrowing new book, Donald Rayfield probes the lives, the minds, the twisted careers, and the unpunished crimes of Stalin's loyal assassins.

Founded by Feliks Dzierzynski, the Cheka—the Extraordinary Commission—came to life in the first years of the Russian Revolution. Spreading fear in a time of chaos, the Cheka proved a perfect instrument for Stalin's ruthless consolidation of power. But brutal as it was, the Cheka under Dzierzynski was amateurish compared to the well-oiled killing machines that succeeded it. Genrikh Iagoda's OGPU specialized in political assassination, propaganda, and the manipulation of foreign intellectuals. Later, the NKVD recruited a new generation of torturers. Starting in 1938, terror mastermind Lavrenti Beria brought violent repression to a new height of ingenuity and sadism.

As Rayfield shows, Stalin and his henchmen worked relentlessly to coerce and suborn leading Soviet intellectuals, artists, writers, lawyers, and scientists. Maxim Gorky, Aleksandr Fadeev, Alexei Tolstoi, Isaak Babel, and Osip Mandelstam were all caught in Stalin's web—courted, toyed with, betrayed, and then ruthlessly destroyed. In bringing to light the careers, personalities, relationships, and "accomplishments" of Stalin's key henchmen and their most prominent victims, Rayfield creates a chilling drama of the intersection of political fanaticism, personal vulnerability, and blind lust for power spanning half a century.

Though Beria lost his power—and his life—after Stalin's death in 1953, the fundamental methods of the hangmen maintained their grip into the second half of the twentieth century. Indeed, Rayfield argues, the tradition of terror, far from disappearing, has emerged with renewed vitality under Vladimir Putin. Written with grace, passion, and a dazzling command of the intricacies of Soviet politics and society, *Stalin and the Hangmen* is a devastating indictment of the individuals and ideology that kept Stalin in power.

"From the Hardcover edition.

About the Author

Donald Rayfield is professor of Russian and Georgian at the University of London and the author of a number of books on Russian writers and intellectuals, including an acclaimed biography of Anton Chekhov.

From the Hardcover edition.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Justin Price:

Do you have favorite book? If you have, what is your favorite's book? Publication is very important thing for us to be aware of everything in the world. Each book has different aim as well as goal; it means that book has different type. Some people truly feel enjoy to spend their time and energy to read a book. They may be reading whatever they get because their hobby will be reading a book. Why not the person who don't like reading through a book? Sometime, individual feel need book when they found difficult problem or exercise. Well, probably you will want this Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him.

Neil Owens:

Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him can be one of your nice books that are good idea. Many of us recommend that straight away because this publication has good vocabulary that may increase your knowledge in terminology, easy to understand, bit entertaining but still delivering the information. The writer giving his/her effort to get every word into pleasure arrangement in writing Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him nevertheless doesn't forget the main stage, giving the reader the hottest and based confirm resource facts that maybe you can be certainly one of it. This great information can easily drawn you into brand-new stage of crucial contemplating.

Alan Trevino:

Don't be worry when you are afraid that this book may filled the space in your house, you might have it in e-book way, more simple and reachable. This particular Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him can give you a lot of friends because by you taking a look at this one book you have point that they don't and make a person more like an interesting person. This particular book can be one of one step for you to get success. This book offer you information that maybe your friend doesn't understand, by knowing more than some other make you to be great men and women. So , why hesitate? Let us have Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him.

Antonio Sisson:

Do you like reading a guide? Confuse to looking for your best book? Or your book ended up being rare? Why so many question for the book? But virtually any people feel that they enjoy with regard to reading. Some people likes reading through, not only science book but also novel and Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him or perhaps others sources were given expertise for you. After you

know how the great a book, you feel need to read more and more. Science publication was created for teacher as well as students especially. Those books are helping them to add their knowledge. In additional case, beside science e-book, any other book likes Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him to make your spare time far more colorful. Many types of book like this one.

**Download and Read Online Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him By Donald Rayfield
#H1ASY5KUDXE**

Read Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him By Donald Rayfield for online ebook

Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him By Donald Rayfield Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him By Donald Rayfield books to read online.

Online Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him By Donald Rayfield ebook PDF download

Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him By Donald Rayfield Doc

Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him By Donald Rayfield Mobipocket

Stalin and His Hangmen: The Tyrant and Those Who Killed for Him By Donald Rayfield EPub