Soviet history  
苏联旧事  
Stalin and his cursed cause  
斯大林和他可憎的事业  
High five for communism  
为共产主义击掌  
Stalin's Curse: Battling for Communism in War and Cold War. By Robert Gellately.  
《斯大林的诅咒》：热冷战期间为共产主义而战斗。罗伯特盖拉特莱著。  
FIRST and foremost, Stalin was a communist, who believed that the sacred cause justified the most extreme measures: what non-believers would call unparalleled barbarity. This central message in Robert Gellately's masterly new book is an uncomfortable one for those who believe that Stalinism was an aberration, or a reaction to mistakes made by the West. It is facile to say Stalin was simply a psychopath, that he believed in terror for terror's sake, or that the Red Tsar's personality cult replaced ideology. A Leninist to his core, he was conspiratorial, lethal, cynical and utterly convinced of his own rightness.  
首先，斯大林是一个共产主义者。他相信只要是为了神圣的事业，采取最极端措施也是可以的。而不相信的人称之为空前的暴行。盖拉特莱最新的作品堪称大师之作。文中表达的中心思想会让一些人感到不安。那些人认为斯大林主义不合常规，或者是对西方所犯的错误作出的回应。人们可以轻率地说，斯大林就是一个精神病，他为引起恐慌而信仰恐怖活动。或者说他用对“红色沙皇”的个人狂热崇拜取代意识形态。斯大林是彻头彻尾的列宁主义者，他爱耍阴谋，心狠手辣，生性多疑，却坚信自己事业的正义性。



“Stalin's Curse” draws mainly on German and Russian archives, plus numerous first-hand accounts, and the author's formidable interpretative skills. Unlike other biographies that have focused on the most sensational episodes in the dictator's life, it sets Stalin firmly in the historical context: the rise (and eventual fall) of what the author calls the “Red Empire”.  
除了运用大量第一手记述资料之外，《斯大林的诅咒》主要参考了德国和俄国档案。书中作者对史料的解读展现出高超的技巧。与其他传记聚焦这个独裁者一生中最轰动的轶事不同，本书牢牢地将斯大林置身于在历史大背景(作者称之为“红色帝国”的崛起,最终失败了)  
Mr Gellately's latest work has a good claim to be the best single-volume account of the darkest period in Russian history. It is part of a crop of excellent new accounts of the era. It sits well with Timothy Snyder's 2010 book, “Bloodlands” (about mass killings) and Anne Applebaum's “Iron Curtain” (which deals with eastern Europe after 1944 and which came out last year). It is also a worthy successor to his “Lenin, Stalin, Hitler: The Age of Social Catastrophe” (2008), which compared and contrasted the three monsters.  
要说讲述俄国最黑暗时期的单册历史书描述中最优秀的，盖拉特莱的新书当之无愧。它是记录那个时代的诸多新杰作之一。这本书和蒂莫西 斯奈德2010年的新书《血色土地》（讲述数起大屠杀）和安妮 阿普勒鲍姆“《铁幕》（此书讲述1944年之后的东欧历史，去年出版）相得益彰。此书算得上盖拉特莱的《列宁，斯大林，希特勒：灾难的年代》的出色姊妹篇。后者比较了三个残酷的领导人。  
Stalin's supposed strategic genius gets short shrift, along with his generalship. Because communist doctrine said all imperialists were equal, Stalin failed to see that the Western powers were not the same as Nazi Germany, and might even be useful allies against it. For all his paranoia and cynicism, the Soviet leader was determinedly friendly to Adolf Hitler, apparently believing that close ties with the Soviet Union made a Nazi attack less likely. But Hitler saw it the other way round: relying on Soviet imports endangered his long-term goal of destroying communism.  
人类们认为斯大林满腹韬略和将才的天赋，本书作者却不以为然。因为社会主义教条宣称帝国主义者都是一样的。斯大林没能看到西方政权与纳粹德国并非完全相同，甚至与西方政权联盟可能对反纳粹德国最有效。尽管偏执又多疑，这位苏维埃领导人却坚定地对阿道夫希特勒表示友好，显然是认为德国和苏联关系紧密，可以减少纳粹进攻的可能性。但希特勒却从另一方面看待此事：依赖苏联进口威胁了他摧毁社会主义的长远目标。  
Where Stalin excelled, again and again, was in ruthlessness and attention to detail. He paid minute attention to extending Soviet rule in places conquered at the war's end. He took great interest in details of science and cultural policy, fearing even the faintest breach in communist omniscience. The results might be disastrous: but they were in accordance with communist theory, which was what mattered.  
斯大林次次出众的是残暴以及对细节的关注。在这场战争尾声，他对苏联统治在被攻克地区的扩张给予了密切关注。他对科学和文化政策的细枝末节十分感兴趣，甚至担心自己的模糊会对社会主义者无所不知的形象造成破坏。其结果可能是灾难性的，但再这些政策都与社会主义理论相符合 ，这是最关键的。  
Mr Gellately, a professor in Florida, has a deft touch with detail. For all the havoc he wreaked on the countryside, Stalin knew next to nothing about it (he seems to have visited farms only once, in 1928). During their furious conquest of Germany, the Red Army soldiers avenged their homeland's suffering in an orgy of destruction. An eyewitness describes their taking “axes to armchairs, sofas, tables and stools, even baby carriages”. Individual stories are recounted with understated sympathy. But the scope of the suffering is inconceivable. An all but forgotten post-war famine in the Soviet Union killed 1m-2m people. Communism probably killed around 25m: roughly the same toll of death and destruction as that wrought by the Nazis.  
盖拉特莱，是一名佛罗里达的教授，善于挖掘细节。尽管斯大林在农村造成了破坏，本人却几乎毫不知情（貌似他只在1928年参观了农场一次）。在猛攻德国期间，红军通过一系列肆意摧毁来为祖国曾遭受的苦难复仇。一个目击者形容他们“用斧头劈扶手椅，沙发，桌子，凳子甚至婴儿车”。个体的故事只是带着轻描淡写的同情色彩叙述着。但苦难的波及之广是难以想象的。 一场快被遗忘的苏联战后饥荒饿死了10到20万人。共产主义可能导致了25万人死亡：和纳粹造成的死亡、损失数字大致持平。  
Aside from the chief villain, Western leaders too come in for quiet but deserved scorn. Both Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman failed to grasp their counterpart's malevolence. Winston Churchill made casual deals that consigned millions of people to slavery and torment. The foreigners thought Stalin was a curmudgeonly ally to be coaxed and cajoled. He treated them as enemies to be outwitted. Far from provoking Stalin into unnecessary hostility, the Western powers were not nearly tough enough.  
除首要的反面人物外，西方领导人也受到虽克制的但应得的蔑视。富兰克林罗斯福和哈里S杜鲁门都没能洞悉与他们的对手斯大林的恶毒。邱吉尔随意就达成了协议：导致数以百万计的人遭受奴役和折磨。这个外国人认为斯大林是个易被哄骗和劝诱的，脾气暴躁的同盟者。他对他们就像瞒骗敌人。西方列强不愿挑起斯大林的不必要敌意，更谈不上对他采取强硬态度。  
Some of the strongest passages of the book concern Stalin's final years: the sharpening contrast between his obsessive paranoia and his analytical powers; the looming anti-Semitism, and the beginnings of a massive new arms build-up. Little of that came to fruition, sparing the world untold new horrors. But what Stalin did achieve was quite bad enough.  
书中涉及斯大林最后日子的段落是高潮：他的强迫性偏执和超强的分析能力形成鲜明对比；骨子里的反亲犹太人主义，一种大规模新式军备逐步增强的开端。这些只有少部分实现了，使世界免于数不清的新恐慌。但已实现了的那些，却是够坏的了。