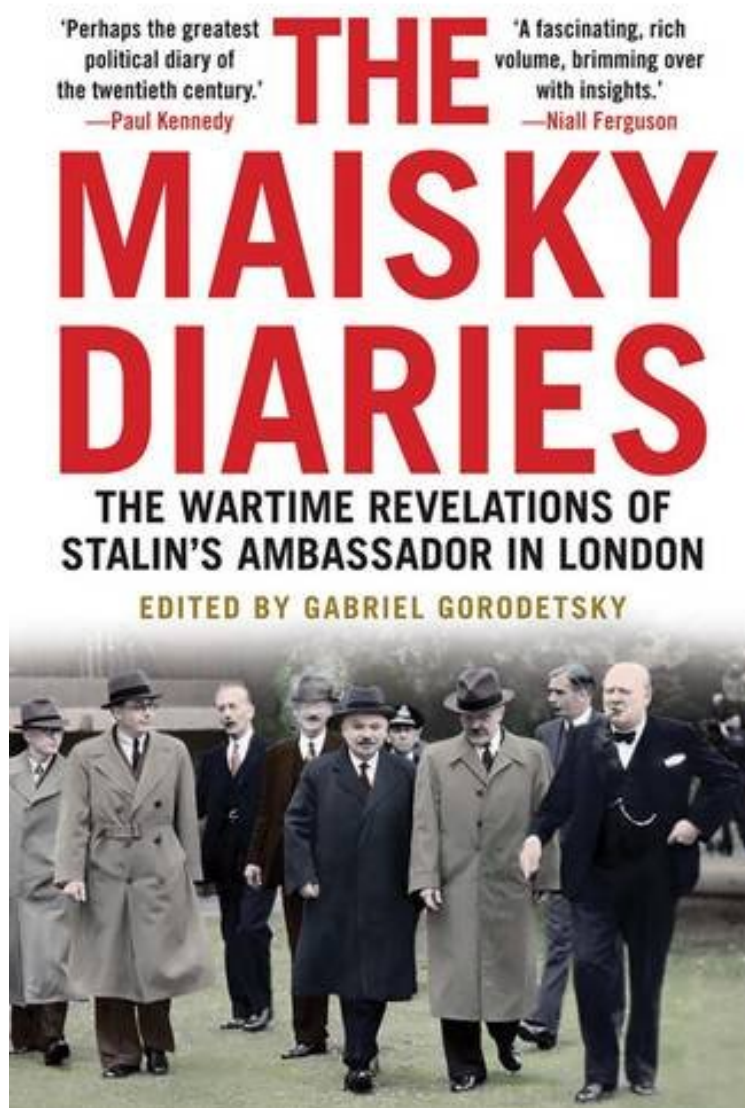


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The Maisky Diaries: The Wartime Revelations of Stalin's Ambassador in London

Ivan Maisky

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Ivan Maisky : The Maisky Diaries: The Wartime Revelations of Stalin's Ambassador in London before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Maisky Diaries: The Wartime Revelations of Stalin's Ambassador in London:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Well-Researched and Written Diplomatic History By Clothes Horse Excellent editing, footnoting, and background complement the surprisingly human diary of the USSR's ambassador to the UK from the mid-'30s thru '43. Maisky comes alive in these pages as someone who'd make an excellent and entertaining dinner or weekend guest. OTOH, his adulation of Communism conflicts with his humanity, at least as I understand the latter, but that is not the author's fault; he tells it like it is. Maisky might be faulted for trying to save himself, as so many others under Stalin tried but failed to do, by slavishly supporting Stalin, but that was his job and he lived in difficult times. Overall, the book is a great, can't-put-it-down read, and as a history major, I very much enjoyed and appreciated the author's careful research and writing style. Highest recommendation - and I've already got two friends who want to borrow it.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The Maisky Diaries adds to our knowledge of Soviet-British diplomacy the crucial years 1932-1945 through the eyes of diplomacy By C. M. Mills If we think the world is a terrible mess (and it is with the rise of terrorism) then we should board a time machine back to prewar Europe. Ivan Maisky and his cultured wife Agniya were posted to the Court of Saint James in London in 1932. Maisky as a doughty survivor of the Great Stalin Terror and purges of the late 1930s. He was a talented, artistic and devoted communist. Maisky was also an excellent observer and writer. These newly published diaries (edited by Dr. Gabriel Gorodetsky a professor of history at Tel Aviv University) are a historic landmark. Such eminent British historians as Paul Kennedy, Niall Ferguson, Antony Beevor and Richard Overy have lavishly praised the book. This book is actually a compilation of the most interesting entries in the Maisky diary included in the full three volume edition. Maisky (1884-1975) lived a long life despite being in prison for a short time in Moscow following his recall from London. He knew all the greats of the day from Winston Churchill, Anthony Eden, Neville Chamberlain, Rab Butler, Lord Beaverbrook, Edward VIII in the realm of politics and government to such literary luminaries as H.G. Wells, Beatrice Webb, George Bernard Shaw and defeatist Joseph Kennedy the father of JFK who was the US Ambassador to London, The Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact which Maisky opposed, the Battle of Britain, the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 and the buildup are all given pages in this long work. The book is lavishly illustrated with period photographs and cartoons. A critical commentary provides context and footnotes provide background information on the main players in the drama. An excellent resource destined to become a classic of World War II diplomatic history. Essential reading!

In this glorious work we see Maisky at the center of action in dealing with the Spanish Civil War, the appeasement policy of Lord Halifax

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Maisky Diaries By Karen S. Hansen This was a long book, robust in historical value and taking the reader through the most relative years of a Russian Ambassador's career. We get to know the subject and become witnesses and accompaniment to his important meetings with the famous names of historical figures, like Winston Churchill, Anthony Eden, other ambassadors and foreign ministers that were at the front lines of pre-World War 2, and all the events leading up to that crucial time in history. We see events presented seriatim that put in place the reasons why war became unavoidable and inevitable and the thrust of the beginning of the war. We see the main strategies that were presented and acted upon and we also saw how nothing could be realized as predictable, creating strategies that needed to be altered because events didn't unfold as anticipated and new plans had to be made to accommodate the turn of events. All through it we see a man dedicated and loyal to his country, but also becoming incorporated in the fabric of England, the country he is assigned to as Ambassador and which he called home for many important years. We also see how his loyalty was not recognized and the climax of his career ending in a country ignoring his allegiance and turning against him. The inevitability of the accusations against him was a crushing blow to his life, but I as a reader following his career, also felt it and I felt sad for him after being called back to Russia. After finishing the book, I felt a bit empty and sad for him and sat for a while contemplating his life and just reflected on it. I felt like I got to know the man himself, but I also felt like I got to know the author and felt I had developed a great admiration for this story teller. This book was so well written and researched, with inserted back stories of events that were not included in Maisky's diary and I have great admiration for the author for such a job well done, and to his editors. The research behind this book stands by itself as monumental and helped complete the entire story of Maisky's life. In all nearly 600 pages, I didn't see any errors, which speaks highly of Mr. Gorodetsky and his editors. The photographs also became the visionary of events and helped bring life to this story. I learned to like Maisky from the writings of his diary entries, but I also learned to like and respect Mr. Gorodetsky for his brilliance in presenting such a strong, interesting, informative and educational historical volume.

Highlights of the extraordinary wartime diaries of Ivan Maisky, Soviet ambassador to London The terror and purges of Stalin's Russia in the 1930s discouraged Soviet officials from leaving documentary records let alone keeping personal diaries. A remarkable exception is the unique diary assiduously kept by Ivan Maisky, the Soviet ambassador to London between 1932 and 1943. This selection from Maisky's diary, never before published in English, grippingly documents Britain's drift to war during the 1930s, appeasement in the Munich era, negotiations leading to the signature of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, Churchill's rise to power, the German invasion of Russia, and the intense debate over the opening of the second front. Maisky was distinguished by his great sociability and access to the key players in British public life. Among his range of regular contacts were politicians (including Churchill, Chamberlain,

Eden, and Halifax), press barons (Beaverbrook), ambassadors (Joseph Kennedy), intellectuals (Keynes, Sidney and Beatrice Webb), writers (George Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells), and indeed royalty. His diary further reveals the role personal rivalries within the Kremlin played in the formulation of Soviet policy at the time. Scrupulously edited and checked against a vast range of Russian and Western archival evidence, this extraordinary narrative diary offers a fascinating revision of the events surrounding the Second World War.

"[Maisky's] vast diary is a fascinating and invaluable source on wartime relations between Moscow and London. . . . A triumph of meticulous scholarship and enlightened publishing."—David Reynolds, *Times Literary Supplement*