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Review of the book The great patriotic war of the Soviet Union, 1941-45: A documentary reader

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Hill, Alexander. The great patriotic war of the Soviet Union, 1941-
9780714657127. $170.00

Hill (Univ. of Calgary) has arranged this book in 12 chapters,
patterned on a 12-week seminar covering the Eastern Front during WW
II. He provides both a thorough study of each historical topic (e.g.,
"Barbarossa," "The Siege of Leningrad"), and numerous excerpts from 169
primary documents, which come from both unpublished archival sources
and published collections. Unfortunately, full bibliographic information
is not given in the text when the documents are presented (sometimes the
source lists only a name and date), so one must consult the bibliography,
which is arranged by category (e.g., "Published documents in Russian,
"Memoirs in Russian") for more information. The author is well
versed in both the primary and secondary literature, and other features of the
volume include a "further reading" guide for each chapter, a chronology
of key events (1917-1945), and a glossary of terms and acronyms/
abbreviations. The volume is designed to be used in conjunction with
either David Glantz and Jonathan House's When Titans Clashed: How the
Red Army Stopped Hitler (CH, May'96, 33-5274), or Evan Mawdsley's
Thunder in the East: The Nazi-Soviet War, 1941-1945 (2005). This work
helps to fill a gap in the literature by making Soviet wartime documents
available to a wide audience in English translation, but its high price,
given that it is meant to supplement another text, will make it a non-
mandatory purchase for most libraries. Summing Up: Recommended.
★★ Upper-division undergraduates and above.—J. A. Drobnicki, York
College, CUNY