The Hitler-Stalin Pact: How Documents are Captured, Restored, and Employed by Enemy World Powers

The Treaty of Non-aggression between Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, otherwise known as the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact, the Nazi–Soviet Pact, the Hitler–Stalin Pact, or the German–Soviet Nonaggression Pact, was a military treaty between the Soviet Union and the Third Reich signed in Moscow on August 23, 1939. The treaty outlined the partition of Poland, the division of the Baltic states, and ensured a frail peace between the Soviets and Nazis. The document is separated into two parts, the first part was a treaty meant to be published, and the second part is a secret protocol that dictated how exactly the Soviets and Nazis would partition Eastern Europe. The true author is unknown, yet Joachim von Ribbentrop and Vyacheslav Molotov are regarded as the architects and signatories of the pact.

The original secret protocol in German was most likely destroyed in the war and is unaccounted for today, yet it was microfilmed in 1943 and entrusted to a civil servant to be saved until he was ordered to destroy it. He instead hid the microfilms to give them to the Allies as a way to ensure his safety after the war. Nazi leaders and politicians alluded to the pact during the Nuremberg trials, with some producing text versions in their defence which were then taken by the media and published in 1946. The microfilms recovered by the Americans were translated and edited by historians under the direction of the State Department, finished by late 1947, and published in January of 1948 as a tactic to discredit the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union's official stance was that the secret protocol never existed, and it stayed ambivalent of its involvement until June 1, 1989, when Chairman Mikhail Gorbachev created a commission to investigate the pact. The commission concluded that the treaty had violated international laws and finally acknowledged that the Soviet Union had secret protocols with Nazi Germany.

I found most of the books cited below at the UCSB library and all the articles by searching Google or Wikipedia. Eckert's book was not readily available to me so I got most of the information from a podcast she appeared on to talk about the book and from reviews and summaries.
Annotated Bibliography in Chronological Order

- Stokes, Richard L. “Purported Texts on Agreed Spheres of Influence Produced at Nuernberg but Not Admitted at Trial.” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, 22 May 1946, pp. 1–6. This is the first concrete evidence of a secret protocol given to the public in the United States. This text was produced during the trial of Grand Admiral Erich Raeder. I find it odd that even though this publication reproduces a text very similar to the one the State Department would publish just two years later, this *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* article received little attention.

- “The Soviet-German Secret Clauses.” *Manchester Guardian*, 30 May 1946, pp. 4. This is the first concrete evidence of a secret protocol given to the public in the UK. This time, it comes from a correspondent who was at the Nuremberg Trials and reported about the trial of Joachim von Ribbentrop, the German signatory of the treaty. The correspondent mentions how Ribbentrop's legal advisor was a Dr. Friedrich Wilhelm Gaus, a name that doesn't appear on Ribbentrop's Wikipedia page. Dr. Gaus has his own Wikipedia page but it is only in German and does not mention his defence of Ribbentrop at Nuremberg, only that he appeared as a witness. [https://translate.google.com/translate?sl=auto&tl=en&u=https%3A%2F%2Fde.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FFriedrich_Gaus](https://translate.google.com/translate?sl=auto&tl=en&u=https%3A%2F%2Fde.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FFriedrich_Gaus)

- Nazi-Soviet Relations 1939-1941. *Documents from the Archives of the German Foreign Office*, Washington, 1948, 78, [http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/nsr/nsr-02.html#21](http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/nsr/nsr-02.html#21). This is the original declassified text released by the US State Department on January 21, 1948. Although the protocol had been published in the *Manchester Guardian* and *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* two years prior, this was the first time most Americans were made aware of the pact. This was huge international news and was considered a success by the State Department in their attempts to embarrass the Soviet Union.

- “Excerpts From Papers in State Department's Publication 'Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939=1941'; WHEN PARTITION OF POLAND WAS DECIDED.” *The New York Times*, 22 January 1948, pp. 18–18, [www.nytimes.com/1948/01/22/archives/excerpts-from-papers-in-state-departments-publication-nazisoviet.html](http://www.nytimes.com/1948/01/22/archives/excerpts-from-papers-in-state-departments-publication-nazisoviet.html). The New York Times was the first national newspaper in the United States to report on the pact, which had just been declassified and released by the State Department the previous day. The headline reads “Excerpts From Papers in State Department's Publication 'Nazi-Soviet Relations, 1939=1941'; WHEN PARTITION OF POLAND WAS DECIDED.” Another article was published the next day which included further excerpts from the pact.

Numbers 228 and 229, pp. 245-47. (English translation accredited to the U.S. Department of State Division of Language Services and slightly edited by GHI staff)
This is the GDHI version of the document, which is probably an edited version of the one published by the State Department in 1948. I say probably because even though I can not prove that they are, historian Anna M. Cienciala claims that this document is the same as the one produced in 1948.

  This document is the Soviet Union's formal acknowledgement of the non-aggression treaty. It was written by Congress of People's Deputies of the Soviet Union, the highest power of the Soviet Union at the time. The Congress attempts to push the blame of the hidden treaty to Stalin by claiming that the pact had been orchestrated by him without any regulatory controls. Translated using Google Translate and found on the Wikipedia page regarding the pact. (https://translate.google.com/translate?sl=auto&tl=en&u=www.lawmix.ru%2Fdocs_cccp%2F1241).

  This book cites the official State Department document that was published in 1956, the same one used on GHDI. Vizulis claims that the American Information Service had already definitely proved that a secret pact had been created by the end of 1939, though its employees in Moscow and with speeches made by Stalin that alluded to expanded spheres of influence.

  This book cites the pact as a key event in the formation and dissolution of the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic. Dreifelds claims that once the pact became public knowledge in the Soviet Union on December 23rd and 24th, 1989, the people of Latvia could claim their independence back from the Soviets because of the illegality of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact. Dreifelds also makes the claim in this book that the original German copy of the pact was destroyed in a bombing during the end of the war, he does not back it up with any evidence though.

  This book attempts to question why the Soviets and Germans signed a pact in the first place. The chapter pertaining to the pact is written by Anna M. Cienciala. She builds on ideas that Soviet policy was to outright deny the pact, citing an interview between a Russian journalist and Molotov himself. She also points out the chronology of the document; that it was first published in the Manchester Guardian (she ignores the St. Louis Post-Dispatch publication), and then the American State Department and press.
Most importantly, Cienciala provides a different citation for the treaty than the one on GHD. GDHI claims that their version of the text is from *Documents on German Foreign Policy: From the Archives of the German Foreign Ministry*. Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, **1956**. Series D (1937-1945), *The Last Days of Peace*, Volume 7: August 9 – September 3, 1939. **Document Numbers 228 and 229**, pp. 245-47. Cienciala says that this citation should actually be *Documents on German Foreign Policy* ser. D, vol.VII (London, Washington, **1956**), no. 229. I can not completely prove that these are the same two sources, but I am pretty sure they are, and either somebody cited them wrong or the names were changed in translation. This is also important because she also claims that this 1956 document is an edited version of the one published in 1948 by the state department.

- Eckert, Astrid M. *The Struggle for the Files: the Western Allies and the Return of German Archives after the Second World War*. German Historical Institute, **2013**. This book is the backbone of the Wikipedia page when pertaining to the discovery of the secret protocol. It is an extensive study on how the archives recovered by the Americans and British were found, saved, used as propaganda against the Soviets, and the eventual return of these archives to Germany. Eckert claims that the secret protocol was weaponized by the Americans after the failure of the Foreign Ministers Conference in London 1947. The official document was sent to the press in an attempt to smear the Soviet Union, who still denied any secret collaboration with the Nazis. An interesting thing I found here was that Eckert makes no mention of the *Manchester Guardian* or *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* articles, and claims that the first time anyone outside of the Nazi government, Soviet government, and the Nuremberg trials saw the secret protocol was when it was published by the State Department. She goes on the argue that the American State Department did not clear with the British that they would publish the document, which led to tensions between the two countries, although I do not know how to feel about this seeing how it was already published in the *Manchester Guardian* two years prior..

- Moorhouse, Roger. *The Devils Alliance: Hitler's Pact with Stalin, 1939-1941*. Basic Books, **2014**. In this book, Moorhouse makes a claim that the secret protocol was initiated by the Soviet side during the original signing of the pact. He says “Realizing that Hitler was impatient to proceed with his invasion plans for Poland, Stalin sought to extract the maximum possible territorial concessions.” He also makes the claim, without citing a source, that the Nazis purposely destroyed their version of the pact during the war.