Understanding Contemporary Russia

Michael L. Bressler, editor

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Russia today is in many ways different from the country portrayed a decade ago in the first edition of Understanding Contemporary Russia. With an upsurge of both national pride—despite a struggling economy—and civil society activism, with a palpable tension between the support for democratic values and the intense desire for political stability, with an increased role in world politics that puts Putin in the headlines almost daily, contradictions and complexities abound.

These contradictions, complexities, and much more are captured in this new edition. The authors provide sophisticated yet accessible introductions to the country’s history, domestic politics, economy, foreign policy, society, and culture. The result is a well-grounded exploration of the realities of contemporary Russia.

Michael L. Bressler is professor of political science at Furman University.

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Putin’s Energy Agenda: The Contradictions of Russia’s Resource Wealth
Stefan Hedlund

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Contents: Russia Emerges out of Chaos • An Energy Superpower • Energy Assets • Assembling the Powerhouse • Gazprom and the Peculiarities of Gas • Counterreactions • Assembling the Powerhouse • Gazprom and Statoil • The Contradictions of Russia’s Resource Wealth

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Jakob Tolstrup is assistant professor of political science at Aarhus University.


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Rensselaer Lee and Artyom Lukin

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Rensselaer Lee is senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute. Artyom Lukin is associate professor of international relations and deputy director for research in the School of Regional and International Studies at Russia’s Far Eastern Federal University.


2016/276 pages

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Khrushchev’s accomplishments and failures cannot be complete without looking beyond his foreign policy initiatives to assess his efforts to introduce domestic policy reforms in the Soviet Union. Sergei Khrushchev tells the full story of those efforts during the years immediately before his father’s ouster—and of the intrigues and struggles for power that went along with them.

Sergei Khrushchev has been senior fellow in international studies at Brown University’s Watson Institute for International Studies since 1991.

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Raymond A. Zilinskas and Philippe Mauger

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In March 2012, at a meeting convened by the recently reelected Russian president Vladimir Putin, Minister of Defense Serdyukov informed Mr. Putin that a plan was being prepared for “the development of weapons based on new physical principles: radiation, geophysical wave, genetic, psychophysical, etc.” Subsequently, in response to concerns expressed both in Russia and abroad, the Russian government deleted the statement from the public transcript of the meeting. But the question remains: Is Russia developing an offensive biological warfare program?

Raymond Zilinskas and Philippe Mauger investigate the multiple dimensions of this crucial security issue in their comprehensive, authoritative survey. Ranging from the Soviet legacy to current doctrine, from advanced weapons-development networks to civilian biotechnology research, from diplomatic initiatives to disinformation campaigns, they document and analyze the build-up and modernization of Russia’s biodefense establishment under the Putin administration.

Raymond A. Zilinskas is director of the Chemical and Biological Weapons Nonproliferation (CBWN) Program at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey (MIIIS). Philippe Mauger completed work on this book while conducting research at MIIIS.

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Stephen J. Cimbala is distinguished professor of political science at Penn State University Brandywine.

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