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Russia's Path from Gorbachev to Putin - David Kozt - 2007-05-07
Over the past few years, many of the former Communist-rule countries of Central and Eastern Europe have taken a steady path toward becoming more or less normal capitalist countries - with Poland and Hungary cases in point. Russia, on the other hand, has experienced extreme difficulties in its attempted transition to capitalism and democracy. The pursuit of Western-endorsed policies of privatization, liberalization and fiscal austerity have brought Russia growing crime and corruption, a distorted economy and a trend toward authoritarian government. In their 1996 book - Revolution from Above - David Kozt and Fred Weir shed light on the underlying reasons for the 1991 demise of the Soviet Union and the severe economic and political problems of the immediate post-Soviet period in Russia. In this new book, the authors bring the story up-to-date, showing how continuing misguided policies have entrenched a group of super-rich oligarchs, in alliance with an all-powerful presidency, while further undermining Russia's economic potential. New topics include the origins of the oligarchs, the deep penetration of crime and corruption in Russian society, the financial crisis that almost destroyed the regime, the mixed blessing of an oil-dependent economy, the atrophy of democracy in the Yeltsin years, and the recentralization of political power in the Kremlin under President Putin.

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From the Russian Archives - 1993
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China's Challenges - Jacques deLisle - 2014-11-11
When the "fifth generation" of Communist Party leaders in China assumed top political positions in 2012-2013, they took the helm of a country that has achieved remarkable economic growth, political stability, and international influence. Yet China today confronts challenges at least as daunting as any it has faced since the reform era began in the late 1970s. In November 2013, the Chinese Communist Party's Central Committee announced ambitious reforms to address vital issues, such as giving market forces a “decisive role” in the economy, strengthening the social safety net, assigning greater weight to factors other than economic growth and social order in evaluating local officials, promoting urbanization, and relaxing the "one child" policy. China’s Challenges brings together fourteen experts on China’s social, economic, political, legal, and foreign affairs to examine some of the nation’s pivotal policy issues. Their wide-ranging analyses cover economic and social inequality, internal migration and population control, imperatives to “rebalance” China’s economy toward domestic demand and consumption, problems of official corruption, tensions between legal reform and social order, and the strained relationships with neighboring countries and the United States that stem from China's rising power, military modernization, enduring territorial disputes, and rising nationalism in domestic politics. This timely volume offers a broad and comprehensive look at the issues facing China today and lays the groundwork for understanding the shifts to come. How—and how well—China handles these challenges not only will define China’s trajectory for years to come, but will have repercussions far beyond China’s borders.

The Myth of the Strong Leader - Archie Brown - 2014-04-08
From one of the world’s preeminent political historians, a magisterial study of political leadership around the world from the advent of parliamentary democracy to the age of Obama. All too frequently, leadership is reduced to a simple dichotomy: the strong versus the weak. Yet, there are myriad ways to exercise effective political leadership—as well as different ways to fail. We blame our leaders for economic downturns and praise them for vital social reforms, but rarely do we question what makes some leaders successful while others falter. In this magisterial and wide-ranging survey of political leadership over the past hundred years, renowned Oxford politics professor Archie Brown challenges the widespread belief that strong leaders—meaning those who dominate their colleagues and the policy-making process—are the most successful and admirable. In reality, only a minority of political leaders will truly make a lasting difference. Though we tend to dismiss more collegial styles of leadership as weak, it is often the most cooperative leaders who have the greatest impact. Drawing on extensive research and decades of political analysis and experience, Brown illuminates the achievements, failures and foibles of a broad array of twentieth century politicians. Whether speaking of redefining leaders like Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Lyndon Johnson, and Margaret Thatcher, who expanded the limits of what was politically possible
during their time in power, or the even rarer transformational leaders who played a decisive role in bringing about systemic change--Charles de Gaulle, Mikhail Gorbachev and Nelson Mandela, among them--Brown challenges our commonly held beliefs about political efficacy and strength. Overturning many of our assumptions about the twenty-first century's most important figures, Brown's conclusions are both original and enlightening. The Myth of the Strong Leader compels us to reassess the leaders who have shaped our world--and to reconsider how we should choose and evaluate those who will lead us into the future.

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The New Russian Foreign Policy - Michael Mandelbaum - 1998

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A World Transformed - George H. W. Bush - 2011-12-07

It was one of the pivotal times of the twentieth century--during George Bush's presidency, an extraordinary series of international events took place that materially changed the face of the world. Now, former President Bush and his national security advisor, Brent Scowcroft, tell the story of those tumultuous years. Here are behind-the-scenes accounts of critical meetings in the White House and of summit conferences in Europe and the United States, interspersed with excerpts from Mr. Bush's diary. We are given fresh and intriguing views of world leaders such as Mikhail Gorbachev, Boris Yeltsin, Margaret Thatcher, Helmut Kohl, and Francois Mitterrand--and witness the importance of personal relationships in diplomacy. There is the dramatic description of how President Bush put together the alliance against Saddam Hussein in the Gulf War. There are the intensive diplomatic exchanges with Beijing following the events of Tiananmen Square, and the intricate negotiations leading up to German reunification. And there are the sometimes poignant, sometimes grim portrayal of Gorbachev's final years in power.

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End of History and the Last Man - Francis Fukuyama - 2006-03-01
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Imperial Overstretch: Germany in Soviet Policy from Stalin to Gorbachev - Hannes Adomeit - 2016-07-11

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The Death of Expertise

Technology and increasing levels of education have exposed people to more information than ever before. These societal gains, however, have also helped fuel a surge in narcissistic and misguided intellectual egalitarianism that has crippled informed debates on any number of issues. Today, everyone knows everything: with only a quick trip through WebMD or Wikipedia, average citizens believe themselves to be on an equal intellectual footing with doctors and diplomats. All voices, even the most ridiculous, demand to be taken with equal seriousness, and any claim to the contrary is dismissed as undemocratic elitism. Tom Nichols’ The Death of Expertise shows how this rejection of experts has occurred: the openness of the internet, the emergence of a customer satisfaction model in higher education, and the transformation of the news industry into a 24-hour entertainment machine, among other reasons. Paradoxically, the increasingly democratic dissemination of information, rather than producing an educated public, has instead created an army of ill-informed and angry citizens who denounce intellectual achievement. When ordinary citizens believe that no one knows more than anyone else, democratic institutions themselves are in danger of failing either to populism or to technocracy or, in the worst case, a combination of both. An update to the 2017 breakout hit, the paperback edition of The Death of Expertise provides a new foreword to cover the alarming exacerbation of these trends in the aftermath of Donald Trump’s election. Judging from events on the ground since it first published, The Death of Expertise issues a warning about the stability and survival of modern democracy in the Information Age that is even more important today.

The Death of Expertise

A Practical Guide to Constitution Building

"A Practical Guide to Constitution Building provides an essential foundation for understanding constitutions and constitution building. Full of world examples of ground-breaking agreements and innovative provisions adopted during processes of constitutional change, the Guide offers a wide range of examples of how constitutions develop and how their development can establish and entrench democratic values. Beyond comparative examples, the Guide contains in-depth analysis of key components of constitutions and the forces of change that shape them. The Guide analyzes the adoption of the substantive elements of a new constitution by looking at forces for the aggregation of governmental power, and forces for greater legaliztion or greater legaliztion of governmental power, and examining how these forces influence the content of the constitution. It urges practitioners to look carefully at the forces at play within their individual contexts in order to better understand constitutional dynamics and play a role in shaping a constitution that will put into place a functioning democratic government and foster lasting peace."

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The Cold War may be over, but the United States is still practicing Cold War foreign policies. From the Persian Gulf to El Salvador, from Bosnia to Somalia, U.S. policymakers continue to rely on force, threats, arms, and military aid. A fundamental redefinition of national security—beyond war and militarization, beyond bilateralism, beyond sovereign states—is long overdue. In Security Without War, a dynamic author team lays out new principles and policies for the United States to adopt in a post-Cold War world. Shuman and Harvey encourage Americans to take account of all threats (not just military ones), to emphasize preventing conflicts over winning wars, to enhance every nation's security (including that of its enemies), to favour multilateral approaches over bilateral agreements, to take account of all threats (not just military ones), to emphasize preventing conflicts over winning wars, to enhance every nation's security (including that of its enemies), to favour multilateral approaches over bilateral agreements, to promote greater citizen participation in foreign policy. Throughout, they show how military, political, economic, and environmental security interests are all linked—and how emphasizing one over the others can undermine the nation's safety. Security Without War brings together for the first time the major elements of post-Cold War security thought. The authors show how a new framework for U.S. international relations can enhance U.S. and indeed, global-security at a substantially lower cost.


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