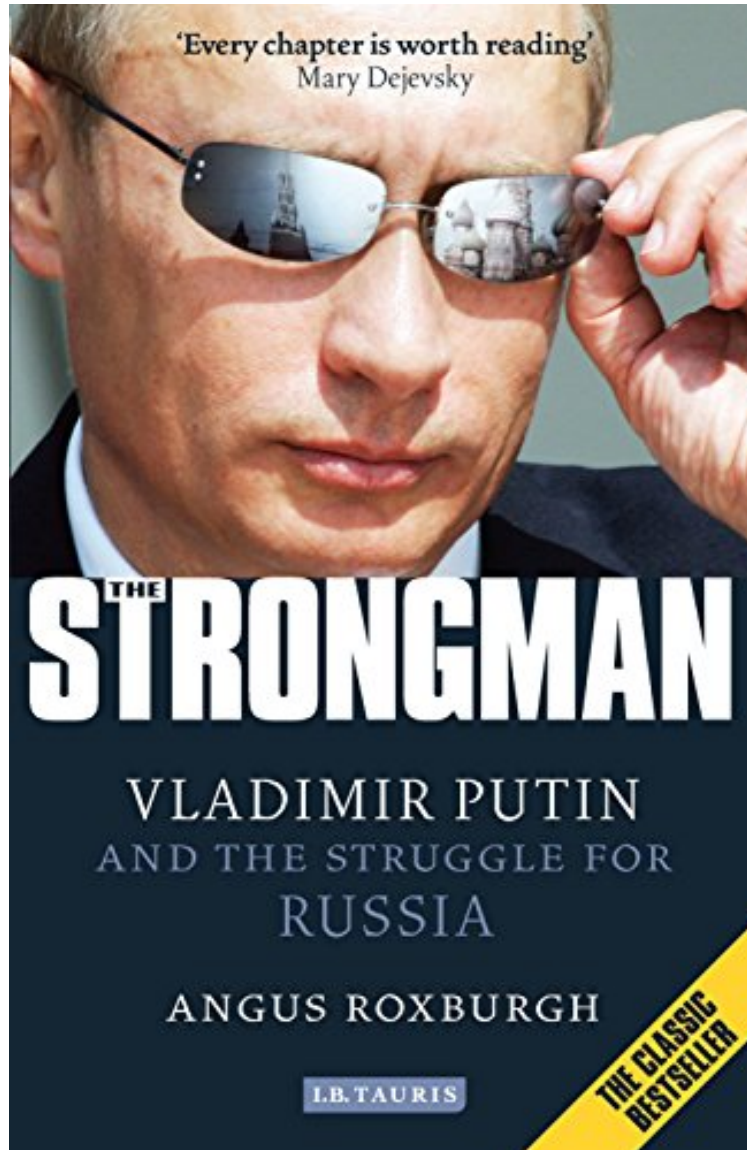


(Download free pdf) The Strongman: Vladimir Putin and the Struggle for Russia

The Strongman: Vladimir Putin and the Struggle for Russia

Angus Roxburgh

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#1014594 in Books I. B. Tauris 2013-05-28 2013-05-28 Original language: English PDF # 1 7.82 x 1.18 x 5.09l, .88 #File Name: 1780765045368 pages | File size: 17.Mb

Angus Roxburgh : The Strongman: Vladimir Putin and the Struggle for Russia before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Strongman: Vladimir Putin and the Struggle for Russia:

14 of 15 people found the following review helpful. A regime the West can't changeBy R. L. HuffBritain's veteran Russia specialist, Angus Roxburgh, offers a mature, reasoned, and experienced Western view of Putin and Putinism. It serves as a necessary counterpoint to the incessant demonizing of both emanating from the United States. I seriously

doubt if it could have been written or published now in the US. Russia-bashing is an old American tradition, predating even the Bolshevik revolution (see David Fogel's "The American Mission and the 'Evil Empire': The Crusade for a 'Free Russia' Since 1881.") And unfortunately, in the wake of the Crimean annexation, it is the negative that's escalating to ever more shrill (and impotent) heights. Roxburgh bids us to stand back and look at the world not just from Putin's view, but that of Russia itself. The West has obviously (or, perhaps knowingly) plowed on ahead with a self-interested agenda to simultaneously remold and contain the "New" Russia, as if said adjective was merely a supporting prop. Roxburgh is good at demonstrating the Western "forked tongue" over NATO expansion eastward, which is ultimately behind most of the post-Soviet angst. But he shies short from connecting the dots. The Latvian president's tear-jerking ode to her country's freedom from Russian domination at the Prague summit of 2002 (p. 97) left many Russian eyes dry, as they recalled the two Latvian SS divisions that served Nazi occupiers in the Third Reich's thrust toward Moscow. The Kremlin cries today of "Ukrainian fascists" who have taken over Kiev hearken to the same bloody memories, still willfully ignored by the West as it seemingly patronizes groups precisely for their anti-Moscow militance. Roxburgh is also, I feel, being disingenuous when he wonders why post-communist Russia has not "turned itself into a thriving manufacturing country like China or many other developing economies" (p. 283). He seems unaware that Russia is not a developing country, but an old developed economy whose industries were of the same rust-belt generation as the mills, mines, and factories of Youngstown or Pittsburgh. The thrust of "economic reform" was thus to dump old industrial investment for new finance-driven capitalism, exactly as in the old-money West - with the added inducement that Russia's modernization was further hamstrung by bans on new-technology sales to Moscow. This policy is far from dead, as the quashing of Russia's bid to acquire GM asset Opel attested: to keep Russia from acquiring the very technology required to make it competitive. I disagree with Roxburgh's take that Russian reform has always "come from above." The Tzar's granting of a Duma in 1906, and initiating land reforms, was inspired solely to quell the revolutionary movement of the streets and villages. Similarly, the Russian revolution re-erupting in February, 1917, was a perfect parallel to Egypt's Arab Spring as a groundswell of street activism, bringing down two governments within a year. But it's true that Putin has rolled back the glasnost era, when Russian liberty seemed to have arrived into its own at last. Two points here: Yeltsin was not the "democrat" the West made him out to be, as Roxburgh accurately recalls, but an authoritarian predecessor for all that it now objects to in Putin. Secondly, Yeltsin's entourage was composed not only of Democratic Russia liberals, but entrenched apparatchiks who hated Gorbachev, who abandoned the old CP because it was no longer theirs - like Yeltsin himself. Mouthing democratic phrases was a small price to pay for access to Western loot. The rise of Putin in 2000 demonstrated the final eclipse of the liberal DemRossiya wing of Yeltsin's movement. It has been a downhill slide since, but with equal responsibility from a self-serving West. Putin's role, as he sees it, is to reconstruct the Russian, not the Soviet empire. His vision is the old mantra of "Great Russia, One and Indivisible." Western fuming over the return of the USSR shows an ignorance as mutual as the Russian belief that 9/11 was a Zionist-CIA plot. He highly resembles another "strongman", the former Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic. Yet the West will not be able to bomb Putin to the negotiating table. It will have no other option but diplomacy and recognizing Russian interests. Russia - like GM - is simply "too big to fail."

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Understanding Russia and Putin
By Andras Jenei
An excellent insight to the Russian administration, to their political and historical thinking, and a clear and detailed picture of Vladimir Vladimirovich. Not as detailed as other biographies but the purpose of the book is to place his politics into a context not to know every inch of him. If you want to understand, what is actually happening today in Russian politics in the shadows of the Ukrainian crisis, this book is a must read. You will understand, why Putin is not backing out from the crisis, why the Russian people support this controversial quest, why the West doesn't really understand his moves. The author's view is very balanced, most of the hypotheses are on solid ground and also very useful how the motivations of Putin are shown - you can even predict some moves and steps if you read carefully. Not heavy, a fun to read, but worth to do it at least twice (or make a lot of notes) or you can get easily lost in the web of oligarchs, business ties and networks.

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Easy Fun Read with lots of insider info
By The Kid
This is both a well written book and an enjoyable read. It doesn't take a stance heavily one way or the other which keeps the book from being too heavy handed. There are many times in which he gives the opinions and view points from people behind the scenes and this is what makes this a really good book. I really enjoyed reading this and felt I knew the Russians and Putin's stand on things better after reading it. I highly recommend it to anyone wanting to better understand the Russian approach to foreign policy, Great Book!

"Roxburgh paints a...compelling portrait. He is sympathetic to what motivates Putin but critical of what Putin has become during his years in power...engrossing." - Foreign Affairs
"A solid foreign correspondent narrative of Putin's behavior" - Bill Keller, The New York Times
"The considerable value of this book lies in [Roxburgh's] painstaking and empathetic effort to understand how Mr. Putin came to power, why many Russians still support him today, and how the West's approach to Russia has helped to shape his rule... Mr. Roxburgh persuasively argues" - Wall Street

