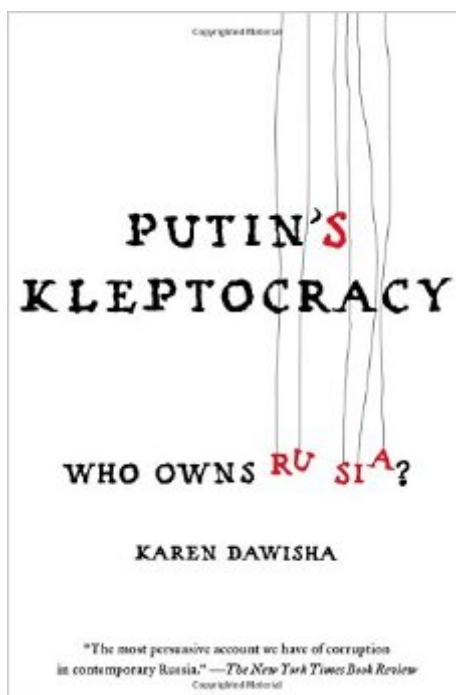


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Putin's Kleptocracy: Who Owns Russia?



Synopsis

The raging question in the world today is who is the real Vladimir Putin and what are his intentions. Karen Dawisha's brilliant Putin's Kleptocracy provides an answer, describing how Putin got to power, the cabal he brought with him, the billions they have looted, and his plan to restore the Greater Russia. Russian scholar Dawisha describes and exposes the origins of Putin's kleptocratic regime. She presents extensive new evidence about the Putin circle's use of public positions for personal gain even before Putin became president in 2000. She documents the establishment of Bank Rossiya, now sanctioned by the US; the rise of the Ozero cooperative, founded by Putin and others who are now subject to visa bans and asset freezes; the links between Putin, Petromed, and "Putin's Palace" near Sochi; and the role of security officials from Putin's KGB days in Leningrad and Dresden, many of whom have maintained their contacts with Russian organized crime. Putin's Kleptocracy is the result of years of research into the KGB and the various Russian crime syndicates. Dawisha's sources include Stasi archives; Russian insiders; investigative journalists in the US, Britain, Germany, Finland, France, and Italy; and Western officials who served in Moscow. Russian journalists wrote part of this story when the Russian media was still free. "Many of them died for this story, and their work has largely been scrubbed from the Internet, and even from Russian libraries," Dawisha says. "But some of that work remains."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Earlier this year, I read that Cambridge Press refused to publish this book for fear of a libel lawsuit. Of course, I was intrigued and curious about its contents. It is a no holds barred expose about the deeply ingrained and rampant corruption permeating Russia since the fall of the USSR. Ms Dawisha lays out in great details based on primary sources, Wikileaks and extensive research of public documents - the machinations and illegal predatory schemes perpetrated by Putin and his inner circle, beginning from 1990 to the present. The author exposes Putin's rise to power from his early days as a KGB officer in East Germany to his stint in St. Petersburg, where he was embroiled with the local Mafia, ex-KGB apparatchiks and bureaucrats in several shady financial schemes involving the diversion of municipal funds, illegal arms shipments, the food shortage scandal of 1991, local gambling industry and money laundering for the Cali drug cartel through the Real Estate Board of St. Petersburg. Putin "was a thug and a crook from the very beginning, and the people of St. Petersburg knew it." As head of the FSB and with the support of a close knit cabal, Putin rapidly rose to power and by 2005 was elected (fraudulently according to the book and others) as President of Russia. By the end of the USSR, the KGB secreted about \$300 billion in currency and gold outside the country. Funds that they then used to purchase industries and banks in the new Russia. According to Credit Suisse, today there are about 110 billionaires in Russia where the median personal income is only \$871 per month. A cabal of oligarchs, Mafiosos and ex-KGB and FSB cronies run the state through Putin, by usurping all the levers of power, production, commerce and finance.

Karen Dawisha's book, "Putin's Kleptocracy: Who Own's Russia" is not light reading by any means. A lot of research has gone into this, and there is a lot to comprehend. Nevertheless, you will absorb a lot even from just one reading, and what you will find may surprise you. From reading recent headlines about Putin, occupying the Georgian province of Abkhazia, along with sending troops into Eastern Ukraine and denying it, it is obvious that Putin is not only a tyrant, but a liar, a cheat, and a thief. He got to where he is today by lying cheating, and stealing. Most of all, he is evil, and this book presents evidence backing up all of this. With Putin, this has been a way of life. Putin started out in the KGB, working as an officer in East Germany for five years during the time of the Soviet Union. He was chiefly into espionage, stealing weapons designs from industries in the West. Fifty percent of all Soviet (and now Russian) weapons systems were based on stolen designs. When East Germany fell, Putin helped to destroy lists of East German informers. Soon after, Putin became deputy mayor of St. Petersburg, where he took plenty of bribes and kickbacks, until finally, was selected by Boris Yeltsin to become the Russian Prime Minister and soon after, its President. Putin

was not without his critics. He has been investigated by the FSB (equal to the FBI) and other law enforcement agencies, even indicted, but was never brought up for trial. Putin always escaped it through his connections, up until the time he became president. There have also been attempts on his life. Russia, in the 1990s, was awash with criminal activity and corruption.

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