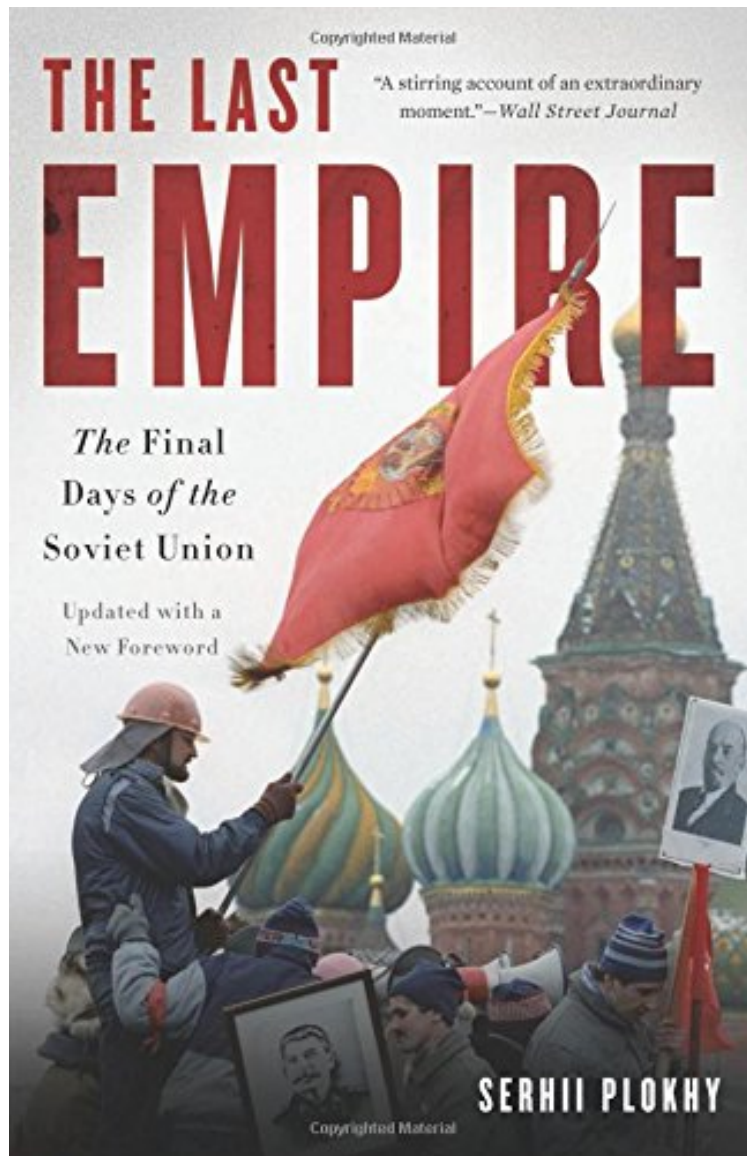


The Last Empire: The Final Days of the Soviet Union

Serhii Plokhy

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#328054 in Books Serhii Plokhy 2015-06-02 2015-06-02 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.00 x 1.50 x 5.50l, .0 #File Name: 0465046711544 pages The Last Empire The Final Days of the Soviet Union | File size: 40.Mb

Serhii Plokhy : The Last Empire: The Final Days of the Soviet Union before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Last Empire: The Final Days of the Soviet Union:

68 of 71 people found the following review helpful. A study worthy of Pulitzer consideration. By Patrick M. Blackburn Simply put, this is a stunning book. It's not every day an author is able to rewrite history, and do so credibly.

When I read, on the inside cover, the following sentence: "...the collapse of the Soviet Union was anything but the handiwork of the United States," I feared that it was going to attempt to diminish the role the U.S. played. On the contrary. I have read about 20 books on the subject and this is one of the best accounts of US-Russia relations from 1980-present (Hoffman's "The Dead Hand" is another). After reading "The Last Empire," I have a greater appreciation of the actions George Bush (HW) took (and accomplished) during this time. The significant impact of Secretary of State George Schultz was revealing as well. Plokhy takes you right into private meetings all over the world during a six-month period in 1991. From the unbelievably tense meetings between Yeltsin and Gorbachev, to meetings by leaders of former Soviet states (namely Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus) about the nature of the role they will play in this new world, there is no shortage of intrigue in "The Last Empire". This book is not only for those who are interested in the end of the Cold War and the breakup of the Soviet Union. The timing, with what is currently happening in that part of the world this book, is perfect. The author is an expert on Ukrainian affairs (he is director of the Ukrainian Research Institute at Harvard University) and spends a lot of time discussing Ukraine's (significant) role in the breakup of the Soviet Union. He even spends time on Crimea, which makes this book as relevant today as it was 25 years ago, if not more so. After reading "The Last Empire," I feel like I have a much better understanding of what (Putin's) Russia is trying to do (which doesn't make it any less disturbing). Whether you are interested in 1991 Russia, 2014 Russia, or both, "The Last Empire" absolutely must be added to your library. You won't be sorry.

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Heroic Story By Peter G. Tsouras As an analyst of Soviet affairs for the U.S. Government, I worked the events surrounding the collapse of the Soviet Union from the Washington end. This book brought all of those world-shaking events back to life. I particularly remember how awestruck I was to see on TV the Red Banner of the Soviet Union falling from its flagpole in the Kremlin to be replaced with the Russian pre-Revolutionary white, blue, and red flag. I wish we had known one tenth of what this book describes. The author is correct when he asserts that the US was not the prime mover in the destruction of the Soviet Union. The Russian and Ukrainian peoples freed themselves. What the US did was hold the communist beast at bay for forty years while its own contradictions rotted it from within. When Yeltsin banned the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) after the August 1991 coup, no one came to its defense. It was already as dead as Lenin's mummy. I could not put this book down. The tale of peoples freeing themselves is simply heroic.

17 of 18 people found the following review helpful. Very good book to understand modern events and the history leading up to them By Jim C This book is recommended for the following reasons: 1. It is not written by an American - making the book's perspective and content more interesting. I.e. too many books on this subject written by Americans claim the US won the cold war by vanquishing the evil empire. It was far more complicated... 2. The subject is remarkable - relative to other states/empires, the end of the USSR was "remarkably" peaceful. I was fascinated by how the "soviet" system, politically, functioned in this very difficult time with less violence occurring compared to other states and empires when they collapsed. (Chechens and other small regional conflicts would argue otherwise but consider the potential for more widespread violence). 3. This book has excellent coverage on how Ukraine was created - including a Russian majority Crimea and eastern Ukraine - and why this was not a major issue in 1992-1994 when the USSR came apart - the coverage for this subject alone makes this book highly recommended. 4. The discussion of the time frame covered in this book as a collapse of an empire - and the motivations of the different ethnic groups and leadership within the former soviet union. Overall a great book, despite sections were tedious to read.

"A stirring account of an extraordinary moment." --Wall Street Journal

"A superb read: a deeply researched, indispensable reappraisal of the fall of the USSR that has the nail-biting drama of a movie, the gripping narrative and colorful personalities of a novel, and the analysis and original sources of a work of scholarship."?Simon Sebag Montefiore, BBC History Magazine (Best History Books of the Year)"Using recently released documents, Plokhy traces in fascinating detail the complex events that led to the Soviet Union's implosion."?Foreign Affairs"A fine-grained, closely reported, highly readable account of the upheavals of 1991."?Financial Times"Plokhy makes a convincing case that the misplaced triumphalism of the senior Bush's administration led to the disastrous hubris of his son's."?Slate"A fascinating and readable deep dive into the final half-year of the Soviet Union."?Sunday Telegraph (UK)"A superb work of scholarship, vividly written, that challenges tired old assumptions with fresh material from East and West, as well as revealing interviews with many major players."?Spectator (UK)"An incisive account of the five months leading up to the Union's dissolution.... His vibrant, fast-paced narrative style captures the story superbly."?Sunday Times (UK)