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Salem Press Announces the Fourth Volume in the Brand-New Series *Countries, Peoples & Cultures: Eastern Europe*

Countries, Peoples & Cultures: Eastern Europe is the fourth volume of a new nine-volume series from Salem Press. *Countries, Peoples & Cultures* offers valuable insight into the social, cultural, economic, historical, and religious practices and beliefs of nearly every country around the globe. With nine comprehensive, up-to-date volumes spanning every major world region, this in-depth reference source is one of the most thorough compilations of its kind on the market today.

Eastern Europe is as much a political and historical entity as it is a geographical one. It is an area in which relatively few of the major physical features, such as mountains and rivers, have played a major role in establishing boundaries that separate peoples, cultures, and nations. In part because of this fact, a variety of conflicting definitions of the region and its limits exist. Most scholars agree that Eastern Europe undoubtedly includes the countries of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, and the countries of the former Yugoslavia (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Kosovo). Many would broaden the definition to include additional countries of the Soviet-era Eastern Bloc—namely, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania (the Baltic states), Belarus, Ukraine, and Moldova. All of these countries including border states, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan are approached in this title.

The map of Eastern Europe presents a number of notable physical features. To the north is the great North European Plain skirting the southern and eastern edges of the Baltic Sea. Its southern limit gives way to the Carpathian Mountains, a large, winding chain that traverses much of the central portion of Eastern Europe. To the west of the Carpathians lies the great Danube River valley, which runs first north-south and then eastward to the base of the Carpathians and out to the Black Sea. Finally, in the south lies the Balkan Peninsula, a rugged, semi-mountainous region situated between the Danube valley, the Adriatic Sea, and the Black Sea. Throughout its history, Eastern Europe, by virtue of its position, has been buffeted by every people, religion, philosophy, and political current flowing between the open vista of Eurasia on the one hand and the bounded peninsula of Western Europe on the other. It has always been relatively fragmented culturally, despite the imposition of overarching political or religious schemes atop this diversity at various times in the past.

About the Series

Every volume in the *Countries, Peoples & Cultures* series contains **Country Profiles** that explore each nation's background, practices, beliefs, laws, peoples, and more, ensuring users receive a complete, three-dimensional understanding of the countries they research. Every profile

contains a picture of the country's flag and two large colored maps—one highlighting the country's location in its region of the world and the other detailing the capital, major cities, and major natural landmarks. An Introduction provides general information about each country, such as its Population, Official Language(s), Physical Size, Climate, Currency, and National Motto/Anthem. Subsequent sections dive deep into a diverse array of topics, including: Environment & Geography (Topography, Plants & Animals); Customs & Courtesies (Greetings, Gestures & Etiquette, Eating/Meals, Visiting); Lifestyle (Family, Housing, Food, Life's Milestones); Cultural History (Art, Architecture, Music, Drama, Literature); Culture (Arts & Entertainment, Cultural Sites & Landmarks, Libraries & Museums, Holidays, Youth Culture); Society (Transportation, Transportation Infrastructure, Media & Communications); Social Development (Standard of Living, Water Consumption, Education, Women's Rights, Health Care); Government (Structure, Political Parties, Local Government, Judicial System, Taxation, Armed Forces, Foreign Policy, Dependencies, Human Rights Profile); and Economy (Industry, Labor, Energy/Power/Natural Resources, Fishing, Forestry, Mining/Metals, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Tourism). Each profile also includes full color photographs, valuable tables of information—such as “Do You Know?” facts—and a comprehensive Bibliography.

Additionally, two helpful appendixes are included. Appendix One contains information about **World Governments**, focusing on 21 different types of governments found around the world today, from Commonwealth to Treaty System. Every profile includes sections detailing the government's Guiding Premise, Typical Structure, Role of the Citizen, and Modern-Day Examples. Appendix Two profiles **World Religions**, concentrating on 10 of the world's major religions, from African Religious Traditions to Sikhism. Each profile in this appendix includes information on the religion's Number of Adherents, Basic Tenets, Major Deities, Sacred Texts, Major Figures, Major Holy Sites, Major Rites & Celebrations, Origins, and more. Finally, a scholarly **Introduction** by the Editor and an alphabetical **Index** are also provided for the reader's convenience.

The following titles make up the entire *Countries, Peoples & Cultures* series:

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| • <i>Central & South America</i> | • <i>East & Southern Africa</i> |
| • <i>Central & Southeast Asia</i> | • <i>West & Central Africa</i> |
| • <i>Western Europe</i> | • <i>North America & the Caribbean</i> |
| • <i>Eastern Europe</i> | • <i>East Asia & the Pacific</i> |
| • <i>Middle East & North Africa</i> | |

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