



# **Russian Foreign Policy in the Twenty-first Century and the Shadow of the Past (Studies of the Harriman Institute, Columbia University)**

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Because the turbulent trajectory of Russia's foreign policy since the collapse of the Soviet Union echoes previous moments of social and political transformation, history offers a special vantage point from which to judge the current course of events.

In this book, a mix of leading historians and political scientists examines the foreign policy of contemporary Russia over four centuries of history. The authors explain the impact of empire and its loss, the interweaving of domestic and foreign impulses, long-standing approaches to national security, and the effect of globalization over time.

Contributors focus on the underlying patterns that have marked Russian foreign policy and that persist today. These patterns are driven by the country's political makeup, geographical circumstances, economic strivings, unsettled position in the larger international setting, and, above all, its tortured effort to resolve issues of national identity. The argument here is not that the Russia of Putin and his successors must remain trapped by these historical patterns but that history allows for an assessment of how much or how little has changed in Russia's approach to the outside world and creates a foundation for identifying what must change if Russia is to evolve.

A truly unique collection, this volume utilizes history to shed crucial light on Russia's complex, occasionally inscrutable relationship with the world. In so doing, it raises the broader issue of the relationship of history to the study of contemporary foreign policy and how these two enterprises might be better joined.

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