



Russia's Foreign Policy: Change and Continuity in National Identity

By Andrei P. Tsygankov

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Now fully updated and revised, this clear and comprehensive text explores contemporary Soviet/Russian international relations, comparing foreign policy formation under Gorbachev, Yeltsin, Medvedev, and Putin. Challenging conventional views of Moscow's foreign policy, Andrei Tsygankov shows that definitions of national interest depend on visions of national identity and are rooted both in history and domestic politics. Yet the author also highlights the role of the external environment in affecting the balance of power among competing domestic groups.

Drawing on both Russian and Western sources, Tsygankov traces how Moscow's policies have shifted under different leaders' visions of Russia's national interests. He gives an overview of the ideas and pressures that motivated Russian foreign policy in six different periods: the Gorbachev era of the late 1980s, the liberal "Westernizers" era under Kozyrev in the early 1990s, the relatively hardline statist policy under Primakov, the more pragmatic course of limited cooperation under Putin and then Medvedev, and the assertive policy Putin has implemented since his return to power. Evaluating the successes and failures of Russian foreign policies, Tsygankov explains its many turns as Russia's identity and interaction with the West have evolved. The book concludes with reflections on the emergence of the post-Western world and the challenges it presents to Russia's enduring quest for great power status along with its desire for a special relationship with Western nations.

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Editorial Review

Review

Tsygankov is one of the world's leading analysts of the complexities of Russian foreign policy, and in this volume he makes available, in a concise and easily accessible format, his knowledge distilled from years of study of the subject. He steers a sophisticated path between pro-Western liberal views and various anti-Western Russian nationalist mythologies to provide a convincing and coherent study of the relationship between national identity and foreign policy. A must-read for all serious students of Russian foreign policy and of the country's place in the world. (Richard Sakwa, University of Kent)

This book is based on a profound understanding of how Russian policymakers view the world and the impact of those views on their foreign-policy behavior. It is a must read for scholars, students, and the educated citizenry. (George Breslauer, University of California, Berkeley)

Now fully revised and updated, this clear and comprehensive text explores the past quarter-century of Soviet/Russian international relations, comparing foreign policy formation under Gorbachev, Yeltsin, Medvedev, and Putin. Drawing on an impressive mastery of both Russian and Western sources, Andrei Tsygankov shows how Moscow's policies have shifted with each leader's vision of Russia's national interests. He evaluates the successes and failures of Russia's foreign policies, explaining its many turns as Russia's identity and interaction with the West have evolved. The author devotes a special chapter to Moscow's recent shift to the rhetoric of state-civilization that has defined Russia as a country with special cultural values and assesses how these values have affected foreign policy. The book concludes with reflections on the emergence of the post-Western world and the challenges it presents to Russia's enduring quest for great power status along with its desire for a special relationship with Western nations.

About the Author

Andrei P. Tsygankov is professor in the Departments of Political Science and International Relations at San Francisco State University.

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