

# Russian Conservatism: A Historical and Ideological Overview

Russian conservatism is a complex and multifaceted ideology that has shaped Russian politics and society for centuries. It is rooted in the country's unique historical experience, which includes centuries of autocratic rule, a strong Orthodox Christian tradition, and a deep sense of national identity.



## Russian Conservatism (NIU Series in Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies) by Paul Robinson

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

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Russian conservatism is characterized by a number of key beliefs, including:

- **Traditionalism:** Russian conservatives believe that the best way to ensure stability and order is to preserve traditional values and institutions.
- **Authoritarianism:** Russian conservatives tend to support strong, centralized government and believe that individual rights should be

subordinate to the needs of the state.

- **Nationalism:** Russian conservatives are fiercely patriotic and believe that Russia has a unique destiny as a great power.
- **Orthodoxy:** Russian conservatives are deeply religious and believe that Orthodox Christianity is an essential part of Russian identity.

The origins of Russian conservatism can be traced back to the 19th century, when a group of intellectuals and politicians known as the Slavophiles began to argue that Russia should reject Western liberalism and instead embrace its own unique Slavic traditions. The Slavophiles believed that Russia was a unique country with a special mission to fulfill, and that it should not blindly follow the path of other European nations.

The Slavophiles' ideas were popular with many Russians, who were disillusioned with the failures of Western liberalism and the increasing social and economic instability in Russia. In the 1880s and 1890s, a number of conservative governments came to power in Russia, which implemented policies that reflected the Slavophile ideology.

After the Russian Revolution of 1917, Russian conservatism went into decline. The Bolsheviks, who seized power after the revolution, were staunchly opposed to conservatism and sought to eradicate it from Russian society. However, conservative ideas continued to circulate in the Russian diaspora and among some intellectuals in the Soviet Union.

In the late 1980s, as the Soviet Union began to collapse, Russian conservatism began to re-emerge. A number of conservative parties were founded, and conservative ideas began to gain currency in the media and in public discourse.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russian conservatism has become a major force in Russian politics. Conservative parties have won elections and formed governments, and conservative ideas have influenced policy-making in areas such as education, social welfare, and foreign policy.

Contemporary Russian conservatism is a diverse and complex ideology. It includes both traditionalist and modernist elements, and it draws on a variety of sources, including the Slavophiles, the Russian Orthodox Church, and the Soviet Union.

Russian conservatism is likely to continue to play a major role in Russian politics and society for many years to come. It is a powerful ideology that appeals to many Russians who are seeking stability, order, and a sense of national identity.

# RUSSIAN CONSERVATISM



PAUL ROBINSON

## Further Reading

- Richard Pipes, *Russia Under the Old Regime* (1995)
- George L. Kline, *Russian Conservatism and the Revolution of 1905* (1995)
- Marlene Laruelle, *Russian Nationalism: Imaginaries, Doctrines, and Political Practices* (2019)

- Mark D. Steinberg, *The Russian Empire and the Russo-Japanese War* (2016)
- Edward Acton, *Russia: The Tsarist and Soviet Legacy* (2019)



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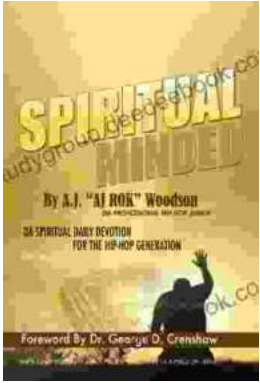
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