

Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent



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"Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent" is the first book to fully explore the expansive and ill-understood role that Russia's ancient Christian faith has played in the fall of Soviet Communism and in the rise of Russian nationalism today. John and Carol Garrard tell the story of how the Orthodox Church's moral weight helped defeat the 1991 coup against Gorbachev launched by Communist Party hardliners. The Soviet Union disintegrated, leaving Russians searching for a usable past. The Garrards reveal how Patriarch Aleksy II - a former KGB officer and the man behind the church's successful defeat of the coup - is reconstituting a new national idea in the church's own image. In the new Russia, the former KGB who run the country - Vladimir Putin among them - proclaim the cross, not the hammer and sickle. Meanwhile, a majority of Russians now embrace the Orthodox faith with unprecedented fervor. The Garrards trace how Aleksy orchestrated this transformation, positioning his church to inherit power once held by the Communist Party and to become the dominant ethos of the military and government. They show how the revived church under Aleksy prevented mass violence during the post-Soviet turmoil, and how Aleksy astutely linked the church with the army and melded Russian patriotism and faith. "Russian Orthodoxy Resurgent" argues that the West must come to grips with this complex and contradictory resurgence of the Orthodox faith, because it is the hidden force behind Russia's domestic and foreign policies today.

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