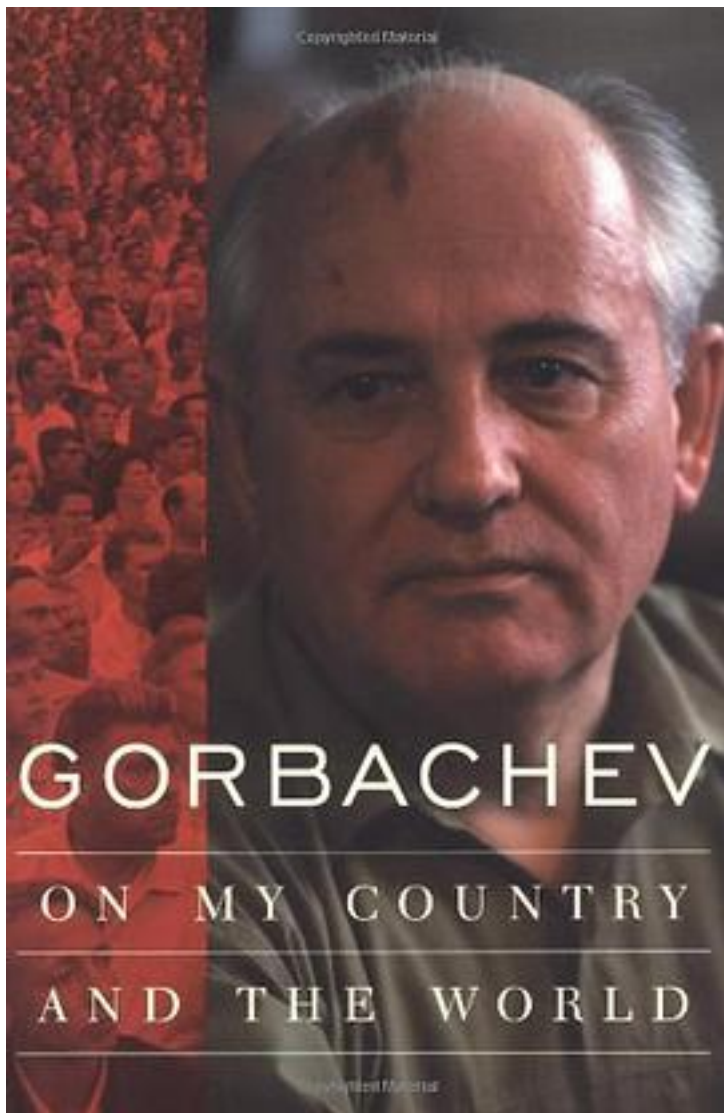


On My Country and the World



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著者:Mikhail Gorbachev

出版者:Columbia University Press

出版时间:2000-10-15

装帧:Paperback

isbn:9780231115155

Here is the whole sweep of the Soviet experiment and experience as told by its last steward. Drawing on his own experience, rich archival material, and a keen sense of history and politics, Mikhail Gorbachev speaks his mind on a range of subjects concerning Russia's past, present, and future place in the world. Here is Gorbachev on the October Revolution, Gorbachev on the Cold War, and Gorbachev on key figures such as Lenin, Stalin, and Yeltsin. The book begins with a look back at 1917. While noting that tsarist Russia was not as backward as it is often portrayed, Gorbachev argues that the Bolshevik Revolution was inevitable and that it did much to modernize Russia. He strongly argues that the Soviet Union had a positive influence on social policy in the West, while maintaining that the development of socialism was cut short by Stalinist totalitarianism. In the next section, Gorbachev considers the fall of the USSR. What were the goals of perestroika? How did such a vast superpower disintegrate so quickly? From the awakening of ethnic tensions, to the inability of democrats to unite, to his own attempts to reform but preserve the union, Gorbachev retraces those fateful days and explains the origins of Russia's present crisis. But Gorbachev does not just train his critical eye on the past. He lays out a blueprint for where Russia needs to go in the next century, suggesting ways to strengthen the federation and achieve meaningful economic and political reforms. In the final section of the book, Gorbachev examines the "new thinking" in foreign policy that helped to end the Cold War and shows how such approaches could help resolve a range of current crises, including NATO expansion, the role of the UN, the fate of nuclear weapons, and environmental problems. Gorbachev: On My Country and the World reveals the unique vision of a man who was a powerful actor on the world stage and remains a keen observer of Russia's experience in the twentieth century.

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目录:

[On My Country and the World_ 下载链接1](#)

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