

THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS OF EURASIA

Series Editors: KAREN DAWISHA AND BRUCE PARROTT

Volume 1

THE **LEGACY** OF **HISTORY** IN **RUSSIA** AND THE **NEW STATES** **OF EURASIA**

Editor:
S. Frederick Starr

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Karen Dawisha and Bruce Parrot

This ambitious ten-volume series develops a comprehensive analysis of the evolving world role of the post-Soviet successor states. Each volume considers a different factor influencing the relationship between internal politics and international relations in Russia and in the western and southern tiers of newly independent states. The contributors were chosen not only for their recognized expertise but also to ensure a stimulating diversity of perspectives and a dynamic mix of approaches.

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Edited by S. Frederick Starr

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Preface

This book is the first in a projected series of ten volumes produced by the Russian Littoral Project, sponsored jointly by the University of Maryland at College Park and the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies of the Johns Hopkins University. As directors of the project, we share the conviction that the transformation of the former Soviet republics into independent states demands systematic analysis of the determinants of domestic and foreign policies of the new countries. The series of volumes is intended to provide a basis for comprehensive scholarly study of these issues.

This volume analyzes the legacy of history and its impact on the foreign relations and political identity of the new states. The nearly seventy-five years of Soviet rule, while a long time, did not erase the historical memories of the Russians or of the Soviet empire's other peoples. As the newly independent nations search for their place in the world, they are guided in part by their memories, some clearer than others, of a past without Soviet or Russian domination. The volume examines the new states' perceptions of history and how they have manipulated the images of the past in formulating contemporary policy. It also examines past relations among the post-Soviet nations and other peoples. Where do the sympathies of the new states rest, and to what extent are old "alliances" and "hatreds" being revived?

We would like to thank the contributors to this volume for their help in making the first phase of the Russian Littoral Project a success and for revising their papers in a timely fashion. We are especially grateful to S. Frederick Starr for agreeing to be the editor of this first volume "sight unseen," and for his enthusiastic support of the project and the series of volumes from the very beginning.

Russian Littoral Project

The objective of the Russian Littoral Project is to foster an exchange of research and information in fields of study pertaining to the international politics of Eurasia. The interaction between the internal affairs and foreign policies of the new states is studied in a series of workshops taking place in Washington, D.C.; London; Central Asia; and other locations between 1993 and 1995. Scholars are invited from the new states, North America, and Europe to present papers at the workshops.

Focusing on the interaction between the internal affairs and the foreign relations of the new states, the project workshops examine the impact of the following factors: history, ethnicity and national identity, religion, political culture and civil society, economics, foreign policy priorities and decision-making, military issues, and the nuclear question. Each of these topics is examined in a set of three workshops, first with respect to Russia, then with respect to the western belt of new states extending from Estonia to Ukraine, and finally with respect to the southern tier of new states extending from Georgia to Kyrgyzstan.

The Russian Littoral Project could not have been launched without the generous and timely contributions of the project's Coordinating Committee. We wish to thank the committee members for providing invaluable advice and expertise concerning the organization and intellectual substance of the project. The members of the Coordinating Committee are: Dr. Adeed Dawisha (George Mason University); Dr. Bartek Kaminski (University of Maryland and The World Bank); Dr. Catherine Kelleher (The Brookings Institution); Ms. Judith Kipper (The Brookings Institution); Dr. Nancy Lubin (Carnegie Mellon University); Dr. Michael Mandelbaum (The School of Advanced International Studies); Dr. James Millar (The George Washington University); Dr. Peter Murrell (University of Maryland); Dr. Martha Brill Olcott (Colgate University); Dr. Ilya Prizel (The School of Advanced International Studies); Dr. George Quester (University of Maryland); Dr. Alvin Z. Rubinstein (University of Pennsylvania); Dr. Blair Ruble (The Kennan Institute); Dr. S. Frederick Starr (Oberlin College); Dr. Roman Szporluk (Harvard University); and Dr. Vladimir Tismaneanu (University of Maryland).

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Finally, we are grateful for the guidance and encouragement given by Patricia Kolb at M. E. Sharpe, Inc. Her confidence in the success of the project and the volumes is deeply appreciated.

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1

Introduction

The Legacy of History in Russia and the New States of Eurasia

S. Frederick Starr

On the eve of Latvia's independence from the Soviet Union, its succession-minded government decided to fly the country's interwar flag from Riga Castle. In a telling gesture, the leaders enlisted as flag-raiser an old man of nearly one hundred years who had been a popular actor and public figure during the brief flowering of Latvian independence between World War I and World War II. Soon after this, leaders of the Soviet Republic of Georgia resolved to make the same symbolic gesture. The situation there was far more complex, however. It had been nearly three-quarters of a century since Georgia had last enjoyed independence, and that period had been very brief. Worse, Georgians inherited several different flags from their past, and each carried a different meaning for the present. Nonetheless, the Georgian government found a few living links with the days of Georgia's brief independence and enlisted these people for the task of raising the old colors.

Theatrics aside, why should anyone expect that history should influence the policies of the post-Soviet states to any significant degree, and why should such influence extend in particular to foreign policy? Clearly, the immediate demands of the present moment overwhelm all other influences acting on these new countries. Besides, only the three Baltic states and Russia enjoyed anything near a sustained independent political existence within the past century and three-quarters. Leaving

aside the sham "foreign ministries" that Stalin established in various republics, none of the other new states can claim in their modern history to have possessed even the most basic institutions necessary for formulating and executing foreign policy. As former colonies and dependencies, their ties with other peoples were suppressed in favor of links with Moscow, which dominated their attention. Under such circumstances, the immediately usable past is surely limited, especially in the area of foreign policy.

Viewed in broader perspective, however, history assumes greater importance in the foreign policy of the new states. Whatever their aspirations for the future, the leaders of these countries have been formed by their personal, communal, and national pasts, and are applying on the job whatever truths they have derived from that historical experience. History, then, is the dowry borne by leaders and citizens of these new states as they leave the Soviet family and set up housekeeping on their own. In this broader sense, history, as perceived by present actors, can be a powerful determinant of action.

Yet history is not a unitary thing. Bernard Lewis, the noted specialist on Turkish history, distinguishes between history that is remembered, history that has been recovered, and history that is invented. In the newly independent states history is important in each of these three senses.

Nowhere does the living memory of the past more directly influence the present than in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. In these countries a simple and near-universal conclusion being drawn from historical experience is that they should look not to Russia but to the West. A recent exhibition of technologically sophisticated Latvian export products from the 1930s has inspired a new generation of Latvians to raise the standards of their manufactured goods and to look westward for markets. The current president of Estonia, Lennart Meri, a film maker, once filmed interviews with Estonians who had been exiled to Siberia when the Soviet Union took control of their country in 1939. Invoking living memory, he presents these members of Estonia's old intelligentsia as models of Western culture and victims of Russian rule.

Remembered history prompts other peoples who are still part of Russia to rebel against Russian rule. Thus, communal memory among the Chechen people of the North Caucasus recalls their forty-year war against tsarist Russia in the nineteenth century and their deportation to Central Asia by the Soviets. They remain unassimilated in the new Russia and have in fact declared their independence from it. Tatarstan,

meanwhile, although it has been ruled by Russia since the sixteenth century, maintains a living memory of the golden age in its past and on that basis claims the right to conduct its own foreign policy as a confederated sovereignty within Russia.

In sharp contrast, Armenia's living memory depicts that country's relationship with Russia in a very positive light. Every Armenian knows that the only region of their ancient land to retain its political identity in the twentieth century was the part that remained under Russian control. Yet if this would appear to provide a clear orientation for the new Armenia, Armenians also remember with gratitude that their many conationals living in Iran have for the most part been left in peace by the various governments in Tehran. As Richard G. Hovannisian points out, this leaves Armenians today more open to the idea of an Iranian role in resolving their troubles with neighboring Azerbaijan than either Russia or the West would prefer.

Issues that the rest of the world has forgotten remain part of living memory throughout the region. The memory of Georgia's failed blitzkrieg war against Abkhazia in 1920 may have died elsewhere, but it lives on within Abkhazia itself, as does the memory of the Russian-brokered treaty between Abkhazia and the Georgian Republic that was in force briefly between 1925 and 1931. In this case, direct memory has inspired and justified a bloody and successful war of independence on the part of the small Abkhazian population along the Black Sea littoral. Georgians, too, recall the earlier events but, needless to say, draw diametrically different conclusions from them.

Living memory also provokes current leaders to action in Russia. Average Russians may have little knowledge of the impact that Soviet rule had on the non-Russian peoples, but they know full well the toll it took on their own families and country and are able now to talk about it. Recalling their own sufferings and also the sacrifices they made in order to develop the other republics, they arrive at a surprising conclusion, namely, that Russia was less the perpetrator of Communist oppression, as people in virtually every one of the non-Russian republics believe, than its chief victim. Such thinking leads many Russians to justify and defend the various forms of pressure their government is imposing on its neighbors.

Modern history presents few, if any, instances of so much historical experience being recovered from oblivion as in the post-Soviet states today. As Zenon E. Kohut shows, the suppressed history of Ukrainian

cultural and political identity is being recovered through the republication of works by the early twentieth-century Ukrainian historian Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi. These works present a picture of a vital and culturally developed country interacting fully with countries abroad over many centuries. Historians in Belarus are also busy exhuming the lost or suppressed history of their people and, especially, its links with the West. In the five new countries of Central Asia, the rediscovery of the many international links once maintained by their peoples is even more important, for, as Firuz Kazemzadeh argues, this crucial region has been isolated from the larger world since the early sixteenth century. As Uzbeks and Tajiks rediscover their national glories, they reaffirm the cosmopolitanism of their culture and seek to reclaim it. To be sure, their first steps abroad as independent states have been tentative, and they remain heavily beholden to Russia, thanks to the fact that their old-guard rulers were educated in the Soviet mode and still look to Moscow. But the reorientation toward the East, West, and South is bound to develop when younger leaders eventually come to power.

The recovery of suppressed history can take contradictory forms. Thus, the world is aware that Russia itself seceded from the Communist empire, but it has paid less attention to the fact that as Russians today rediscover their tsarist past, they come face-to-face with an older and deeper national tradition of imperial rule over their neighbors. Thus, just as Ukrainians or Uzbeks are rummaging through their history to reclaim anti-imperial traditions that can help free them from Russian tutelage, Russians are rediscovering the imperial tradition of the tsarist countries that subjugated these peoples in the first place. For Russians to reject this heritage entirely would be to jettison one of the few psychological rafts that Russians can cling to after the sinking of the Soviet ship of state.

By no means all of the history now being rediscovered fits comfortably with ideas of liberal democracy. Kadir Z. Alimov argues that Uzbekistan's political culture has traditionally been authoritarian and that liberals abroad (including those in Moscow and Washington) should not seek to impose their views when they so squarely contradict the historical essence of the Uzbek people. One might ask whether a French observer writing in 1750 might not have drawn similar conclusions about his own country, and thereby ruled out the development of democratic institutions in France that began only a few decades later. Russians use similar historical arguments to deny the validity of Ukrai-

nian independence and to defend their country's claims to a kind of Monroe Doctrine extending across the region. The point at issue in all these cases is not the history itself but the manner in which its supposed truths are applied to the present. In nearly every instance, invocations of the past in Russia are used to buttress the case against change in the future, while in the newly independent states history serves as an agent of change.

By no means all relevant history is being recovered in the midst of this wave of rediscovery. Russian intellectual history, for example, contains a powerful subcurrent of anti-imperialist thinking, epitomized by Alexander Herzen in the nineteenth century, just as it also includes a strong tradition of federalist and constitutional thinking in the realm of domestic affairs. Assimilative currents in Ukrainian culture are similarly being ignored, as is the powerful Pan-Islamic strain in the early history of the Uzbeks and Tajiks. Both of the latter, presumably, will be exhumed when and if pro-Islamic leaders come to power in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

Historical consciousness is less the product of dispassionate analysis of the past than of acts of national passion and will. Far from being defined or constrained by facts, historical consciousness is a creative process that can handily ignore or dismiss historical reality when it is at odds with the purposes at hand. Down to the time Yeltsin closed the parliament in September 1993, there were many in that body who favored the Serbian cause in Bosnia, in opposition to Yeltsin's policy. They based their case on what they wrongly believed was a tradition of pro-Serbian activism in Russia. Sergei A. Romanenko's careful historical research demonstrates how sympathy for Serbia was not widespread among members of the educated Russian public in the early twentieth century, even though the tsarist state had directly championed Serbian independence and official spokesmen sought to rally Russian sympathies for their fellow Slavs and Orthodox Christians in the Balkans. Interestingly, the myth of Russian support for Serbia in the nineteenth century proved incapable of arousing today's public to the same cause.

In his chapter, Alfred J. Rieber argues that tsarist Russia was not impelled by a drive for limitless expansion, as many have claimed, and that during their final century of rule the tsars and their ministers failed to build any coherent and sustained imperial policy at all. Granted that this thesis is highly controversial, it is nonetheless based on a serious

reading of Russian history and therefore requires a response in the same vein. Under the current climate of thought in most of the fourteen non-Russian states, however, it is unlikely that such a sober response will be forthcoming. For as each country seeks to assert its new sovereignty, it responds less to historical facts than to a visceral psychological urge to debunk the one-sided historical mythologies of the Soviet state that were used to repress their sovereignty for so many decades. Thanks to this understandable but irrational urge, mythology is often met with mythology.

In his interesting chapter, Serhii M. Plokhy demonstrates how the history of the Cossacks in southern Russia and the Black Sea region has been recast by publicists and historians in present-day Ukraine in order to undergird that country's independence. At first blush such an effort would seem preposterous, given the extent to which Cossack units in the tsarist army came to epitomize and symbolize the imperial Russian state as a whole. But Plokhy details the intriguing process by which myth has been replaced with countermyth. He identifies the particular importance played in recent years by writers in the far western reaches of Ukraine—the one region in which Cossacks played no historical role at all. Elaborated and preserved in western Ukraine and Galicia, the Cossack myth spread quickly to the rest of the country during the period immediately preceding and following independence. The notion of a Cossack Ukraine has achieved the ultimate prize of historical mythmaking by having been enshrined in the new Ukrainian national anthem.

Zenon E. Kohut treats the same theme but from the perspective of Russians' efforts over many centuries to assert the unity of their state. He presents a broad-brush overview of the so-called state school of Russian historiography founded by Nikolai Karamzin and Sergei Solov'ev in the nineteenth century. Reviving a critique first elaborated by nineteenth-century Russian regionalist historians (*oblastniki*), Kohut argues that the state school's conception of Russian history owed more to the aspirations of the centralizing Tsar Nicholas I than to any study of the historical evidence. In a conclusion that should unsettle Western students of Russia, he goes on to argue that the state school's conception of Russian unity was uncritically absorbed by European and American scholars and is reflected in their writings down to the present, to the detriment of a more accurate understanding of the roots of Ukrainian independence.

An even more devastating attack on the conceptions underlying the state school of Russian historiography comes not from one of the newly independent states but from an American scholar, Edward L. Keenan. The political context of Keenan's argument is worth noting. During 1992–93 many nationalists in Moscow put forward the thesis that Russia could not be whole without controlling Ukraine. Academician Dmitrii Likhachev had long maintained this, but the argument gained an entirely new valence after Ukraine became independent. Now it was taken up by the Afghan war hero Aleksandr Rutskoi, who made it the capstone of his attack on Ukrainian sovereignty. Rutskoi, an ethnic Russian who was raised on a Red Army base in Ukraine, convinced himself that the very national identity of Russia arose first on the territory of present-day Ukraine and that a new Russia that did not include Ukraine would be a mere banana republic.

The core of the argument offered by Likhachev and other apostles of a unitary Russia is that the genealogy of the Russian state traces directly to Kievan Rus' of the tenth through thirteenth centuries. Because they considered themselves the legitimate heirs to this Kievan heritage, the early tsars of Muscovy believed they had the full right to assert their hegemony over the entire East Slavic region and to see themselves as the inheritors of the Byzantine heritage that Kiev had received directly from Constantinople.

In a stunning stroke of revisionism, Keenan argues that this entire conception of history was alien to the early tsars of Muscovy and was in fact concocted by Kremlin ideologues only in the seventeenth century, after Moscow had conquered Kiev and most of Ukraine. The historical debate will not be resolved quickly, if at all, but Keenan's thesis demonstrates how deeply historical mythology can penetrate even scholarly discourse, and how profoundly important is the task of reexamining the cornerstone of historical consciousness today.

The central foreign policy issue for all of the newly independent states is their relationship with Russia. Conversely, the most urgent foreign policy issue for Russia is its relations with its former colonial dependencies. These relationships, moreover, have more potential to alter strategic balances throughout Eurasia than has any other single issue, and contain the seeds of potential instability and conflict. Historical examples are instructive. In 1863 Poland rebelled against Russian control. When Tsar Alexander II attempted to reassert Russian rule

over Poland through force of arms, he destroyed the reform movement within Russia and ushered in a generation of strife in his realm.

Can Russia accept the sovereignty of its neighbors? As of the time of this writing, the Yeltsin government has tried to assert a kind of Russian Monroe Doctrine in the region. Moreover, it has moved rapidly to strengthen the Commonwealth of Independent States by integrating currencies and monetary policy, reestablishing common security arrangements, and using energy pricing and other means to force into the fold nonparticipating countries, notably Georgia and Ukraine.

Rieber denies that there was a popular base for tsarist imperialism but affirms nonetheless that Russia's imperial identity arose before it became a modern state. As if reflecting this historical reality, *Moscow News* reports that 24 percent of Russians believe their country cannot be whole without Ukraine, while only 20 percent hold that Russia has no need to acquire additional territory. Rieber also notes that Peter the Great actively cultivated the "Russian party" in neighboring states and among steppe nomads in order to expand Russia's hegemony in the region. One must ask to what extent these remote historical antecedents are still pertinent today.

The chapters in this volume suggest that the pre-Soviet experience, for all its importance, pales in significance by comparison with the experience of the Soviet era. Indeed, all parties concerned seem to act on the assumption that it is above all the history of the Soviet period that influences today's policies, both positively and negatively. Some scholars have pointed out the continuity from the Soviet era that exists in the foreign policy establishment in Moscow. By contrast, the Baltic states, as described by Romuald J. Misiunas, present a picture of such stark contrast with the immediate past as to suggest the possibility that current policies there are the mirror image of Soviet policies, and hence still defined by them. Either way, the relevant past is quite recent.

The fate of republican borders established by Stalin attests to this truth. Kadir Alimov rightly notes that Stalin's government drew borders within Central Asia in such a way as to divide peoples who share common ethnic, linguistic, and historical identities. Nonetheless, Firuz Kazemzadeh stresses that these Soviet-era borders, for all their initial artificiality, have now gained a reality of their own, and true nation building has begun to take place within them. This, along with the

continuing cultural impact of Russia, assures that the Soviet legacy in Central Asia might endure for centuries longer.

Yaroslav Bilinsky advances an even more striking point regarding Ukraine. Every schoolchild in that country is now aware of the gruesome man-made famine of 1931–33 that claimed millions of Ukrainian lives as Stalin stood by passively. Yet it was also Stalin who consolidated the territory of Ukraine as we know it today, thanks to the acquisitions he made at the end of World War II. And it was Stalin, too, who oversaw the exchange of populations with Poland that successfully transformed the heavily Polish city of Lwów into the Ukrainian city of L'viv. As we have seen, it was precisely in these newly acquired districts of western Ukraine that a new Ukrainian consciousness arose in the 1980s and spread eastward.

Stalin attempted a similar process of consolidation when he briefly seized a region of northern Iran inhabited by Azeris and attempted to unite it with Soviet Azerbaijan. In the end he was thwarted in this by the Allies, but an echo of his old policy can be found among those many Azeri leaders today who still champion the dream of Pan-Azeri unity, as Tadeusz Swietochowski points out.

Moldova owes its very existence to Stalin, who, having extracted the region from Romania as a result of the Hitler-Stalin pact, constituted it as a republic of the USSR. Following its recent independence, Moldova was faced with the choice of developing itself as a separate state or reuniting with Romania. Had the claims of deep history prevailed, Moldova would have followed the latter course. Under President Mircea Snegur, however, it has chosen instead to pursue an independent course within roughly the borders established by Stalin, and to postpone reunion with Romania to some indefinite future.

During the Soviet era it was popular in the West to dismiss as fraudulent Stalin's penchant for assigning the symbols and trappings of statehood to what were in fact administrative districts fully subordinate to Moscow. The fact that the United Nations recognized a country called Belorussia, which boasted a minuscule foreign ministry and maintained an ambassador in New York, epitomized this cynical process. Yet in the long run such seemingly hollow symbols were to gain content, first psychological and then political. Again, the history that counts is that of the Soviet era rather than the more antique past.

Eventually, historians in the new Belarus were to reexamine the entire history of their country, going so far as to claim that the great

medieval Kingdom of Lithuania was in fact the forebear of Belarus. More plausibly, they also argued that it was thanks to Belarus that printing and hence Western culture generally was first introduced into Muscovy. These historical claims, which so clearly remove Belarus from Moscow's orbit and link it with Central Europe, again trace to debates of the Soviet era, rather than to earlier times.

By no means all Soviet nation building was merely symbolic. It is true that modern Uzbekistan includes many non-Uzbeks, and that the Soviet government drew the border of Uzbekistan in such a way as to leave millions of Uzbeks in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. Nonetheless, the Stalinist leaders of Uzbekistan enjoyed special favors under the Soviet system, which in fact confirmed the Uzbeks' leading role among the Turkic peoples of Central Asia. Thanks to this fact, Communist rule had the paradoxical effect of positioning the Uzbeks for the ambitious regional role they now aspire to play as an independent state.

These various examples all suggest that the history most likely to exert influence on present foreign policies is that which is fairly recent. In the non-Russian states it is defined overwhelmingly by their specific experience with Russian dominion during the Soviet period. Their deeper history is relevant, of course, but its direct influence pales by comparison with the pervasive drive to rectify distortions in their relation to Russia that were introduced during the Soviet period.

The international behavior of the post-Soviet states can best be understood within the broader context of new countries emerging from imperial systems. Yet this does not mean that more remote historical experience is irrelevant. On the contrary, it exerts a deep and pervasive influence, although as a very generalized force rather than as the memory of specific moments of past heroism that must be recaptured or ancient humiliations that cry for redress. In this broader sense, the earlier history that counts most is that which involves the relation of each newly independent state with cultures and peoples beyond its borders.

Centralized empires reorient national communications, cultural contacts, and trade of their subject peoples in the direction of the metropolis. This weakens preexistent foreign ties built up over hundreds and even thousands of years. A striking feature of the tsarist empire is the way it expanded into political vacuums created by the collapse of states on its periphery. Many of these had attained higher cultural

levels than Muscovy and were important elements in cultural networks that focused in directions other than toward Moscow. The same can be said of expansion that occurred during the Soviet era. Now, as Moscow's control wanes, these old relationships are reasserting themselves. As this happens, an earlier cultural geography is reemerging, much the way ancient field boundaries and roads reappear when a dam that has long flooded a valley suddenly breaks. This reemerging cultural map of the Russian littoral will help define the new political geography of the region, and hence the foreign policies of the new states.

Many examples of this process are already discernible. Typical is the manner in which the three Baltic states have reoriented themselves toward Northern Europe and Scandinavia. Estonian ties with Finland, Latvian links with Sweden, and Lithuanian affinities with Poland have quickly reasserted themselves. At issue in each of these reorientations are geographical proximity, ethnic or linguistic ties, shared religious confessions, commercial links, and even family connections. With the exceptions of Moldova (with Romania) and Tajikistan (with Afghanistan and Iran), no post-Soviet state is linked to a neighboring region by all these ties. However, the Baltic countries possess several of them, which help reorient their foreign policy northward and westward.

The reassertion of old transborder affinities takes many forms. In Moldova, for example, it was symbolized by the readoption of the Latin alphabet, a particularly important move given Romanians' self-image as descendants of the ancient Roman colonists of Dacia. The choice of alphabets in the newly independent states has an obvious foreign policy dimension. Thus, Azerbaijan has had to choose among three alphabets: the Cyrillic, imposed from Moscow; the Arabic-Iranian, as used by the large Azeri population of northern Iran; and the Latin alphabet, which for most of the twentieth century has symbolized Turkey's reorientation toward the West.

As these old affinities with neighboring peoples surface, they become the subject of spirited debates within each new country. The outcome of these debates will influence significantly the foreign policy of each state. Central Asia is a laboratory for this process. There was no more prominent feature of Soviet rule in Central Asia than the persistent effort to suppress Pan-Turkic and Pan-Islamic consciousness in the region. No sooner was Soviet control broken than both emerged as highly charged issues in the new states. Uzbekistan is still led by

leaders from the Soviet era. Inevitably, these men approached Islamic internationalism with great caution, yet in 1992 they found it convenient to stress their Turkic identity when Turkish investors seemed to be looking favorably toward their country.

Ukraine offers instructive examples of how old cultural affinities can be reworked to fit the needs of the new order. In the first years after independence, the long-suppressed Uniate Church showed remarkable vitality as it achieved legal status and regained control over many of its old places of worship. More recently, however, it has shown signs of having reached its outer limit of expansion. One might infer that the new Ukraine, while oriented toward the West, is unlikely to become fully *of* the West. Nor, however, will it maintain its former ties with Russia, as is suggested by the fact that the Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine has already split into a large Ukrainian Orthodox Church ruled from Kiev and a smaller remnant of the old Moscow-ruled structure, focused mainly in the eastern part of the country. Together, these incidents from Ukraine's religious life reflect the continuing influence of deeper historical and cultural forces that are bound to shape and inform international relations as well.

The ambiguous and mutually contradictory nature of both historical and cultural forces in Ukraine have parallels in the other newly independent states. Latvia's history may be westward looking, yet the ice-free port of Riga was always a major entrepôt for Russian produce, and numerous Latvians filled prominent positions in the Soviet system. Kyrgyzstan may take as its model the nonaligned state of Switzerland, yet that dream is itself the fruit of the long years the Kyrgyz president, Askar Akaev, spent in the worldly corridors of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR in Moscow. Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, and Moldova may all cite their history to justify an independent position in the geopolitical firmament, yet it is due to Russian rule that they were elevated to the status of republics in the first place.

The ambiguous and self-contradictory character of historical experience is nowhere clearer than in Russia itself. Debates in the 1840s among a few young people calling themselves either Slavophiles or Westernizers have provided a convenient framework for analyzing broader trends within Russia's historical legacy. This old polarity also found expression within the institutional structures of foreign policy, beginning in the nineteenth century and extending down to the present; rivalries in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs between those oriented

toward the Middle East and those oriented toward Europe existed in both the 1890s and the 1990s. In neither era, however, did history dictate the choice between these two forces. It can paint in the background against which current policy choices will be made, but it provides no clear and unequivocal policy advice. History, in short, is better at defining choices than making them.

Even this may overstate the importance of history for the foreign policies of the newly independent states. On a day-to-day basis, it is surely overshadowed by urgent issues of the moment. Pressing economic issues, like the need for economic reform, stable currencies, and access to international credit markets, provide more immediate stimuli to foreign and domestic policies than does the legacy of the past. Particularly notable is the way energy policy is capable of shaping foreign policies. Nor is this surprising, since the very sovereignty of new states can be jeopardized by failure to gain access to reliable sources of oil and gas.

Beyond this, global development, communications, and organizations are transforming the broader environment in which the foreign policies of the newly independent states are set. A strong cultural heritage may help a new state to get abreast of these changes and find a meaningful niche for itself on the global stage. However, unresolved international and domestic tensions inherited from the past are just as likely to derail a new state's effort to cope with these forces of modernity. It is significant that Armenia and Azerbaijan both possess assets crucial to success in the modern world. Yet for the entire period since independence both have been willing to permit their energies to be dissipated by an ancient conflict, which, if it continues, could destroy the possibility of either state taking its place among nations.

Yet history is not a nemesis. It shapes some questions that nations ask, but not all; still less does it determine the answers. In the end, the irrelevance of history to the foreign policies of the newly independent states can be summarized with the old truism that "one cannot step into the same river twice." The passage of time transforms everything, and even ancient proclivities surviving in the present have been altered, thanks to constant social and cultural change. However much the Russian Republic may wish to wrap itself in the trappings of the past, it is fundamentally new, as are the fourteen former Russian dependencies that are also now indepen-

dent. Some will be fortunate to have leaders who are wise enough to use history as a means of broadening or deepening their people's understanding of the present world and their potential place within it. These countries will thrive. Others, not so fortunate, will turn for leadership to those for whom history is a source of unresolved conflict and neurosis. Any foreign policies deriving from the latter motives are bound to be a misfortune both for their own people and for their neighbors.

I

Russia

