How Russia Is Not Ruled

Reflections on Russian Political Development

The state remains as important to Russia’s prospects as ever. This is so not only because, as in any society, an effectively functioning state administration is necessary for a complex economy and legal system to function properly, but because in Russian circumstances the impact of factors of economic geography tends to make costs of production a multiple of what they are throughout the world. These mutually reinforcing factors include the extreme severity of the climate, the immense distances to be covered, the dislocation between (European) population centers and (Siberian) natural resource centers, and the inevitable predominance of relatively costly land transportation over seaborne transportation. As a result, it is questionable whether Russia can exist as a world civilization under predominantly liberal economic circumstances: In a unified liberal global capital market, large-scale private direct capital investment will not be directed to massive, outdoor infrastructure projects typical of state investment in the Soviet period.

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How Russia Is Not Ruled

Reflections on Russian Political Development

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I dedicate this book to long-suffering Tullia, as well as to Thomas (even though he does not appear to have been suffering).
Those who are convinced that they can impart form to the lava will be drawn in and have fewer chances to save themselves from the burning stream than the others.

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