

The Tragedy of Soviet Market Economists

In this path-breaking history, Tobias Rupprecht offers a revisionist account of Russia's post-Soviet marketisation from the perspective of the advisors and ministers who oversaw this transformation. Based on extensive interviews with economists and research in state and private archives, he uncovers a significant minority of economic liberals from late Soviet academic and dissident circles who sought to chart a new path, believing free prices and private property were the foundations of a 'civilised country'. This provides a vital challenge to the dominant narrative that neoliberal advisors and organisations imposed harmful reforms on Russia after the collapse of Communism. Liberal reformers faced a profound dilemma – one for which Western advisors had no solution either: should they commit to democratic political activism and risk irrelevance, or align themselves with those in power and be co-opted by an authoritarian state determined to reassert its imperial strength?

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The Tragedy of Soviet Market Economists

The Failed Quest to Civilise Russia, 1972–2022

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