

SYMBOLISM AND REGIME CHANGE IN RUSSIA

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ABSTRACT. The collapse of communism in the Soviet Union in created a dilemma for the post-communist authorities of what they were to.

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Symbolism and Regime Change in Russia. During the Soviet period, political symbolism developed into a coherent narrative that underpinned Soviet political .

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Symbolism and Regime Change in Russia. Cambridge University. Press, Cambridge and New York, vii + pp. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Index.

During the Soviet period, political symbolism developed into a coherent narrative that underpinned Soviet political development. Following the collapse of the.

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Kenan, Jr Professor of Political Science, Stetson University, and author of Presidential Power in Russia 'A fresh and compelling reading of the post-Soviet experience, organised around an examination of the attempt to construct a substitute for the 'metanarrative' that was dominant in earlier years.

Kertzer, Politics and Symbols. And, unlike in the West where the collapse could be, and was, easily explained in terms of the fundamental deficiencies of the system, for those who lived within it and had experienced it as a functioning structure, its demise came as a major shock.

This will be an influential interpretation; it may be a paradigm-changing one.

For those Russians cut off from historical family roots by the emergence of independent states, plunged into penury by economic reform, and with their long-standing values cast into question by the collapse of the socialist ideal, these changes could trigger both personal trauma and a loss of a sense of community, something which could reinforce that trauma. It was not only that the all-embracing nature of the Soviet metanarrative meant that when it was gone the gap it left was significant, but also that the unique Symbolism and Regime Change in Russia of the circumstances of the change in regime demanded a response. It was not just that the political system reflected the values of the ideology but that, because of the totalist aspirations of the regime, every part of the society was closely linked in to the ideology.

Of course, in revolutionary situations, the conceptions of what the national policy was rationalised by its contribution to this overriding aim, while the basic legitimacy of the system was grounded in the claim that progress was being made towards the creation of

a new type of society, communism.