

# **Russia**

**Russia's problem was ultimately not just about its military weakness.**

**Its problem was, and remains, its weakness in all relevant forms of power, including the power of attraction.**

**At least during the Cold War a communist Soviet Union could claim to offer the path to paradise on earth.**

**Yet afterward, Moscow could provide neither ideology, nor security, nor prosperity, nor independence to its neighbors.**

**It could offer only Russian nationalism and ambition, and eastern Europeans understandably had no interest in sacrificing themselves on that altar.**

**Robert Kagan,  
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