



Democracy Derailed in Russia: The Failure of Open Politics (Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics)

M. Steven Fish

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Why has democracy failed to take root in Russia? After shedding the shackles of Soviet rule, some countries in the postcommunist region undertook lasting democratization. Yet Russia did not. Russia experienced dramatic political breakthroughs in the late 1980s and early 1990s, but it subsequently failed to maintain progress toward democracy. In this 2005 book, M. Steven Fish offers an explanation for the direction of regime change in post-Soviet Russia. Relying on cross-national comparative analysis as well as on in-depth field research in Russia, Fish shows that Russia's failure to democratize has three causes: too much economic reliance on oil, too little economic liberalization, and too weak a national legislature. Fish's explanation challenges others that have attributed Russia's political travails to history, political culture, or to 'shock therapy' in economic policy. The book offers a theoretically original and empirically rigorous explanation for one of the most pressing political problems of our time.

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