



## **The Russian Concern for ‘History’**

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Contribution (‘History’: excerpt from **‘The Russian Preoccupation with History’**) to ‘Out of the Year’, *Listener* 92 no. 2386 (19 and 26 December 1974), 830a



*The Russian Empire in 1914 (Geographx)*

*Sir Isaiah Berlin spoke of the concern for ‘History’ manifested by nineteenth-century and twentieth-century Russians – and, comparably, by developing nations in Asia and Africa:*

There obviously is some deep connection between being technologically inferior and looking to history to see what one can do. In some way, history offers a prop. It offers some kind of encouragement to proceed in a certain direction, which successful

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societies don't feel because they can simply ask themselves what is the rational thing to do, without particularly bothering about alleged patterns to which they look as some kind of salvation.

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