

Russia and Germany: A Century of Conflict

Russia and Germany have a long and complex history, marked by both cooperation and conflict. This article examines the major events that have shaped their relationship over the past century, from the First World War to the present day.



Russia and Germany: Century of Conflict by Walter Laqueur

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The First World War

Russia and Germany were on opposite sides of the First World War, which began in 1914. Russia was allied with France and Great Britain, while Germany was allied with Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire. The war was fought on multiple fronts, including the Eastern Front, where Russia and Germany fought a bloody and protracted struggle.

The First World War had a devastating impact on both Russia and Germany. Russia lost millions of soldiers and civilians, and its economy was ruined. Germany also suffered heavy losses, and its defeat led to the collapse of the German Empire.

The Interwar Period

After the First World War, Russia and Germany were both struggling to rebuild. Russia had undergone a revolution in 1917, and the new Soviet government was hostile to Germany. Germany, meanwhile, was struggling to cope with the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, which it felt was too harsh.

Despite their differences, Russia and Germany began to cooperate in the 1920s. The two countries signed a number of treaties, including the Treaty of Rapallo in 1922, which established diplomatic relations between them.

The Second World War

The cooperation between Russia and Germany did not last long. In 1941, Germany invaded the Soviet Union, beginning the Second World War. The Soviet Union was eventually victorious, but it suffered enormous losses. Germany was defeated and divided into two separate states: East Germany and West Germany.

The Cold War

After the Second World War, Russia and Germany found themselves on opposite sides of the Cold War. The Soviet Union and its allies in Eastern Europe formed the Warsaw Pact, while the United States and its allies in Western Europe formed NATO.

The Cold War was a period of intense rivalry between the two superpowers. Russia and Germany were both divided, and there were frequent crises and confrontations between them.

Reunification

In 1990, East Germany and West Germany were reunited. This was a major event in the history of Russia and Germany, and it marked the end of the Cold War.

After reunification, Germany became a member of NATO and the European Union. Russia was not happy about this, but it accepted the new reality.

The Present Day

Today, Russia and Germany have a complex relationship. They cooperate on some issues, such as energy and trade, but they also disagree on other issues, such as Ukraine and Syria.

The future of the relationship between Russia and Germany is uncertain. However, it is clear that the two countries will continue to play an important role in European and global affairs.

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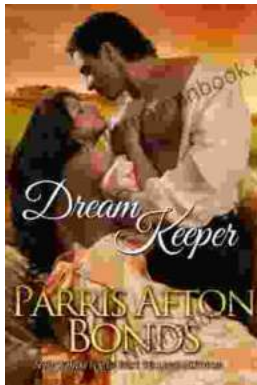
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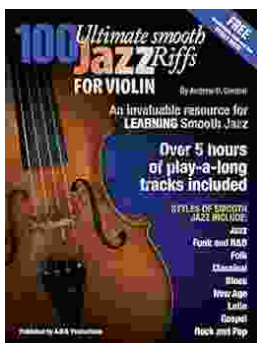
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