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RUSSIA

RUSSIA, a country that originated in eastern Europe and over the centuries grew into an empire extending to the Pacific Ocean. This article focuses on the history of Russia to the Revolution of 1917. For events following the overthrow of the Romanov dynasty, see **RUSSIAN REVOLUTION** and the **UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS—History**.

Soviet historians include in the history of their country such phenomena as the growth of the Urartu kingdom in the Caucasus (founded in the middle of the 9th century B. C.) and of the vast Central Asian empire of the Achaemenids, founded by Cyrus the Persian in 549 B. C. However, Eastern Slavs (the ancestors of modern Russians) appeared first in the steppe north of the Black Sea and had no connection with such states.

The Eastern Slavs had been preceded in the steppe country by several peoples known to history. One of these were the Cimmerians, an Indo-European people mentioned by Homer in the *Odyssey*. Little is known about who they were or where they came from. They were scattered and replaced about 700 B. C. by the Scythians, whose realm ultimately extended from south of the Danube through the Caucasus and beyond. Goldwork in the Scythian "animal style" dazzles visitors to the Hermitage in Leningrad.

By about 200 B. C. the Scythians had been replaced in the steppe by the Sarmatians, a kindred people from the east. But Scythian fishing and trading colonies endured on the Crimean peninsula and the adjoining coastal areas. The coastal Scythians continued to buy grain from the Sarmatian-ruled steppe and to ship it to Greece after the Romans had become masters of the Mediterranean.

Beginning with the Goths, who settled in the Pontic or Black Sea steppe about 200 A. D., peoples unrelated to the Scythians and Cimmerians ruled the area. About 370 A. D. the Germanic-speaking Goths, who had originated in Scandinavia, were driven to the west by the largely Turkic-speaking Huns from the east. The Huns, who penetrated as far west as Gaul, scattered after their defeat at the Battle of Châlons in 451 by the Roman general Aëtius.

Another Turkic people, the Bulgars, made their appearance in the Pontic steppe in the 5th century, but in 558 they succumbed to the Avars, also an Altaic people. (Turkic is a subgroup of the Altaic linguistic group.) By the 640's the Bulgars had regained enough power to control a sizable area north of the Sea of Azov. But within a short time they had split in two—one horde occupying present-day Bulgaria and the other migrating to the vicinity of the junction of the Volga and Kama rivers, where by the late 10th century they had established a substantial state.

In the middle of the 7th century, a successor state to the western Turkic kaganate of Central

Asia established itself in the region north of the Caucasus. This was the Khazar state. The Khazars held back invading Muslim Arabs and traded with the Byzantine Empire. Their rulers finally converted to Judaism.

The Slavs. The original Slavic homeland may have centered in what is today Poland and ranged from the Vistula River to the Dnieper River. Archaeologists trace proto-Slavic settlements there to about 1000 B. C. But not until the 1st century A. D. are Slavs mentioned in the historical writings of Pliny the Elder and, later, by Tacitus, who call them Venedi. The 6th century writers Procopius and Jordanes refer to the Slavs, who had appeared on the borders of the Byzantine Empire, as Antae and Sclaveni.

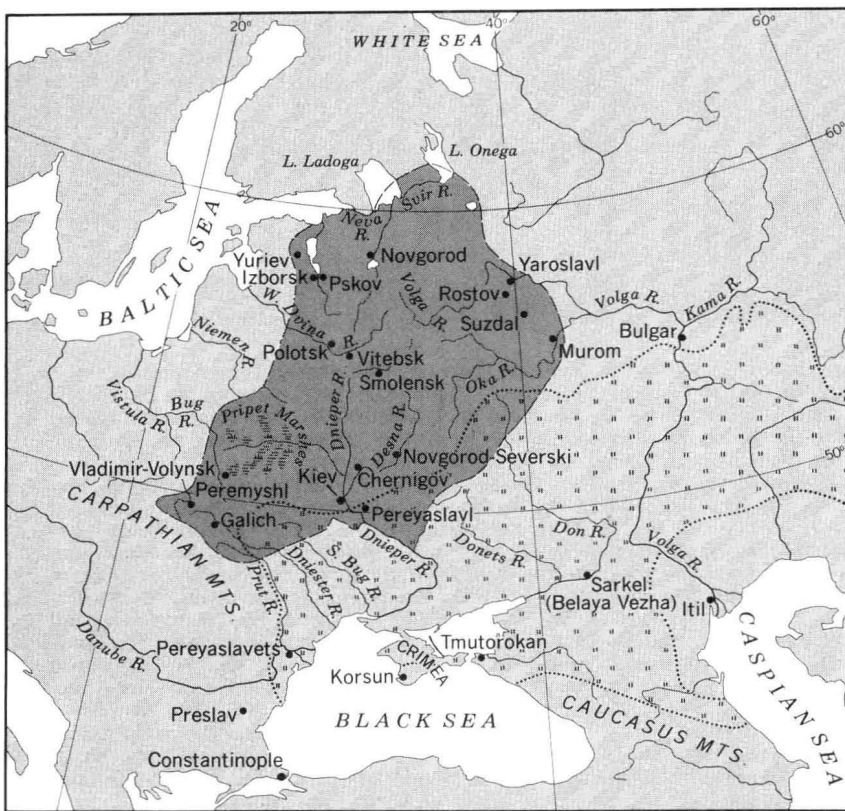
Probably some Slavs lived north and east of the Carpathians as early as the Scythian occupation of the steppe zone and outlasted all the non-Slavic states or hordes that followed.

KIEVAN RUS

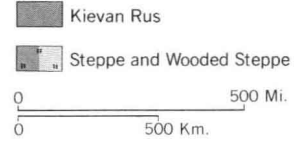
By the 9th century the Eastern Slavs, who later became differentiated into Great Russians (or simply Russians), Belorussians, and Ukrainians, were divided into several tribes. They engaged in agriculture as well as hunting, fishing, the keeping of cattle and bees, and crafts, and traded with their neighbors in such products as furs, wax, and honey.

The Varangians. Such trade may have attracted Scandinavian or "Varangian" merchant-adventurers to eastern Slavic regions. Among these were the chieftains Askold and Dir, who occupied the town of Kiev on their way to attack Constantinople in 860. Soon after, Askold and Dir were dislodged from Kiev by Oleg, a Varangian leader of Novgorod. It seems probable that the state that came into being in the late 9th century, with Kiev as its center, was ruled by a Varangian dynasty founded by Oleg or perhaps by the earlier and even more shadowy Varangian Rurik, Oleg's predecessor in Novgorod. By the late 10th century the bulk of the state's population, which was Eastern Slavic, had absorbed its Varangian conquerors.

Kievan Rus (the origin of the word "Rus" is uncertain) was a state that came to consist of a group of principalities, of which Kiev itself was senior. The state's rulers, or grand princes, were able to threaten the Byzantine Empire and Constantinople itself. According to the 12th century *Kievan Primary Chronicle*, the empire was attacked by Oleg in 907 and by his successor, Igor, a clearly historical figure, in 941. Treaties between Rus and Byzantium signed in 911 and 944 as the result of such expeditions regulated their trade in precise fashion. The furs, wax, honey, and slaves that the Rus sent to Constantinople had to be levied from the Slavic tribes in annual winter expeditions. On one such expedition Igor was killed in 945. His widow, Olga, acted as



KIEVAN RUS IN ABOUT 1050.



regent for their son Svyatoslav I in his minority. She became a convert to Orthodox Christianity.

When Svyatoslav reached maturity, he won brilliant military victories over the Bulgars on the Volga and on the Danube. He considered making Pereyaslavets (Preslavets), near the mouth of the Danube, his capital. He also destroyed the Khazar state, eliminating a valuable buffer against Asian tribes moving westward across the steppe. In fact, the new Pecheneg horde that promptly appeared in southern Russia killed him in 972 and reportedly made his skull into a drinking cup.

Of his three sons, Vladimir emerged the victor in a struggle over the succession. Though at first a zealous worshiper of pagan gods, he converted to Orthodox Christianity about 988, and the people of Kievan Rus followed his lead. As a result the culture of Byzantium, the source of Orthodoxy, had far-reaching influence on the Kievan state's art, literature, law, and customs. But the Rus did not fall heir to the broader Byzantine Hellenic heritage, which was based on the Greek language. They had no need to learn Greek since Church Slavonic, not Greek, was the language of their liturgy. Church Slavonic was based on the Macedonian tongue and had been reduced to writing in the "Cyrillic" alphabet, invented for the purpose probably by a pupil of the missionary Saint Cyril.

Christianized Rus in the Kievan period developed partly as a trading and partly as an agrarian society with a substantial class of slaves. Politically, it remained a federation of states rather than a single principedom. The princes might be limited in their power by local town assemblies (singular, *veche*) or a council of notables (*druzhina*, from which the boyar *duma* developed), in a manner varying from state to state.

The death of Vladimir I in 1015 was followed by internecine strife from which Yaroslav I ("the Wise") emerged as grand prince of Kiev in 1019. Kiev reached its highest point of development during his reign. Trade and intermarriage linked Kiev with states to the west. Russian princesses became queens of Poland, Hungary, Norway, and France.

Although Yaroslav won a decisive victory over the Pechenegs, a new group of Turkic invaders, the Polovtsy (or Cumans), began to threaten Rus soon after Yaroslav's death in 1054. A series of conflicts among Yaroslav's descendants prevented the Rus from organizing an effective defense against them. Vladimir II Monomakh (reigned 1113–1125) finally proved to be a match for the Polovtsy, and his domestic stature as a Christian prince commanded respect. He combated the abuses of usury and strove to inculcate concern for the welfare of all Rus. He was unable, however, to reverse the processes of decline.

His son Mstislav and nephew Yaropolk II kept peace in the realm until 1139. By then the princely families had multiplied, and with them contestants for the throne. In such regions as Novgorod the *veche* gained the upper hand over the prince, who might be invited and dismissed at will. The various principalities fought different enemies. In the west they confronted Finns, Lithuanians, Poles, and Hungarians. In the east they fought the Volga Bulgars and Polovtsy. Sometimes a principality allied itself with a foreign power against other princes of Rus.

Kiev gradually lost its authority as the unifying principedom. From 1139 to 1169 there were 17 princes in Kiev. In 1169, Andrew Bogolyubsky, prince of Suzdal, captured Kiev and sacked the city. He chose not to move his capital there but

to Vladimir, a relatively new city south of Suzdal that had no strong notables or town assemblies to check his power.

Trade routes began to shift both northward and southward with the rise of the Italian and German cities and the capture of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1204. Novgorod benefited from the shift, owing to its Baltic trade. The principalities of Galicia (or Lodomeria), with its capital city of Galich (Polish, Halicz; Ukrainian, Halych), and Volhynia, with its capital city of Vladimir-Volynsk, were united in 1199 and developed strength in the southwest. But Kiev lost its preeminence forever. Vladimir-Suzdal became the most important principality under Andrew Bogolyubsky's brother Vsevolod III "Big Nest" (reigned 1176-1212), but no new unity was reimposed on Rus. Therefore, when the Mongols invaded in force in 1237, resistance was feeble. However, the fact that no power in either Europe or Asia was able to check their advance suggests that even a healthy Kiev would probably have failed as well.

THE MONGOL PERIOD AND THE RISE OF MOSCOW

A raiding force from the Mongol armies of Genghis (Chinggis) Khan suddenly burst across the Caucasus and in 1223 met an army of Rus and Polovtsy at the Kalka River. The Mongols defeated the enemy and then immediately withdrew. In 1236 an army of perhaps 200,000 under Genghis' grandson Batu advanced on Europe and attacked the Volga Bulgars on the way. In the winter of 1237-1238 the Mongol cavalry overran most of Rus. They were halted before Novgorod only by the spring thaw. They leveled Kiev and continued west, in 1241 crushing the Poles and others at Liegnitz and defeating the Hungarians near Mohi.

The Golden Horde. In 1242, Batu's Mongols withdrew to the Russian steppe and established the so-called Golden Horde at Sarai on the lower Volga. From there they ruled Rus, officially from 1240 to 1480, though in fact their effective rule ended about 1450. The original Mongol conquest had devastated many towns and villages. But their rule was not harsh. After a short period in which some of their officials were stationed in the chief cities, the Mongols (or Tatars, as the Russians came to call these people, among whom Turkic elements soon predominated) generally left the principalities of Rus alone as long as tribute was paid to them. The Rus princes also had to be invested by the Mongol ruler, for a time in Karakorum and later in Sarai, and were required to furnish contingents to Mongol armies.

The effect of the Mongols on Russian development has long been a matter of scholarly debate. Some historians see Mongol influences in the shaping of Muscovite and, later, imperial Russian autocracy. Others point to Byzantine influences, and still others to indigenous ones.

The Struggle for Supremacy Among the Principalities. In the period following the Mongol conquest, there were three centers of power in Rus: Galicia-Volhynia, Novgorod, and Vladimir. In Galicia-Volhynia, an attempt was made to organize resistance to the Mongols. When it failed, the principality had to submit to Mongol rule once more. The boyars, or landowning notables, of Galicia and Volhynia were stronger than those in areas to the east, and they prevented the princes from consolidating their power. In the 14th century, Volhynia was annexed by Lithuania and Galicia by Poland.

Novgorod (officially, Lord Novgorod the Great) by the 12th century had gained both effective ecclesiastical autonomy and the power of limiting the prince's authority. Alexander Nevsky, chosen prince of Novgorod in 1236, defeated the Swedes by the Neva River (hence his appellation) in 1240. In 1242 he routed the Teutonic Knights in the "battle on the ice" of Lake Chud (Peipus).

The Novgorodians had to fight invaders from the west many times before and after Nevsky. Nevsky, however, chose to submit to the Mongols, believing that any other course was impossible. He began a policy of cooperation with the Horde, which was adopted by other princes of Rus who hoped thereby to keep the Mongol soldiers and officials at a distance. Novgorod governed itself through its *veche* and Council of Notables and expanded its commercial connections. It penetrated the northern forests all the way to the Urals and beyond, and traded actively with Gotland and the Germanic ports on the Baltic Sea before and after the rise of the Hanseatic League.

The beginnings of the Great Russian state, however, are to be found in the northeast in Vladimir. The son of Vsevolod III, Grand Prince Yuri, was killed in battle against the Mongols in 1238. In 1252 the Tatars removed one of his successors and installed Alexander Nevsky as grand prince. Nevsky's loyalty to the Tatars forestalled more than one punitive expedition that the khan had planned against Vladimir. His loyalty also led to greater Mongol toleration of Orthodox Christianity, though the pagan Mongols officially adopted Islam during the reign of Uzbek (1312-1342). In 1299-1300 the chief cleric, the metropolitan "of Kiev and all Rus," abandoned Kiev for Vladimir.

Upon Alexander Nevsky's death in 1263, his youngest son Daniel (died 1303) received the principality of Moscow. The town is first mentioned in the Chronicles under the year 1147. As its first resident prince, Daniel tried to make the state a solid base for his line. He and his successors annexed neighboring territories bit by bit. Yuri (reigned 1303-1325) competed with the grand princes of Tver, a state to the northwest, for the favor of the khans. Ivan I Kalita (reigned 1328-about 1341) succeeded in moving the seat of the metropolitan from Vladimir to Moscow in about 1326-1328, and also was awarded the title of senior grand prince. He was known for his financial sagacity as well as for his loyalty to the Tatars. During the reigns of Simeon the Proud (about 1341-1353) and Ivan II (1353-1359) and during the minority of Dmitri Donskoy (reigned 1359-1389), Metropolitan Aleksei gave his support to the Moscow principality (often referred to as Muscovy).

During this period large areas that once formed part of Kievan Rus came under Lithuanian control. At the same time that the people who came to be called Great Russians (or simply Russians) were mostly subject to the Tatars, those who were emerging as Belorussians and Ukrainians were gradually conquered by Lithuania. Grand Duke Gediminas (Polish, Gedymin; reigned 1316-1341) had unified and consolidated the pagan state of Lithuania in the Vilnius (Vilna) region and began its expansion to the southeast. Under Algirdas (Polish, Olgierd), Lithuania occupied Kiev in 1361 and went on to reach the Black Sea. In 1368 and 1372, Algirdas attacked Moscow, but the newly built stone walls of the Kremlin held against both assaults.



NOVOSTI, FROM SOVFOTO

Ivan I, a 14th century grand prince of Moscow and Vladimir, is shown in the midst of his boyars in this miniature from a 16th century manuscript. Known as "Moneybags" (*Kalita*), he won protection from the Tatar khan by paying him tribute, which he raised from his subjects through heavy taxation. The tax collectors are shown extorting taxes by whipping Ivan's subjects.

Dmitri Donskoy made peace with Lithuania and defeated its ally, Tver. Most noteworthy, however, was his defeat of the Tatars, first in 1378 and then in the great Battle of Kulikovo in 1380, in which the Lithuanian and Ryazan armies failed to arrive in time to help the Tatar khan Mamai. Though Tokhtamysh, who replaced Mamai as khan, burned Moscow two years after Kulikovo, the khan reaffirmed Dmitri as grand prince.

Dmitri's son Vasili I (reigned 1389–1425) acquired new principalities, holding at bay both the Tatars and the Lithuanians. Nevertheless Lithuania, which had joined in a dynastic union with Poland in 1385, remained a serious threat to Muscovite lands. The Lithuanian ruler Jagiello (Lithuanian, Jogaila) had accepted Christianity in the Roman rite for himself and his followers, and thereafter the country was brought within the Polish cultural orbit, though 90% of its population remained Orthodox Slavs.

During the reign of Vasili II, son of Vasili I, the disintegrating Golden Horde lost control of the Crimea in 1430, of Kazan in 1436, and, after the death of Vasili II in 1462, of Astrakhan in 1466. Vasili was strong enough to establish a Tatar principality subject to himself in 1452, an event that marks Moscow's effective independence of the Horde.

Moscow, the Third Rome. Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Turks in 1453. Seeking Western aid against the Ottomans, Byzantium had agreed to a union of the churches under Rome at the Council of Florence in 1439. A council of Russian bishops repudiated the union (which soon collapsed) and in 1448 elected Iona as the metropolitan, terminating ecclesiastical dependence on the patriarch of Constantinople. By the time of Vasili II's death, Muscovy had become a realm of about 15,000 square miles (40,000 sq km).



NOVOSTI PRESS AGENCY

Dmitri, grand prince of Moscow and Vladimir, leads his troops out of Moscow to confront the Tatars. He was later known as Dmitri Donskoy ("of the Don") because of his great victory in 1380 over the Tatar khan on the plain of Kulikovo beside the Don River. It was the first major Russian victory over the Tatars, to whom Russian princes had paid tribute since the 13th century.

Ivan III the Great succeeded his father, Vasili II, in 1462. He conquered Novgorod in the 1470's and Moscow's old rival Tver in 1485, thus becoming ruler of a Muscovy that had incorporated most of the Russian principalities. The few that remained were annexed by his son Vasili III, chiefly Pskov in 1510 and Ryazan in 1517. Vasili also wrested Smolensk from Lithuania.

Moscow's relations with its Tatar neighbors became less of a preoccupation when Ivan III formally renounced the tributary relationship in 1480. The army sent by the khan to punish him withdrew from the Ugra River without fighting. The remnants of the Golden Horde itself were destroyed by the Crimeans in 1502.

Ivan aspired to make Muscovy the new Byzantium. He took as his second wife Sophia (Zoë) Palaeologa, niece of the last Byzantium emperor, Constantine XI, and he adopted Byzantine symbols and ritual. The notion of Moscow as the "third Rome" was developed during the reign (1505–1533) of Vasili III, the son of Ivan III and Sophia. Vasili received the ambassador of the Holy Roman Empire, established diplomatic relations with the Ottoman sultan and the Mughul emperor, and permitted the establishment of a "German suburb," or Western colony, in Moscow.

During the period when Moscow was establishing its supremacy among the principalities, sometimes called appanages, some institutions comparable to those of Western feudalism developed, such as vassalage and immunities for subordinate princes and boyars. But the social system that developed in Russia did not parallel that of Western feudalism in all its particulars. For example, estates were inherited rather than granted for service.

Except in Novgorod, commerce and crafts did not flourish during the period. Most Russians were peasants but were not yet fully enserved.

There were numerous slaves (singular, *kholop*), as in the Kievan period. The church did not suffer under the Muslim Tatars, and monastic lands became extensive and rich. Monks were important in the pioneering of settlements to the northeast, following the lead of Russia's most notable medieval saint, Sergius of Radonezh (died 1392).

IVAN IV THE TERRIBLE

In the period between the reign of Ivan III and the foundation of the Russian Empire by Peter I in 1721, fundamental changes occurred in the social-political structure of Muscovy. The development of Muscovy's trade and the growth of its cities were accompanied by the decline of the peasantry into serfdom. The freedom of the peasant to leave his landlord was reduced, and provisions were made for the landlord's recovery of peasants who had fled his estate.

During this period the minor princes and boyars, who made up the hereditary landlord class, were fast losing their political power, their lands, and even, in some cases, their lives, especially during the reign of Ivan IV (1533-1584). On the other hand the service landlords (*dvoryane*), with the support of Ivan III and his successors, increased in numbers and landholdings. Unlike the hereditary landowners, the *dvoryane* held title to their estates conditionally on either civil or military service to the state. The Muscovite grand princes, or czars, favored them over the boyars. It can be said that they created the *dvoryane* as the chief support of Muscovite absolutism.

Though the *dvoryane* formed a service class of gentry, service was also due from the minor princes, the boyars, and "free servants." Each of

these was exempt from taxation. The taxed classes were mainly the merchants, artisans, and peasants.

Many of the minor princes and boyars were descended from rulers of Lithuania, Tatar states, or principalities of Rus that had been absorbed by Muscovy. Having lost their former power as they became mixed in a common pool of servitors to the Muscovite prince, they became preoccupied with matters of rank within their own class. The czars encouraged their rivalries for position by sanctioning *mestnichestvo* (literally, "system of placement"). In compliance with this system, the civil or military post assigned to a given minor prince or boyar had to reflect the rank of his family and himself in respect to all other members of his class.

The proud princes and boyars seem to have had several opportunities to consolidate as an aristocracy and limit the grand princes' power. However, for whatever reason, they never succeeded in doing so.

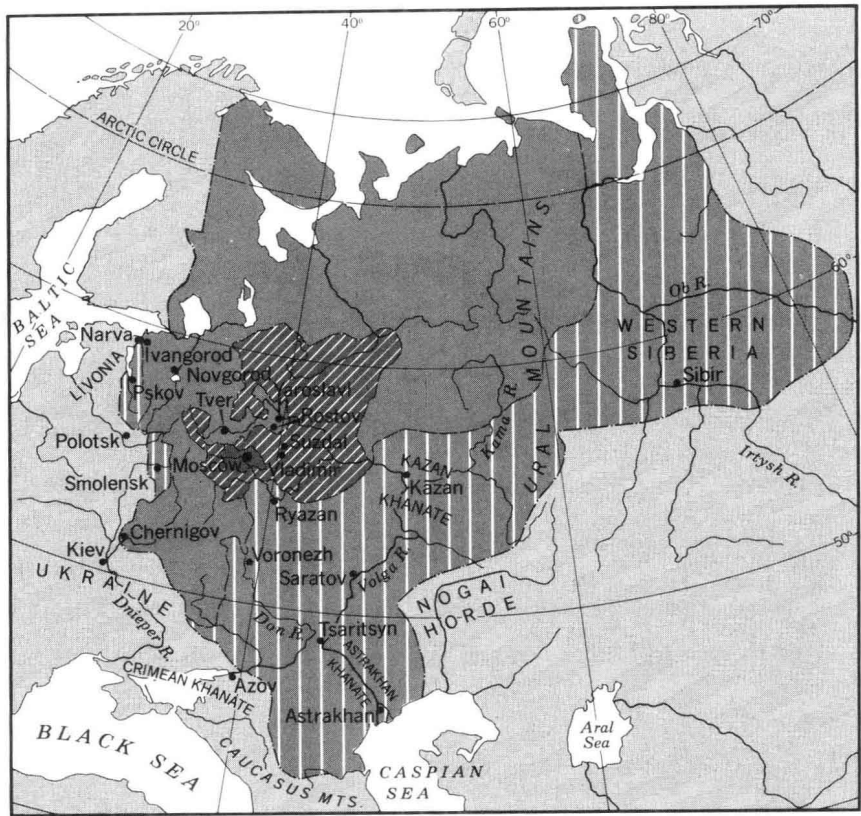
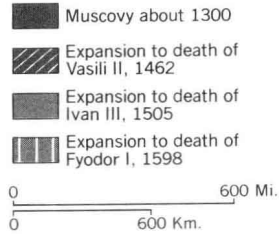
Early Years of Ivan IV's Reign. The three-year-old Ivan IV became grand prince on the death of his father, Vasili III, in 1533. At first his mother, Yelena Glinsky, acted as regent, treating the boyars with scant ceremony. She died suddenly in 1538. A period of intrigue and violence ensued in which the Shuiskys (the premier princely family, former rulers of Suzdal) and Belskys (headed by Vasili III's cousin) struggled for ascendancy, each attempting to mobilize both clerical and lay support.

Ivan IV seems to have been an intelligent and curious boy who suffered from the atmosphere of fear and brutality in which he grew up. Gradually ridding himself of the feuding princes,

Moscow's Kremlin, with its newly built walls, as it existed at the time of Ivan III the Great. It was Ivan's ambition to make Muscovy heir to the Byzantine Empire after Constantinople had fallen to the Ottomans in 1453.



GROWTH OF RUSSIA FROM 1300 TO 1598.



Ivan in 1547 had himself crowned czar of all Russia by Metropolitan Makary (Macarius) and married Anastasia, a member of the boyar family of Romanov. A few months later a great fire destroyed much of Moscow, and mob violence threatened the czar himself. But a fairly tranquil period ensued, during which Makary and other advisers led him to summon the first assembly of the land, or *zemski sobor*, in 1549. To some extent it was comparable to the assemblies of estates of medieval western Europe.

In 1556 the military obligations of the landowning class were specified. Each landowner had to begin military service at the age of 15 and serve for the rest of his life, if physically able. Compulsory service was now exacted of all landholders, whether their estates were hereditary (singular, *votchina*) or based on service tenure (singular, *pomestie*). A standing force of *streltsy*, or musketeers, was also created.

Ivan's Wars. Though the Golden Horde had ceased to exist, the successor Tatar khanates of Kazan, Astrakhan, and the Crimea continued to raid Muscovite territory. On the west the Livonian Knights blocked Muscovy's access to the Baltic, and the dynastically united Poland-Lithuania overshadowed Ivan's realm.

Ivan first mounted a campaign against Kazan and succeeded in defeating it in 1552. The entire khanate was annexed in the next few years. In 1554-1556 his armies took Astrakhan and annexed that khanate also, thus acquiring for Muscovy the Volga Valley all the way to the Caspian Sea.

Since the Crimean Tatars had harassed Muscovy during the campaigns against Kazan and Astrakhan, Ivan's close advisers wished him to strike at the Crimea. But the czar's chief interest lay in trade with the West through the Baltic. This led him to undertake war against Livonia,

an adventure that was to last 24 years. Though much of Livonia fell to Ivan's armies, part of present-day Estonia was taken by Sweden, and the defeated Livonian Order secularized itself, its master accepting vassalage to the Polish king as duke of Courland.

When Russia succeeded in taking Polotsk, Lithuania offered peace in 1566. But Ivan, with the support of a *zemski sobor*, unwisely decided to continue the war. An increasingly Polonized Lithuania, which had been joined to Poland by dynastic ties since 1385, was politically united with Poland by the Union of Lublin in 1569. By this union the two countries gained a single sovereign and diet, although the two administrations and armies remained separate. Ivan now faced a more formidable enemy in a united Poland-Lithuania, and his resources were nearing exhaustion. A truce was arranged with Poland-Lithuania in 1582, and an armistice with Sweden was signed the following year. Muscovy was stripped of all its conquests along the Baltic and the Gulf of Finland.

Campaign Against the Boyars. In 1553, Ivan had fallen seriously ill. Thinking he was close to death, he demanded that the boyars swear allegiance to his son Dmitri. Their reluctance to do so made him increasingly suspicious of them. His distrust increased with the flight to Lithuania in 1564 of the boyar Andrei Kurbsky, one of his close companions. In December of that year, Ivan abruptly left Moscow for the nearby town of Aleksandrov, sending Moscow an ultimatum. To deal with the betrayal of princes and boyars, Ivan declared, he must be entrusted with the power to set up a state within a state, to be called the Oprichnina ("something set apart"). His ultimatum was accepted, and he returned a few weeks later to organize a new personal guard.

The new guards, known as Oprichniki, eventually numbered several thousand. They killed many boyars and other alleged enemies of the czar, and confiscated property wholesale. The rest of the realm was termed the Zemshchina, which the boyar дума and other previously existing administrative agencies continued to govern. But the Oprichniki were ordered to wipe out "treason" in both the Oprichnina and Zemshchina.

Closing Years of the Reign. Great social and economic damage was wrought by both the Livonian War and the domestic upheavals provoked by the czar's campaign against the boyars. The Oprichnina was abolished in 1572, perhaps because of Oprichnik inability to check the previous year's raid by Crimean Tatars, who reached and burned much of Moscow. Many Russians were in flight, joining Cossack settlements in the Ukraine and on the Don River.

The close of Ivan's reign was one of gloom, relieved in 1582 by the conquest of the khanate of Sibir (from which the name "Siberia" derives) by Yermak and his band of Cossacks, sent by the merchant-adventurer family of Stroganov. This event marked the beginning of Russian penetration to the Pacific Ocean, reached some 50 years later. Ivan died in 1584.

BORIS GODUNOV AND THE TIME OF TROUBLES

Two years before his death, Ivan IV had struck and killed his son and heir, Ivan, in a heated argument. Ivan was succeeded, therefore, by his next surviving son, Fyodor I. Fyodor was sickly and content to let his wife's brother, Boris Godunov, conduct much of the business of state. During Fyodor's reign, the patriarch of Constantinople agreed to elevate the metropolitan of Moscow to patriarch of Moscow, an act that other Eastern patriarchs later confirmed. The new step was to become the most important of the whole Eastern Orthodox Church.

A war with Sweden ended in 1595 with the reestablishment of Russia's western boundaries as



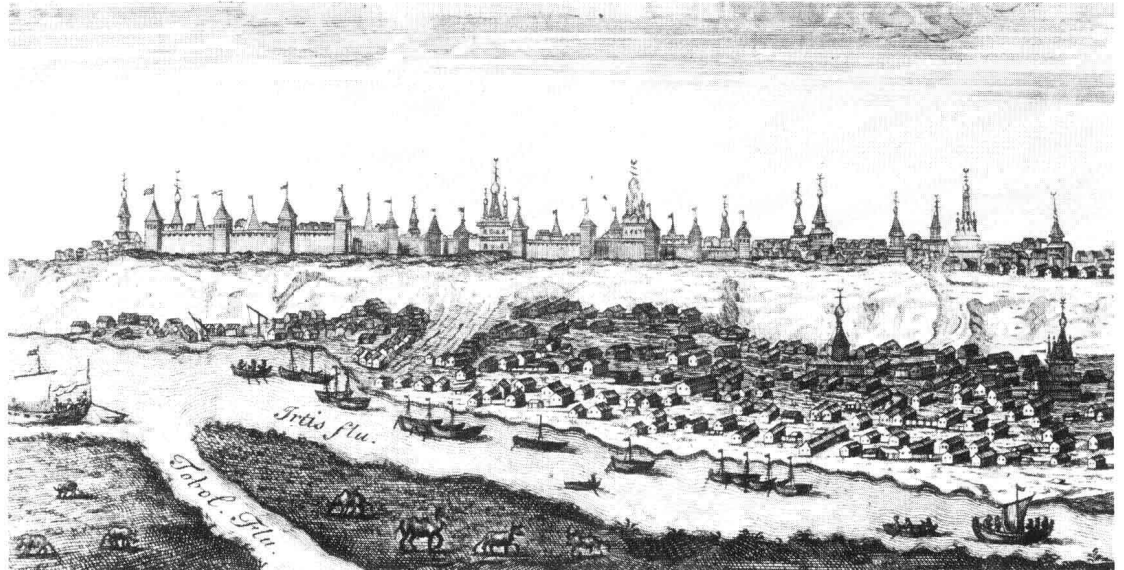
NATIONALMUSEET, COPENHAGEN

Ivan IV the Terrible, portrayed in an ikon dating from his reign, was the first Muscovite prince to be crowned czar and grand prince of all Russia. His struggles against the princes and boyars and his protracted wars left Russia in a state of economic and social collapse.

they had been before the Livonian War. Fyodor died in 1598, the last of the branch of Rurik that had ruled Moscow since Daniel. Ivan IV's youngest son, Dmitri, having been exiled to Uglich, had died there under mysterious circumstances in 1591. (Another son of Ivan's, also called Dmitri, to whom the boyars had been reluctant to give allegiance when Ivan became ill in 1553, had died soon after Ivan had recovered.)

Tobolsk was a well-established, fortified city when this 18th century engraving was made of it. It had been founded in 1587 at the confluence of the Irtysh and Tobol rivers in western Siberia. From there the Cossacks advanced eastward to the Pacific in the early 17th century, opening up the whole of Siberia to Russian settlement.

RADIO TIMES HULTON PICTURE LIBRARY





Boris Godunov was crowned czar in 1598 after the death of the last of the Rurik dynasty of Muscovy. His reign began the 15-year period of civil disturbances and foreign invasions of Russia known as the Time of Troubles.

A series of theatrical yet fateful events took place in the period, known as the Time of Troubles, between Fyodor's death and 1613.

Boris Godunov. Boris Godunov was offered the throne, which he finally accepted, and ruled as czar from 1598 to 1603. He proved to be a skillful diplomat and able administrator. But famine and disease struck in 1601–1603. The princes and boyars opposed him, and though he exiled several of the Romanov family, forcing Fyodor Romanov to take monastic vows under the name Filaret, the opposition was not stifled. In 1603 a pretender to the throne appeared in Poland, who may have been a renegade church deacon named Grigori Otrepiev but who also may have believed he was truly Ivan's youngest son, Dmitri. Pushkin's play *Boris Godunov* and Mussorgsky's opera of the same name have popularized the suspicion current at the time that Boris was responsible for the real Dmitri's death. Modern scholars have found little evidence to confirm this.

The False Dmitris. The pretender, known as the First False Dmitri, had become a Roman Catholic in Poland and had fallen in love with a Polish noblewoman, Marina Mniszek. Raising an army with Polish and other Roman Catholic support, he entered Moscow in June 1605, a few weeks after Boris had died and his young son, proclaimed Fyodor II, had been murdered. The pretender was crowned czar and ruled for nearly a year. He married Marina Mniszek, who became czarina though she remained a Roman Catholic.

The support of the Roman Catholics for the new czar weakened when he put off fulfilling promises he had made to them. He was also distrusted by the boyars, who had welcomed (or used) him as a way of getting rid of Boris. In May 1606 the leader of the boyar faction, Prince

Vasili Shuisky, dethroned the pretender in a coup, burned his body, and fired the ashes from a cannon toward the west from which he had come.

Proclaimed czar as Vasili IV, Shuisky promised to make certain decisions in harmony with the boyar *duma*. At his instigation the real Dmitri was canonized, and his remains were brought from Uglich to Moscow, as part of a propaganda campaign to legitimize Shuisky's succession.

Outside Moscow, disorder was widespread. Many popular uprisings took place. The most dangerous was one led by a former slave, Ivan Bolotnikov, whose forces combined serfs and other lower-class elements with some landlords of the gentry class. Despite their challenge to authority and even property, they did not oppose the czarist system and for a time contended that Fyodor I's son Pyotr was with them. There never was a real Pyotr, and the false one was caught and killed, as was Bolotnikov after his defeat at Tula in 1607.

A new pretender, known as the Second False Dmitri, now appeared, claiming to be both the First False Dmitri and the real Dmitri. Marina Mniszek declared him to be her husband and joined him at his camp at Tushino near Moscow. Filaret served unofficially as his patriarch.

In 1609, Vasili Shuisky turned to the Swedes for help. The "Rogue of Tushino" fled to Kaluga. A delegation of Tushino gentry, abandoning the Second False Dmitri, visited the Roman Catholic king of Poland, Sigismund III, and invited the king's son Władysław to become czar. A document signed in February 1610 provided that he would rule with the *zemski sobor*.

In the spring of 1610 separate armies of Poles and the Second False Dmitri and Swedish units in the service of Vasili Shuisky were all near Moscow. In July an assemblage of Muscovites of different classes deposed Shuisky and forced him to become a monk. The Swedes had retreated northward. A Polish force entered Moscow, and the Muscovites accepted Władysław as czar. However, Sigismund III now strove to take the throne for himself, while the Swedes declared war on the Russians. In December 1610 the Second False Dmitri was slain by one of his own men, leaving the way clear for a national effort at resolving the crisis that would not be complicated by the "Rogue's" candidacy.

Resolution of the Succession Crisis. The effort was led by the church. The patriarch Hermogen announced that Russians were released from their allegiance to Władysław, and called on them to drive out the Polish Roman Catholic forces. The Poles promptly imprisoned him. Armies of gentry and Cossacks sprang up in various Russian cities, but they squabbled and hesitated. Several high clerics renewed their appeals for a national solution. The response of the city of Nizhni Novgorod was decisive. A butcher, Kuzma Minin, and Prince Dmitri Pozharsky organized an army there that reached Moscow in September 1612. The Poles, besieged in the Kremlin, surrendered in November. In early 1613 a *zemski sobor* convened, including representatives from the clergy, boyars, townsmen, and even some peasants. It elected 16-year-old Mikhail Romanov, kin to the old dynasty through Ivan IV's wife Anastasia. He was crowned in July as Michael I.

During the Time of Troubles, the boyars' bid for power and the lower classes' aspirations for a better life failed. It was the autocracy and its instrument, the service nobility, that emerged with their forces intact.



THE EARLY ROMANOVS

The country's first need was for peace and order. Peace with Sweden was concluded at Stolbovo in 1617, with Sweden retaining the shores of the Gulf of Finland, which it had regained during the Time of Troubles. In 1618, Władysław of Poland attacked Moscow, reaching its outskirts but failing to take the city. He then accepted the Truce of Deulino, by which Poland retained the provinces of Smolensk and Seversk and returned its Russian prisoners, including the czar's father, Filaret. Filaret officially became patriarch in 1619 and in effect acted as regent for his son. After the truce expired in 1632, Władysław, now King Vladislav IV of Poland, defeated the Russians near Smolensk. By the Peace of Polyanovka in 1634, Poland retained most of the territory secured by the Truce of Deulino, but Vladislav yielded his claim to the throne of Muscovy. Though the Cossacks of the Don region captured the Turkish fortress of Azov in 1637 and offered it to Muscovy, a *zemski sobor* declined the offer out of prudence.

Filaret died in 1633 and Michael in 1645, to be succeeded by his son Alexis. Known as "the most gentle" czar despite his fits of temper, Alexis was a devoted son of the church. (His reign was idealized by some 19th century writers.) He relied on the boyar Boris Morozov to run the government, until an uprising in Moscow in 1648, provoked by financial exactions and corruption, led to Morozov's dismissal.

A new legal code was issued in response to the unrest. Adopted in 1649, this *ulozheniye* is often considered to mark the full arrival of serfdom for the landlords' peasants (as distinguished from "state peasants" living on lands belonging to the state). No limit was placed on the landlord's right to recapture fugitives from his estates.

The *ulozheniye* also terminated what remained of the previously recognized right of peasants to change their masters on St. George's Day. Thereafter, the gentry (*dvoryanstvo*) increasingly came to treat the serfs as property. One result was to accelerate the flight of peasants to the free Cossacks of the Don and Dnieper valleys.

The Cossacks. Some of the Dnieper Cossacks had established their forts, known collectively as the Zaporozhian Sich ("stronghold beyond the cataracts"), on islands in the lower course of the Dnieper River in the Ukraine. They were known as the Zaporozhian Cossacks. Poland, which had gained control of the Ukraine when Lithuania and Poland were united in 1569, allowed the Dnieper Cossacks to govern themselves and elect their own leaders.

As Poland attempted to impose Roman Catholicism on the Orthodox Ukrainians and as Polish leaders pressed into the steppe, establishing large estates there, Cossack revolts broke out and continued from 1624 to the 1650's. Several times the Cossack *hetman* (headman) Bohdan Chmielnicki (Ukrainian, Khmelnytzkyi; Russian, Khmelniitsky) appealed to Alexis for protection against the Polish Catholics. The czar and the *zemski sobor* finally agreed to extend their protection, and in 1654 union was proclaimed, with autonomy for the Ukrainians. Their autonomy soon was abridged by Moscow.

War with Poland was the immediate result of the union. It was concluded only in 1667 by the Treaty of Andrusovo. By the terms of the treaty Muscovy was awarded Smolensk and Chernigov. The boundary of Muscovy was also extended to the Dnieper River and across it to include the city of Kiev.

Other Cossacks moving across Siberia reached that part of the Pacific Ocean known as the Sea of Okhotsk by 1640. In 1648 the Cossack



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Nikon, shown in his patriarchal robes, introduced extensive reforms in the church that ultimately led to schism. He lost the support of Czar Alexis when he attempted to establish ecclesiastical autonomy within the state.

navigator Semyon Dezhnev sailed from the Arctic Ocean around the northeastern tip of Siberia, discovering the Bering Strait (as it would later be known). Furs were the main attraction of this vast eastern region, inasmuch as they figured prominently in state finance and were much in demand abroad. Although Russian administration followed the Cossack pioneers across Siberia, serfdom never did. As a result, the atmosphere was freer there than west of the Urals, though this was to change when exiles were sent to Siberia at a later date.

Farther south the Cossacks encountered the Chinese, and a series of clashes and disputes with them was concluded only in 1689 by the Treaty of Nerchinsk, which fixed the frontier in such a manner as to concede the Amur region to China. This frontier remained unchanged until 1858–1860.

In 1670–1671, Stepan (“Stenka”) Razin, a *hetman* of the Don Cossacks, led a revolt against the Russian landlords. It spread up the Volga Valley. Certain Finnish and Turkic peoples of the region also rebelled. Razin was defeated, captured, and executed in 1671.

Church Reform and Schism. During Alexis’ reign, a theological and moral revival took place. In 1652 an able but uncompromising cleric named Nikon was named patriarch. He undertook the correction of several errors in church books and rites. Nikon rode roughshod over the opposition, led by the archpriest Avvakum, and simultaneously made claims for ecclesiastical autonomy or even primacy in the state, which alarmed and then angered the czar. At the council of 1666–1667,

held in Moscow, Nikon was deposed as patriarch. But his reforms were upheld.

Those who opposed Nikon’s reforms became known as Old Believers (*starovery*), Old Ritualists (*staroobryadtsy*), or simply Schismatics (*raskolniki*). They clung steadfastly to the old forms. A few died as martyrs, executed by the state, including Avvakum, who was burned in 1682. Many engaged in self-immolation, and in two decades more than 20,000 died in this manner. The only major split in the history of the Russian Church became permanent. Some managed to retain the services of the priesthood, while others were forced to do without. Merchants and prosperous peasants were prominent in the ranks of the Old Believers.

Alexis was succeeded by Fyodor III (reigned 1676–1682), his son by his first wife, Maria Miloslavskaya. During Fyodor’s reign the *mestnichestvo* system was finally abolished (1682), thus reducing the power of the hereditary nobility.

PETER THE GREAT

Fyodor was survived by a sickly, slow-witted brother, Ivan. In the choice of a successor, Ivan was passed over in favor of Peter, the 10-year-old son of Alexis by his second wife, Natalia Naryshkina. Natalia was made regent. Within weeks, however, Ivan’s 25-year-old sister Sophia led a coup that resulted in the proclamation of Ivan as the senior co-czar and Sophia as regent. The coup was carried out by the *streltsy*, among whom the Old Believers were strong.

The two boy czars had no say during Sophia’s regency (1682–1689), and Ivan was to remain a nonentity. The regency was dominated by Sophia’s chief adviser and lover, Prince Vasili Golitsyn, who devoted much of his attention to foreign affairs. In 1686 a treaty of “perpetual peace” was signed with Poland, generally confirming the borders of 1667.

In the west bank Ukraine (the Ukraine west of the Dnieper River) the decades after 1667 had been turbulent owing to continuing Cossack struggles with the Poles on the one hand and with the Crimean Tatars and Turks on the other. (The Crimea had been a vassal state of the Ottomans since 1475.) The treaty of 1686 provoked war with the Crimeans. Twice, in 1687 and 1689, Golitsyn led an army against them, suffering defeat. The second campaign was disastrous.

Peter spent much of his time roistering with his Western friends in the “German suburb,” a place outside Moscow where foreigners could live. He also learned from them. In August 1689 a plot to place Sophia on the throne was foiled by troops loyal to Peter, and Sophia was confined to a convent. For several years more, Peter’s mother and her lay and clerical advisers conducted the affairs of state. Only after she had died in 1694 did Peter become the effective ruler. Ivan V died in 1696.

Dynamic and tireless, Peter was to introduce a series of dramatic changes in Russian life, many of them designed to imitate West European states or to bring Russia into credible competition with them. He himself mastered the skills of soldier and sailor and several different crafts, and his curiosity extended to all branches of political, economic, and cultural affairs. His own youthful military games led to the creation of the first two Guards regiments, named Preobrazhenski and Semenovski after the villages in which the games took place. These regiments were to be powerful

forces in war and peace for many decades thereafter.

Peter also indulged in time-consuming debauchery. His mother's attempt to domesticate him through marriage to Yevdokia (Eudoxia) Lopukhina in 1689 was unsuccessful. His entourage included such foreigners as Andrew Ostermann, son of a German pastor, the Scottish general Patrick Gordon, and the Swiss Francis Lefort. His friends ranged from such low-born Russians as Aleksandr Menshikov, who rose from selling pies on Moscow streets to become a prince, and a former swineherd, Pavel Yaguzhinsky, to scions of the most ancient noble families of Muscovy.

Peter's personal rule opened with a renewal of the war against the Turks and Tatars. Building a sizable fleet (Russia's first), he sailed it down the Don River and in 1696 captured Azov. He did not pursue the war, however, believing that he would need allies to defeat the Ottomans. To this end he formed the Great Embassy of 1697, a group of 250 with which he traveled incognito (not very successfully, however, since he was nearly seven feet tall and could be recognized easily). In a year and a half he visited Swedish, Prussian, Dutch, English, and Austrian (Habsburg) territories, observing and learning everything he could, from navigation to statecraft, though he gained no allies against the Turks.

The *streltsy*, many of whom had supported Sophia, raised a revolt to restore her to power. This brought him hurrying back to Moscow. Crushing the rebellion, Peter executed a thousand or more of them and compelled Sophia to take monastic vows. He forced his wife, whom he suspected of supporting the uprising, to do the same.

Acting on what he saw in the West, he ordered the upper classes, though not the peasants or clergy, to shave off their beards and adopt European dress. Also, he decreed the use of the Julian calendar. Although the Gregorian calendar, with its superior astronomical merits, had been introduced into Roman Catholic countries in 1582, several Protestant countries still followed the Julian calendar. Peter copied them in this and consistently chose to emulate Protestant rather than Catholic Europe.

(The Julian calendar, or "Old Style," is used in dating the events that follow, except when reference is made to events that are related to the West. In the latter case the Gregorian calendar is used, and the date is followed by the words "New Style.")

The Great Northern War. Abandoning the notion of a grand European alliance against the Turks, Peter hurriedly concluded peace with the Ottomans in 1700 and promptly joined in an adventure against Sweden, then at the height of its power. Augustus II, king of Poland (and, as Frederick Augustus I, elector of Saxony), had already enlisted Denmark as an ally against Sweden, and Peter joined them in the Great Northern War. In November 1700 he was besieging the Swedish fortress of Narva when the army of Charles XII, the brilliant young Swedish general and king, crushed and scattered the much more numerous Russian army. Unwisely considering Peter beaten, Charles became embroiled in inconclusive fighting with Augustus.

Raising another army, Peter sent it back to the northern Baltic area in 1701. Having driven the Swedes from the Neva River delta on the Gulf of Finland, Peter in 1703 began to build a new capital there, to be called St. Petersburg. A



THE MANSSELL COLLECTION

Peter the Great is shown in a caricature as a barber cutting off a boyar's beard. On returning from western Europe in 1698, he tried to Westernize the Russians by having men of the upper classes shave off their beards.

fort built on an island in the Neva soon shielded the city, but Russia's ability to hold the Swedes at bay remained uncertain. In 1706, Poland was compelled to conclude peace with Sweden, and in early 1708 the Swedish army was ready to start for Moscow.

An uprising in 1707 of the Don Cossacks, led by Konrad Bulavin, resembled Razin's earlier rebellion. It soon spread widely. The Bashkirs on the Volga also revolted. These and other uprisings were responses to Peter's reforms and levies, designed to make possible the continuation of the war.

Charles XII diverted his attack south to the Ukraine, where the Dnieper Cossack *hetman* Ivan Mazepa stood ready to help him. Having crushed Bulavin's rebellion (though the Bashkir rising continued), Peter cut off Charles' supplies and won a decisive victory over the Swedes at Poltava in 1709, sending Charles XII and Mazepa fleeing from the scene to Ottoman sanctuary.

The Turks resumed war with Russia in 1710, and Peter and an inferior force found themselves encircled near the Prut River in the summer of 1711. Peter was fortunate to escape with a peace agreement, whereby he yielded Azov and, in effect, his aspirations for a footing on the Black Sea. Having built a northern navy (the southern one had been lost by the Turkish treaty), Peter at this time resumed the Great Northern War, with Saxony, Poland, Denmark, Hannover, and Prussia as his allies. He occupied most of Finland and the Baltic coast down to Riga, defeated the Swedish navy at sea, and later raided Sweden itself.



RIJKSMUSEUM/GIRAUDON

Peter the Great, proclaimed emperor in 1721 after his decisive victories over Sweden, is portrayed by Aert de Gelder, one of Rembrandt's most gifted students.

Peter and Frederick I, Sweden's new monarch, signed the Treaty of Nystad in 1721. Russia retained Livonia, Estonia, and the territory around the Gulf of Finland. In celebration of the treaty, Russia was proclaimed an empire, and Peter I was given the titles of emperor and "the Great." Russia had become a European power and thenceforth could not be threatened by either Sweden or Poland. The Ottoman Empire remained a formidable threat, however.

Russia was also firmly established beyond the Ural and the Caucasus mountains. The western and southern coasts of the Caspian Sea were annexed from Persia after a campaign in 1722-1723 but were retroceded in 1732. Commercial and diplomatic interests were pursued with the Turkic peoples of Central Asia as well as with India and China.

Domestic Reforms. Many of Peter's domestic reforms, undertaken during the wars of his reign, were influenced by military needs of the moment. But their general direction was shaped by his determination to imitate western Europe, especially its commercial and seafaring Protestant north. Peter created a new standing army equipped with artillery, whose nucleus was the Guards regiments but which also included separate Cossack detachments as well as ordinary Russian units of the line. He was the founder of the Russian navy, supplied by a new shipbuilding industry.

In 1711 he established the Senate, which was charged with the supervision of all governmental bodies. It was linked with the monarch by a procurator general. The first to be appointed was Pavel Yaguzhinsky. In place of the previous 50-odd *prikazy* (governmental departments), Peter formed "colleges" modeled on Swedish practice, which were supposed to make their decisions by majority vote. Originally colleges were set up for war, navy, foreign affairs, state income, state expenses, justice, financial oversight, commerce, and manufacturing.

Peter levied every indirect tax he could think of on the hapless population. In 1718 he instituted a tax on individuals in place of the previous tax on households. When taxes had been assessed by household, the tendency had been for more peasants to crowd into fewer households. As a result of the change from household to individual assessment, the village communes began to redistribute land on a regular basis so that the size of households would be related to the amount of land tilled. This redistribution enabled the individuals making up these households to pay their taxes from the produce of the land tilled.

Probably the result of this new tax was to strengthen the redistributory commune, characteristic of Great Russian areas. The village commune had had social and administrative functions for centuries. But the practice by which the commune also periodically redistributed land probably evolved in the 17th century on the lands of private landlords or gentry. Redistribution was introduced among peasants on state lands only later, in the reign of Catherine II. In the Ukraine the commune tended to be based on hereditary and not redistributory tenure.

The first modern census in Russia was taken in 1722. Its purpose was to assure that everyone paid the poll, or head, tax.

Indirect and direct taxation seem to have yielded in 1724 more than five times the revenue of 1680. A mercantilist-inspired tariff was also enacted in 1724 to protect metallurgical and textile industries either created or expanded by the czar.

In 1722, Peter issued a Table of Ranks (14 in number), which fixed the ranks through which members of the gentry (and others) were supposed to advance by merit in the civil and military service. Nongentry could become gentry for life by reaching the fifth rank. They could become hereditary gentry if they reached the ninth rank, and some did. Peter also promulgated a single-succession law in 1714, intended to terminate the division of land among all sons in a family. The Table of Ranks was in effect until 1917. The single-succession law was repealed in 1731.

Peter did the greatest violence to the sensibilities of his subjects with his ecclesiastical and cultural changes. When the patriarch died in 1700, Peter did not replace him. The patriarch's administrative functions were performed by Stefan Yavorsky, one of a series of 17th century clerics influenced by Polish Catholic methods. Yavorsky and other churchmen offended by Peter's Protestant leanings placed their hopes in the heir, Aleksei, son of Eudoxia. But Peter and his son became increasingly estranged. After several ultimatums, Peter tricked him into returning home from Austria. Aleksei died in Russia, probably under torture, in 1718.

By this time Stefan Yavorsky had lost influence, and Peter relied on Feofan Prokopovich, a bishop, to introduce in 1720 the Ecclesiastical Regulation for a new "college." Soon to be called the Most Holy Governing Synod, it administered the Orthodox Church. The whole settlement of church affairs, patterned on Lutheran models, was to determine church-state relations in Russia until 1917.

A series of "ciphering" schools were founded by Peter to educate the gentry, but they were not to last. Russia's educational system in the 18th century was to be based on the ecclesiastical

seminaries created according to the Ecclesiastical Regulation, of which there were 46 in 1727. Instruction was mostly conducted in Latin, the language of Protestant as well as Roman Catholic scholasticism. Peter also wished to found a new Academy of Sciences. It was officially inaugurated under Catherine I, his successor, who was virtually illiterate.

SUCCESSION CRISES AND EUROPEAN ALLIANCES (1725–1762)

Catherine I was the daughter of a Lithuanian peasant. She had been Aleksandr Menshikov's mistress when Peter met her in 1705. The czar made her his mistress in that year and married her in 1712. Menshikov governed Russia during her reign. When she died in 1727, having designated Aleksei's son Pyotr (Peter's grandson) as her successor, Menshikov hoped to retain his power. However, Pyotr, on succeeding as Peter II in 1727, preferred the Dolgoruky family. He had intended to marry a Dolgoruky princess but died of smallpox at the age of 15.

Peter had not named a successor. The Supreme Privy Council, created during the reign of Catherine I, chose Anna Ivanovna, daughter of the co-czar Ivan V and widow of the duke of Courland. The council stipulated a series of "conditions" under which she could rule only by its consent. Anna accepted the conditions, but after becoming empress she used regiments of the Guards (which had already determined Catherine's succession in 1725) to repudiate the "conditions" and abolish the council.

Anna favored Germans during her reign—for example, Ostermann in foreign affairs and Ernst Johann Biron (Bühren), her lover and chief adviser. Biron is believed to have been responsible for the execution and exile of many thousands of her subjects. Anna designated as her successor the infant Ivan Antonovich, her grandnephew and the great-grandson of Ivan V. Anna died in October 1740 and was succeeded by the infant Ivan VI. His reign lasted only until November 1741 when Yelizaveta Petrovna, daughter of Peter the Great and Catherine I, supported by the Guards, seized the throne and was proclaimed Empress Elizabeth.

Elizabeth strove to link her own image with that of her father. Her abolition of capital punishment symbolized her break with Anna's repressive reign. However, she was not active as either a reformer or ruler, and the country's financial conditions deteriorated during her reign. As her successor she chose her sister's son, Karl Peter Ulrich, duke of Holstein-Gottorp, who had been raised as heir to the Swedish throne. Peter was brought to St. Petersburg at the age of 14. He disliked Russia and admired Prussia, especially its ruler Frederick the Great.

On Elizabeth's death in December 1761, Peter succeeded as Peter III. But after a reign of only six months, he was overthrown by another Guardist coup guided by his wife, Catherine, who had been born a princess of Anhalt-Zerbst. She came to terms with Russia more successfully than her husband and in time became known as Catherine the Great.

Domestic and Foreign Affairs. Between the reigns of Peter I and Catherine II significant changes had occurred. The gentry's situation had greatly improved. Their rights were codified, and their compulsory military service was reduced to 25 years in 1736 and finally abolished in 1762.

Since land tenure thereafter was no longer conditional on service, the concept of private property was introduced for the gentry, who were relieved of onerous obligations to the state. But the gentry's gain was the serfs' loss, because more than ever they were treated as the gentry's personal property, almost as slaves.

During this period Russia's foreign affairs centered on Europe, though the commercial treaty of Kyakhtha was signed with China in 1727 and an Orthodox mission was established in Peking. From 1726 to 1761, Russia's chief ally was Austria, though Russia traded more with Britain than with Austria. In 1733–1735, Russia and Austria fought the War of the Polish Succession against France, long a supporter of Russia's old antagonists the Ottoman Empire, Poland, and Sweden. In that war the French candidate for the throne of Poland lost. In 1736–1739, Russia fought the Ottomans with Austrian support, but its gains were minor. In 1741–1743 a Russo-Austrian war against Sweden led to a small adjustment of the frontier in Finland in Russia's favor. In the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–1748), Russia played an insignificant role, but it confirmed the fears of Count Aleksei Bestuzhev-Ryumin, who managed foreign affairs under Elizabeth, that Prussia would become a threat to Russia.

In the "diplomatic revolution" of 1756, the old enemies Austria and France joined hands, while Prussia allied itself with Britain. In the ensuing Seven Years' War (1756–1763), Russia continued to fight alongside Austria but refused to declare war on Britain. In 1760, Russian forces reached Berlin. Prussia was saved from disaster at the last moment when Elizabeth died, and Peter III promptly made not only peace but an alliance with his hero Frederick the Great. The alliance was as short-lived as his reign.

In the course of these wars Russia became a full participant in Europe's dynastic struggles and produced such distinguished generals as Aleksandr Suvorov. But the cost of Russia's gains far exceeded their value.

CATHERINE THE GREAT AND PAUL I

Catherine II was acclaimed empress in 1762. She had no title to the throne under the law of 1722 and was not related by blood to previous sovereigns. Her claim rested solely on force. Her son (whose father may or may not have been Peter III) was an obvious alternative if discontented elements should try to replace her. One previous emperor, Ivan VI, was alive in prison at the start of her reign, but was killed according to prior instructions when an attempt was made to free him in 1764. Her task was to win acceptance, which she accomplished with patience and shrewdness. Her intelligence, education, and courage were impressive, and though her appetite for lovers was voracious, she was able until the last years to avoid letting her private passions interfere with matters of high policy.

Part of her strategy was to earn acclaim in the West and at home for her supposed devotion to the principles of the Enlightenment. Her sincerity in this regard has been both affirmed and denied, each side finding some apparent basis in evidence. In 1766 she summoned a legislative commission, for which she herself prepared a *Nakaz* (Instruction), drawing heavily on the writings of Montesquieu and Cesare Beccaria. After meeting for over a year (1767–1768), the commission was discharged without codifying the

laws. But Catherine was praised for such measures by the *philosophes* of France. She exchanged letters with Voltaire and arranged for Diderot to come to St. Petersburg to instruct her. Both her own and Russia's reputation abroad were heightened by these gestures, whether this was justifiable or not.

The interruption of the commission was occasioned by the outbreak of war with the Ottoman Empire in 1768. The Russian army and navy acquitted themselves well, and in 1774 the Treaty of Kuchuk Kainarji yielded Russia a stretch of Black Sea coast and the ill-defined right to protect Balkan Christians. The Crimea had been occupied by Russia but was declared independent by the treaty. It was annexed, however, by Catherine in 1783.

In the fall of 1773, Yemelyan Pugachev, a Don Cossack, raised a rebellion which, due to the army's commitment to the war with the Turks, spread over a vast part of the Volga Valley and adjoining areas. Pugachev announced that he was Peter III and proclaimed the end of serfdom. It took the best efforts of Suvorov and the army to crush the revolt by late 1774.

The uprising led the empress to reform local government in 1775. She created new provinces (singular, *gubernia*), of which there were 50 by 1796. Each had an appointed governor, and the gentry participated in the administration. She confirmed gentry landownership and codified their privileges by the Charter of the Gentry (1785), giving members of the gentry in each province corporate legal status.

Prince Grigori Potemkin, one of Catherine's lovers and her ablest counselor, was associated with the colonization of the Black Sea coast. In 1787 the Turks declared war again and were again beaten. By the Treaty of Jassy in 1791 (1792, New Style), the Russian frontier was pushed to the Dniester River. The Turks never again were able to mount a serious threat to Russia.

In 1772, Russia, Prussia, and Austria agreed to the first partition of Poland, whose government had become increasingly weak. The partition brought the Russian border to the Dvina-Dnieper line. Poland's belated but broadly based effort at reform after the partition led to the constitution of 1791, which made the monarchy hereditary and provided for representative government to a degree unusual in Europe at the time. Russia and Prussia responded early in 1793 by partitioning Poland for the second time. Russia gained a great part of Belorussia and the Ukraine west of the Dnieper. Austria rejoined the other two powers in a third partition in 1795, which erased Poland from the map and gained Courland and a border along the Niemen and Western Bug rivers for Russia. The map was to be redrawn in the Napoleonic Wars. But Russian ascendancy in their land was to cause the Poles anguish for much of their later history. Under Catherine, Russia also joined the Armed Neutrality (1780) against Britain during the American Revolution and fought a brief war with Sweden, which left frontiers unchanged.

Russia's population, area, industry, and agricultural output grew rapidly in the 18th century. In Catherine's reign alone, foreign trade through both Baltic and Black Sea ports increased more than threefold.

The church suffered from the secularization of lands carried out in 1764 and from the growth of anticlerical feeling and religious indifference among the increasingly Westernized upper classes.



Catherine the Great professed admiration for the ideals of the Enlightenment while acting as autocratically and with as little concern for the improvement of the condition of the peasantry as any of her predecessors.

The cultural gulf widened between the often French-speaking gentry and the wretched and oppressed peasantry.

Catherine died in 1796, and her son Paul, having felt cheated of the throne for over 30 years, became emperor as Paul I. He was unpredictable and arbitrary in his personal behavior. He began his reign by undoing almost everything that his mother had done. Some of his decrees lasted, such as his law of succession to the throne (1797), which enacted primogeniture in the male line. Some did not, such as his 1797 law that limited serf labor on gentry estates.

In 1798, Russia joined the Second Coalition against France, and in the subsequent campaigns Suvorov performed perhaps the most brilliant feats of any Russian commander in history. However, Paul suddenly withdrew from the coalition and, siding with Bonaparte, prepared to attack the British in India and elsewhere. A palace revolution may already have been maturing, but this move seemed to trigger it. Paul was deposed and killed in March 1801.

ALEXANDER I

During the reign of Alexander I, Russia moved to the very center of the European stage, at least briefly. As a child Alexander had been taken away from his father, Paul, by his grandmother, Catherine II, and given an education in the style of the West and even of the Enlightenment, leaving him more familiar with French and English than with Russian. In the judgment of one historian, Alexander was partly "the pupil of La Harpe" (his tutor, a Swiss revolutionary) and partly "the drill-master of Gatchina" (his father's palace before 1796, where Alexander learned to admire Prussian military methods). Alexander