

EIGHTH
EDITION

*Twentieth
Century
Russia*



DONALD W. TREADGOLD

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**TWENTIETH
CENTURY
RUSSIA**

DONALD W. TREADGOLD

University of Washington

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Preface to the Eighth Edition

This book attempts to summarize what is known about the main lines of development of Russia and the Soviet Union from 1900 to 1994 and to establish a sound basis for further investigation and study.

The book is organized around the chief threads of political change, but considerable space is devoted also to the transformations that occurred in the economy, literature and the other arts, and religion. Mention is made of the major developments in the non-Russian borderlands. Attention is given to the growth of Russian Marxism and Marxist organization, to the role of Marxism-Leninism as the official ideology of the Soviet state, and to the Kremlin's use of foreign Communist parties in its efforts at expansion. I have briefly sketched the main lines of policy and practice of Communist parties that have come to power outside the USSR, with or without Soviet military support, particularly with the purpose of comparing them with Soviet policy and practice.

At the time of writing, Russia has discarded communism but still suffers from the effects of seven decades of Communist rule. Archives, with some exceptions and qualifications, are open after being closed or difficult to access for many years. Thus far much has been learned, but little of it startling to those who followed the reports of émigrés and defectors. Some archival materials have probably been destroyed and some certainly remain inaccessible, so may yet in the future yield dramatic revelations. I make bold to assert that the facts and judgments made in the first edition of this book (1959) remain generally valid, while critics of those judgments have been proven wrong over and over. In this edition I have sought to use the results of recent research and thought, but no one person can claim to have read all of the scholarly publications of the past few years, and I would appreciate corrections from any reader.

In preparing the first edition, I acknowledged special indebtedness to my mother (deceased) and my wife; to John A. Armstrong, Richard Pipes, John S. Reshetar, and George E. Taylor, who are alive, and Gladys Greenwood, Franz Michael, and Udo Posch, who are deceased. My intellectual obligations are great to the late Fr. Georges Florovsky, Michael Karpovich, and Karl A. Wittfogel—who were also my dear friends. I am grateful to my Russian and Soviet colleagues and

friends, as well as those of Russian birth and extraction, who have helped me understand the history of their country (or country of origin).

The eighth edition appears after events that some of us thought might someday occur but seldom expected to live to see. Changes have been introduced that will take years or decades to be completed or to assess fully. The ten-year-old boy to whom the book was first dedicated has grown to become an eminent scholar (in a related field, Byzantine history), and the author is not only older but in some ways gladder, in some ways sadder.

In this edition revisions have been made on almost every page, with many re-writings and substitutions. Dates are given in Old Style—the Julian calendar, up to February 1/14, 1918, when the Bolsheviks adopted the Gregorian calendar—and thereafter in New Style. Transliteration from Cyrillic follows Library of Congress practice except when common usage has altered names, with some resultant inconsistency. Romanization of Chinese names accords with Wade-Giles generally until 1949, pinyin thereafter, except that province names are consistently pinyin and cities bear the name they bore at the time. Some are under the impression that the adoption of pinyin meant renaming, which is quite wrong. I shall not explain the (I trust commonsensical) exceptions I have made. My thanks go to Jane Raese and Peter Kracht at Westview Press and copy editor Jon Taylor Howard for their valued and professional assistance.

Donald W. Treadgold
Seattle, February 7, 1994

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PART ONE

New Currents in Old Russia

Introduction: Into Totalitarianism and Out of It

The Peoples and the Land

Russia, or the Russian Federation (both names are legal), contains slightly more than half the people who inhabited the Soviet Union (a shortened form of the official designation, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), and four-fifths of its territory. The Russians are the predominant people of Russia; in contrast, in some of the former Soviet Union's ethnically named subdivisions, the peoples concerned are not even the majority (for example, Kazakhs in Kazakhstan, Abkhazians in Abkhazia; the Latvians keep a sliver-like edge in Latvia).

The Russian language, together with Belarusian and Ukrainian, make up the Eastern Slavic subdivision of the Slavic branch of the Indo-European family.¹ The three peoples who speak them are linked not only by language but by their traditional religion, Eastern Orthodox Christianity. The Russians, however, are by no means Russia's only ethnic group. The Russian republic has thirty-one administrative subdivisions named for what is or was the most numerous non-Russian people of the area concerned. The two politically most active in the early 1990's are the Tatars of Kazan (the Crimean Tatars seem more concerned with reestablishing themselves in their former homeland than with political self-assertion) and the Yakuts or Sakha. Both are Turkic,² as are the Chuvash and Bashkirs; the

¹ The two other subdivisions are the Western Slavic (mainly Polish, Czech, and Slovak) and Southern Slavic (Serbo-Croatian, Slovene, Bulgarian, and Macedonian).

² The Uralic and Altaic language family, totally different from Indo-European tongues, is, according to one classification, composed of the Uralic, in turn divided into Finno-Ugric (first subdivision, Finnic: Finnish, Estonian, Mari, Mordvinian, and Lapp; second subdivision, Ugric: Hungarian, Mansi, and Khanty) and Samoyedic; and Altaic (Turkish, Mongolian, and Manchu or Tungus). Most of the

Udmurts (formerly Votiaks) and Mari are Finnic; the Buriats and Kalmyks are Mongols, and dozens of other small peoples dot the map of Russia from the Gulf of Finland to the Bering Sea. The Chuvash and Udmurts are Orthodox Christians, but most of the other Uralic and Altaic peoples are Muslims or pagans, except for the Kalmyks and roughly half the Buriats, who are Buddhists.

Of the units that formerly made up the USSR, three have gained independence and have distanced themselves from the rest: Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania; eleven are independent but are currently part of the Commonwealth of Independent States (*Sodruzhestvo Nezavisimykh Gosudarstv*), or CIS. Declarations of sovereignty and independence have been endemic since August 1991, and what those terms are going to mean in a given instance is still being worked out.

The first Slavic state on what later became Russian soil was organized in the ninth century in the region of Kiev. By 1240, when the Mongols invaded Europe, the Kievan state of “Rus” had disintegrated into small independent principalities. An important effect of the Mongol conquest was the devastation of the vicinity of Kiev and the consequent separation of the Eastern Slavs into two sections, to the west and northeast of the ruined city. The western area fell under the control of the large Lithuanian state, which first accepted dynastic union with Poland (1385) and then full union (1569). The northeast came to be ruled by the Grand Prince of Moscow, who in effect assumed the position of viceroy for the Mongols. About 1450 the Muscovite principate threw off its dependence on the Mongols (by this time Tatarized, so often called simply “Tatars”). In 1721, under Peter the Great, Muscovy was renamed the Russian Empire. During the next two centuries almost all Eastern Slavs were brought under the rule of St. Petersburg (Petrograd 1914–24, Leningrad 1924–91), which Peter built on a marsh by the Gulf of Finland and made his capital.

Many non-Slavs also inhabited the Empire. A small Jewish community had appeared in seventeenth-century Muscovy, and shortly before 1800 Catherine the Great established a Jewish “pale” (area of settlement) in the territories newly annexed from Poland. Finnic peoples lived intermingled with Russians, and Finland proper was taken from Sweden during the Napoleonic Wars. In 1814 the Congress of Vienna awarded a truncated “Congress Poland” to Russia. Both Finland and Poland achieved independence after the Russian Revolution. The Empire also included three other Christian peoples: Romanians (“Moldavians”) in Bessarabia, Armenians and Georgians in the Caucasus, and, almost entirely Muslim, the Central Asian Turks (today known as Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, and Turkmen) and the Persian Tajiks. Central Asia was conquered in the late nineteenth century, Bessarabia and the Caucasus earlier.

peoples who speak all the Uralic languages listed (except for most Hungarians) live in the Russian Federation; the same is true of sizable minorities of the three Altaic groups listed.

The Georgians and Armenians had a history of civilization and independence that long antedated the history of the Russians. As the new ideology of nationalism spread through nineteenth-century Europe, at least the intellectuals among peoples who in modern times had never known nationhood, such as the Ukrainians, developed nationalist aspirations. Sometimes nationalism went hand in hand with socialism, and St. Petersburg severely repressed the expression of such ideas.

Only in the late nineteenth century, however, were active measures of Russification carried out. The very name “Russian Empire” may seem to imply an official preference for the Russian language and those who spoke it, but in fact it was a cosmopolitan state, where the imperial family was mostly German through almost two centuries of foreign marriages, and up to the mid-nineteenth century high officialdom was drawn from several European backgrounds. Discrimination was practiced against the Jewish religion but not against Jews who converted to Orthodox Christianity. The name “Ukrainian” was unknown to imperial law, which used the term “Little Russia” (Malorossiiia). On the positive side, Finland enjoyed much autonomy until the Revolution, Poland until the Revolution of 1830. There was little effort to interfere with the religion and customs of the Muslim peoples or the Lamaistic Buddhists and pagans of Asiatic Russia. Schismatic (Old Believers, who had broken with the official church in 1667) and sectarian (Dukhobors, Molokane, Khlysty, Skoptsy) Russian Christians suffered more from governmental pressures than non-Christians (except Jews). In the Baltic region a German upper class descended from the Teutonic Knights ruled over Estonian and Latvian peasants and contributed many men to imperial officialdom. Individual foreigners, especially Germans but also Frenchmen, Englishmen, Scots, and others, received privileged treatment and held high positions in the government, universities, and professions. In general the tsars treated a multinational state as if it were a single nation but refrained from pressing such a policy to its logical conclusion.

The land is mostly flat and cold, and much is not tillable. Inadequate transportation has made it difficult to put to use the country's immense store of natural resources. European Russia's vast network of rivers, most of which rise near Moscow and flow to the Caspian, Black, Baltic, and White Seas, is useful when frozen or free from ice, but for much of the year it satisfies neither condition. The rivers of Siberia are wide, long, and of little use for commerce. They run from south to north to empty into the Arctic Ocean, and though Cossacks originally crossed Siberia by boat, using the rivers' tributaries and portages between them, modern commerce does not lend itself to the same methods. Roads are too few and often poor, reduced to mud by the spring thaws. Railroads are extensively used but in 1994 are sadly in need of upgrading; the same is true of the gigantic national airline, Aeroflot.

Mountains are of little benefit. High ranges lie along the borders with China and nowhere else. Through the Ili gap in northern Sinkiang many nomadic conquerors passed en route to the European steppes; the Urals—by American or