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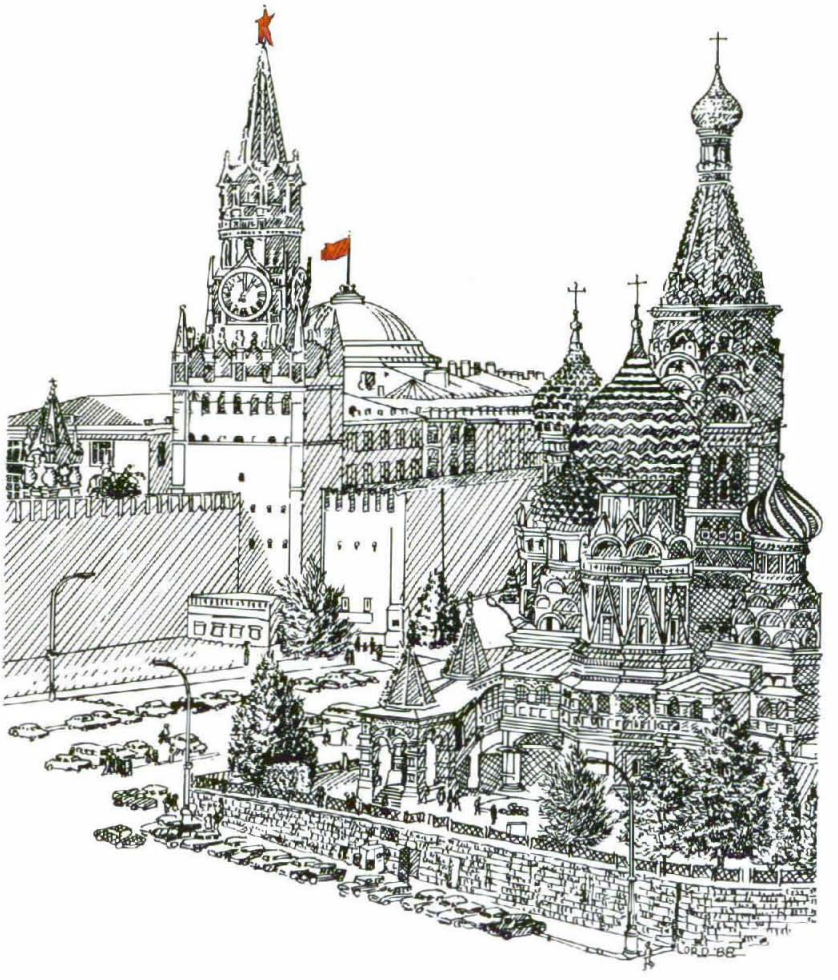
Soviet Union
a country study



Soviet Union
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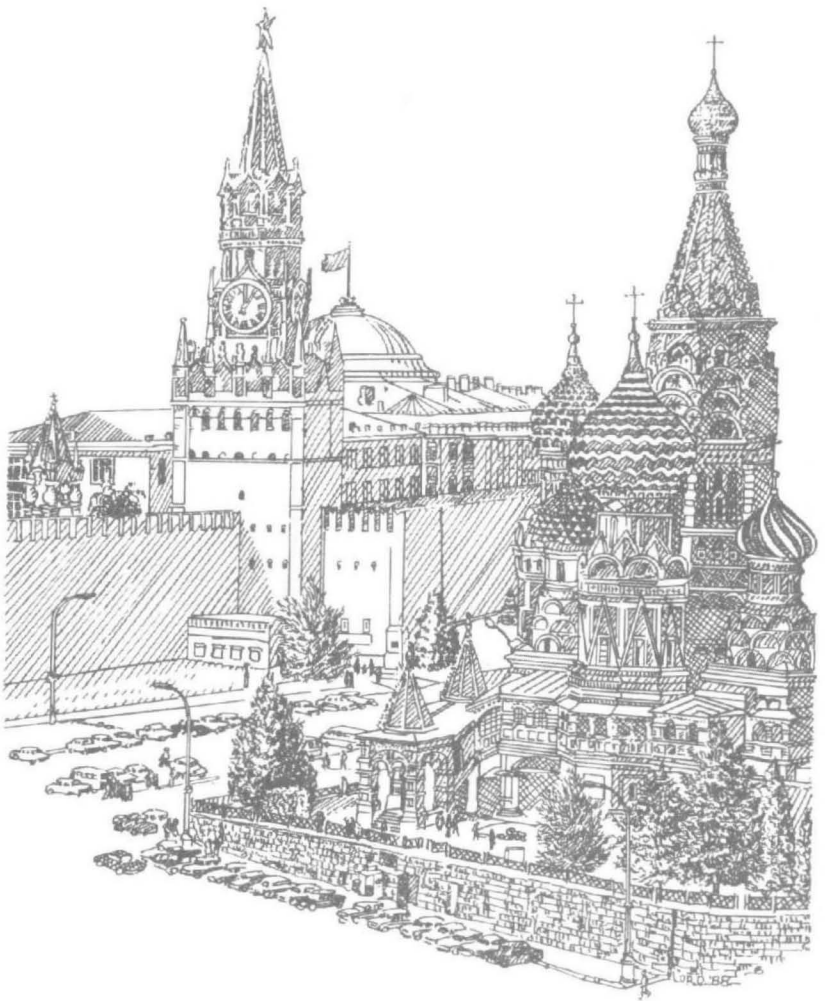
Federal Research Division
Library of Congress
Edited by
Raymond E. Zickel
Research Completed
May 1989



On the cover: Spasskaia (Savior) Tower and the Kremlin Wall with St. Basil Cathedral on the right and the Council of Ministers building in the background

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Foreword

This volume is one in a continuing series of books prepared by the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress under the Country Studies—Area Handbook Program sponsored by the Department of the Army. The last page of this book lists the other published studies.

Most books in the series deal with a particular foreign country, describing and analyzing its political, economic, social, and national security systems and institutions, and examining the interrelationships of those systems and the ways they are shaped by cultural factors. Each study is written by a multidisciplinary team of social scientists. The authors seek to provide a basic understanding of the observed society, striving for a dynamic rather than a static portrayal. Particular attention is devoted to the people who make up the society, their origins, dominant beliefs and values, their common interests and the issues on which they are divided, the nature and extent of their involvement with national institutions, and their attitudes toward each other and toward their social system and political order.

The books represent the analysis of the authors and should not be construed as an expression of an official United States government position, policy, or decision. The authors have sought to adhere to accepted standards of scholarly objectivity. Corrections, additions, and suggestions for changes from readers will be welcomed for use in future editions.

Louis R. Mortimer
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The authors also wish to note the significant contributions of persons not on the staff of the Federal Research Division. Jimmy Pritchard furnished the vast majority of the photographs used in this volume, including some taken expressly for the study. David M. Goldfrank wrote the portion of Chapter 1 that deals with Russian history from 1855 to 1917 and reviewed all of Chapter 1 and Chapter 2. Paul Goble provided commentary on Soviet nationalities, and Graham Vernon reviewed Chapter 17 and Chapter 18.

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Preface

Soviet Union: A Country Study seeks to present factual descriptions and objective interpretations of a broad range of social, political, economic, and national security aspects of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s. The authors synthesized information from books, scholarly journals, official reports of governments and international organizations, foreign and domestic newspapers, and conference reports and proceedings.

This volume supersedes the *Area Handbook for the Soviet Union,* first published in 1971. Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, the Soviet Union was politically, economically, and socially stagnant, according to many Western observers. After Mikhail S. Gorbachev came to power in March 1985, however, unprecedented events portending substantial change began to occur. To revitalize the critically ailing economy, Gorbachev introduced *perestroika;* to alter the political power structure, he introduced *demokratizatsiia;* and to provide information needed to implement both, he introduced *glasnost'*. These three slogans represented evolving concepts rather than formal programs with specific plans and time schedules. Information about events occurring in the late 1980s came in such volume that many observers were overwhelmed. The long-range impact of the events can be realistically assessed only after careful analysis of accurate and complete data and the perspective granted with the passage of time. Meanwhile, the basic elements of the Soviet Union, such as history, geography, and social, economic, and military structures, as described in this volume, can help readers understand the events as they occur.

This volume covers the salient features of the Soviet Union in nineteen chapters that attempt to provide balanced and straightforward descriptions and analyses of the subject matter. Readers wishing to obtain more information on subjects dealt with in each chapter can refer to the bibliographic essay at the end of the chapter. A complete Bibliography at the end of the book provides additional sources of information and complete citations. A Country Profile and a Chronology are also included as reference aids. The Glossary furnishes succinct definitions of many specialized terms used in the book. Measurements are given in the metric system; a conversion table is provided to assist readers unfamiliar with metric measurements (see table 1, Appendix A).

Because confusion often arises with respect to the use of the words *socialism* and *communism,* a note of caution is in order concerning

their use in this book. The Soviet Union and other countries that people in the West generally refer to as *communist* usually describe themselves as *socialist,* making the claim that they are working toward communism, which Karl Marx described as a more advanced historical stage than socialism. In this book, *socialist* and *socialism* are generally used in the sense of Union of Soviet *Socialist* Republics. Soviet *socialism* has little resemblance to the democratic socialism of some West European countries. In this book, *communism* means a doctrine based on revolutionary Marxian socialism and Marxism-Leninism, which is the official ideology of the Soviet Union.

Readers specifically interested in information on the Russian nationality and the Russian Orthodox Church should note that information on these subjects is contained in a number of chapters. Hence, to avoid redundancy, the space devoted to these subjects in the chapter on nationalities and religions (Chapter 4) is proportionately less than that devoted to other nationalities and religions. Readers are especially referred to Chapter 1, which is primarily concerned with the history of the Russian nationality and frequently refers to the Russian Orthodox Church.

Statistics derived from Soviet sources, especially those dealing with the economy and transportation, have sometimes been disputed by Western authorities. Such statistics, occasionally containing unexplained discrepancies, have been used as the only available alternative and have been identified as of Soviet origin. Population statistics used in the book were based on the 1989 census. Because, however, complete results of that census had not been released or fully analyzed at the time the book was being written, some statistics were based on the 1979 census.

Transliteration of Russian names and terms generally follows the Library of Congress transliteration system, but geographic names follow the United States Board of Geographic Names romanization system. Exceptions were made, however, if the name or term was listed in *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary.* For example, Leon Trotsky was used instead of Lev Trotskii and Moscow instead of Moskva. Most of the Russian terms used in the book were not in Webster's and were therefore transliterated and italicized as foreign words. Hence the term for one administrative subdivision *raion* was transliterated and italicized, but the term for another subdivision, oblast, listed in Webster's was not. For most organizational names, English translations—and if needed the acronym derived therefrom—were used. If a transliterated organizational name or its acronym was considered sufficiently well known, however, it was used. For example, most readers will know

that the acronym KGB stands for the Soviet secret police and to use CSS (based on Committee for State Security—a translation of the name that is transliterated Komitet gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti) made little sense.

Table A. Chronology of Important Events

Period	Description
NINTH CENTURY	
ca. 860	Rurik, a Varangian, according to earliest chronicle of Kievan Rus', rules Novgorod and founds Rurikid Dynasty.
ca. 880	Prince Oleg, a Varangian, first historically verified ruler of Kievan Rus'.
TENTH CENTURY	
911	Prince Oleg, after attacking Constantinople, concludes treaty with Byzantine Empire favorable to Kievan Rus'.
944	Prince Igor' compelled by Constantinople to sign treaty adverse to Kievan Rus'.
ca. 955	Princess Olga, while regent of Kievan Rus', converts to Christianity.
971	Prince Sviatoslav makes peace with Byzantine Empire.
988	Prince Vladimir converts Kievan Rus' to Christianity.
ELEVENTH CENTURY	
1015	Prince Vladimir's death leads Rurikid princes into fratricidal war that continues until 1036.
1019	Prince Iaroslav (the Wise) of Novgorod assumes throne of Kievan Rus'.
1036	Prince Iaroslav the Wise ends fratricidal war and later codifies laws of Kievan Rus' into *Ruska Pravda* (Rus' Justice).
1037	Prince Iaroslav the Wise defeats Pechenegs; construction begins on St. Sofia Cathedral in Kiev.
1051	Ilarion becomes first native metropolitan of Orthodox Church in Kievan Rus'.
TWELFTH CENTURY	
1113-25	Kievan Rus' experiences revival under Grand Prince Vladimir Monomakh.
1136	Republic of Novgorod gains independence from Kievan Rus'.
1147	Moscow first mentioned in chronicles.
1156	Novgorod acquires its own archbishop.

Table A.—Continued

Period	Description
1169	Armies of Prince Andrei Bogoliubskii of Vladimir-Suzdal' sack Kiev; Andrei assumes title "Grand Prince of Kiev and all Rus'" but chooses to reside in Suzdal'.
THIRTEENTH CENTURY	
1219-41	Mongols invade: Kiev falls in 1240; Novgorod and Moscow submit to Mongol "yoke" without resisting.
1242	Aleksandr Nevskii successfully defends Novgorod against Teutonic attack.
1253	Prince Daniil of Galicia-Volhynia accepts royal crown of Kievan Rus' from pope.
FOURTEENTH CENTURY	
1327	Ivan, prince of Moscow, nicknamed Kalita ("Money Bags"), affirmed as "Grand Prince of Vladimir" by Mongols; Moscow becomes seat of metropolitan of Russian Orthodox Church.
1380	Dmitrii Donskoi defeats Golden Horde at Battle of Kulikovo, but Mongol domination continues until 1480.
FIFTEENTH CENTURY	
1462	Ivan III becomes grand prince of Muscovy and first Muscovite ruler to use titles of tsar and "Ruler of all Rus'."
1478	Muscovy defeats Novgorod.
1485	Muscovy conquers Tver'.
SIXTEENTH CENTURY	
1505	Vasilii III becomes grand prince of Muscovy.
1510	Muscovy conquers Pskov.
1533	Grand Prince Ivan IV named ruler of Muscovy at age three.
1547	Ivan IV (the Terrible or the Dread) crowned tsar of Muscovy.
1552	Ivan IV conquers Kazan' Khanate.
1556	Ivan IV conquers Astrakhan' Khanate.
1565	*Oprichnina* of Ivan IV creates a state within the state.

Table A.—Continued

Period	Description
1571	Tatars raid Moscow.
1581	Ermak begins conquest of Siberia.
1584	Fedor I crowned tsar.
1589	Patriarchate of Moscow established.
1596	Union of Brest establishes Uniate Church.
1598	Rurikid Dynasty ends with death of Fedor; Boris Godunov named tsar; Time of Troubles begins.
SEVENTEENTH CENTURY	
1601	Three years of famine begin.
1605	Fedor II crowned tsar; First False Dmitrii subsequently named tsar after Fedor II's murder.
1606	Vasilii Shuiskii named tsar.
1606-07	Bolotnikov leads revolt.
1610	Second False Dmitrii proclaimed tsar.
1610-13	Poles occupy Moscow.
1611-12	Minin and Pozharskii organize counterattack against Poles.
1613	Mikhail Romanov crowned tsar, founding Romanov Dynasty.
1631	Metropolitan Mohila founds academy in Kiev.
1645	Alexis crowned tsar.
1648	Ukrainian Cossacks, led by Bohdan Khmel'nyts'kyi, revolt against Polish landowners and gentry.
1649	Serfdom fully established by law.
1654	Treaty of Pereyaslavl' places Ukraine under tsarist rule.
1667	Church council in Moscow anathemizes Old Belief but removes Patriarch Nikon; Treaty of Andrusovo ends war with Poland.
1670-71	Stenka Razin leads revolt.
1676	Fedor III crowned tsar.

Table A.—Continued

Period	Description
1682	Half brothers Ivan V and Peter I named co-tsars; Peter's half sister, Sofia, becomes regent.
1689	Peter I (the Great) forces Sofia to resign regency; Treaty of Nerchinsk ends period of conflict with China.
1696	Ivan V dies, leaving Peter the Great sole tsar; port of Azov captured from Ottoman Empire.
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY	
1700	Calendar reformed; war with Sweden begins.
1703	St. Petersburg founded; becomes capital of Russia in 1713.
1705–11	Bashkirs revolt.
1708	First Russian newspaper published.
1709	Swedes defeated at Battle of Poltava.
1710	Cyrillic alphabet reformed.
1721	Treaty of Nystad ends Great Northern War with Sweden and establishes Russian presence on Baltic Sea; Peter the Great proclaims Muscovy the Russian Empire; Holy Synod replaces patriarchate.
1722	Table of Ranks established.
1723–32	Russia gains control of southern shore of Caspian Sea.
1725	Catherine I crowned empress of Russia.
1727	Peter II crowned emperor of Russia.
1730	Anna crowned empress of Russia.
1740	Ivan VI crowned emperor of Russia.
1741	Elizabeth crowned empress of Russia.
1762	Peter III crowned emperor of Russia; abolishes compulsory state service for the gentry; Catherine II (the Great) crowned empress of Russia.
1768–74	War with Ottoman Empire ends with Treaty of Kuchuk-Kainarji.

Table A.—Continued

Period	Description
1772	Russia participates in first partition of Poland.
1773–74	Emelian Pugachev leads peasant revolt.
1785	Catherine II confirms nobility's privileges in Charter to the Nobility.
1787–92	War with Ottoman Empire ends with Treaty of Jassy; Ottomans recognize 1783 Russian annexation of Crimea.
1793 and 1795	Russia participates in second and third partitions of Poland.
1796	Paul crowned emperor of Russia; establishes new law of succession.
NINETEENTH CENTURY	
1801	Alexander I crowned emperor; conquest of Caucasus region begins.
1809	Finland annexed from Sweden and awarded autonomous status.
1812	Napoleon's army occupies Moscow but is then driven out of Russia.
1817–19	Baltic peasants liberated from serfdom but given no land.
1825	"Decembrists' revolt" fails; Nicholas I crowned emperor.
1830	Polish uprising crushed.
1833	"Autocracy, Orthodoxy, and nationality" accepted as guiding principles by regime.
1837	First Russian railroad, from St. Petersburg to Tsarskoe Selo, opens; Aleksandr Pushkin, foremost Russian writer, dies in duel.
1840s and 1850s	Slavophiles debate Westernizers over Russia's future.
1849	Russia helps to put down anti-Habsburg Hungarian rebellion at Austria's request.
1853–56	Russia fights Britain, France, Sardinia, and Ottoman Empire in Crimean War; Russia forced to accept peace settlement dictated by its opponents.

Table A.—Continued

Period	Description
1855	Alexander II crowned emperor.
1858	Treaty of Aigun signed with China; northern bank of Amur River ceded to Russia.
1860	Treaty of Beijing signed with China; Ussuri River region awarded to Russia.
1861	Alexander II emancipates serfs.
1863	Polish rebellion unsuccessful.
1864	Judicial system reformed; zemstvos created.
1869	*War and Peace* by Lev Tolstoy (1828–1910) published.
1873–74	Army reformed; Russian youths go "to the people."
1875	Kuril Islands yielded to Japan in exchange for southern Sakhalin.
1877–78	War with Ottoman Empire ends with Treaty of San Stefano; independent Bulgaria proclaimed.
1879	Revolutionary society Land and Liberty splits; People's Will and Black Repartition formed.
1879–80	*The Brothers Karamazov* by Fedor Dostoevskii (1821–81) published.
1881	Alexander II assassinated; Alexander III crowned emperor.
1894	Nicholas II crowned emperor.
1898	Russian Social Democratic Labor Party established and holds First Party Congress in March; Vladimir I. Lenin one of organizers of party.
TWENTIETH CENTURY	
1903	Russian Social Democratic Labor Party splits into Bolshevik and Menshevik factions.
1904–05	Russo-Japanese War ends with Russian defeat; southern Sakhalin ceded to Japan.
1905	"Bloody Sunday" massacre in January begins Revolution of 1905, a year of labor and ethnic unrest; government issues so-called October Manifesto, calling for parliamentary elections.

Table A.—Continued

Period		Description
1906		First Duma (parliament) elected.
1911		Stolypin, chief minister since 1906, assassinated.
1914		World War I begins.
1916		Rasputin murdered.
1917	March	(February, according to Julian calendar) February Revolution, in which workers riot at Petrograd; Petrograd Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies formed; Provisional Government formed; Emperor Nicholas II abdicates; Petrograd Soviet issues "Order No. 1."
	April	Demonstrations lead to Aleksandr Kerensky's assuming leadership in government; Lenin returns to Petrograd from Switzerland.
	July	Bolsheviks outlawed after attempt to topple government fails.
	September	Lavr Kornilov putsch attempt fails.
	November	(October, according to Julian calendar) Bolsheviks seize power from Provisional Government; Lenin, as leader of Bolsheviks, becomes head of state; Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (Russian Republic) formed; Constituent Assembly elected.
	December	Vecheka (secret police) created; Finns and Moldavians declare independence from Russia; Japanese occupy Vladivostok.
1918	January	Constituent Assembly dissolved; Ukraine declares its independence, followed, in subsequent months, by Armenia, Azerbaydzhan, Belorussia, Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, and Lithuania.
	February	Basmachi Rebellion begins in Central Asia; calendar changed from Julian to Gregorian.
	March	Treaty of Brest-Litovsk signed with Germany; Russia loses Poland, Finland, Baltic lands, Ukraine, and other areas; Russian Social Democratic Labor Party becomes Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik).
	April	Civil War begins.

Table A.—Continued

Period		Description
	June	Concentration camps established.
	July	Constitution of Russian Republic promulgated; imperial family murdered.
	Summer	War communism established; intervention in Civil War by foreign expeditionary forces—including those of Britain, France, and United States—begins.
	August	Attempt to assassinate Lenin fails; Red Terror begins.
	November	Treaty of Brest-Litovsk repudiated by Soviet government after Germany defeated by Allied Powers.
1919	January	Belorussia established as theoretically independent Soviet republic.
	March	Communist International (Comintern) formally founded at congress in Moscow; Ukraine established as Soviet republic.
1920	January	Blockade of Russian Republic lifted by Britain and other Allies.
	February	Peace agreement signed with Estonia; agreements with Latvia and Lithuania follow.
	April	War with Poland begins; Azerbaydzhan established as Soviet republic.
	July	Trade agreement signed with Britain.
	October	Truce reached with Poland.
	November	Red Army defeats Wrangel's army in Crimea; Armenia established as Soviet republic.
1921	March	War with Poland ends with Treaty of Riga; Red Army crushes Kronshtadt naval mutiny; New Economic Policy proclaimed; Georgia established as Soviet republic.
	Summer	Famine breaks out in Volga region.
	August	Aleksandr Blok, foremost poet of Russian Silver Age, dies; large number of intellectuals exiled.
1922	March	Transcaucasian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic formed, uniting Armenian, Azerbaydzhan, and Georgian republics.

Table A.—Continued

Period		Description
	April	Joseph V. Stalin made general secretary of party; Treaty of Rapallo signed with Germany.
	May	Lenin suffers his first stroke.
	June	Socialist Revolutionary Party members put on trial by State Political Administration; Glavlit organized with censorship function.
	December	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Soviet Union) established, comprising Russian, Ukrainian, Belorussian, and Transcaucasian republics.
1924	January	Lenin dies; constitution of Soviet Union put into force.
	February	Britain recognizes Soviet Union; other European countries follow suit later in year.
	Fall	Regime begins to delimit territories of Central Asian nationalities; Turkmenia and Uzbekistan elevated to Soviet republic status.
1925	April	Nikolai I. Bukharin calls for peasants to enrich themselves.
	November	Poet Sergei Esenin commits suicide.
	December	Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) becomes All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik).
1926	April	Grigorii V. Zinov'ev ousted from Politburo.
	October	Leon Trotsky and Lev B. Kamenev ousted from Politburo.
1927	Fall	Peasants sell government less grain than demanded because of low prices; peasant discontent increases; grain crisis begins.
	December	Fifteenth Party Congress calls for large-scale collectivization of agriculture.
1928	January	Trotsky exiled to Alma-Ata.
	May	Shakhty trial begins; first executions for "economic crimes" follow.
	July	Sixth Congress of Comintern names socialist parties main enemy of communists.
	October	Implementation of First Five-Year Plan begins.

Table A.—Continued

Period		Description
1929	January	Trotsky forced to leave Soviet Union.
	April	Law on religious associations requires registration of religious groups, authorizes church closings, and bans religious teaching.
	Fall	Red Army skirmishes with Chinese forces in Manchuria.
	October	Tadzhikistan splits from Uzbek Republic to form separate Soviet republic.
	November	Bukharin ousted from Politburo.
	December	Stalin formally declares end of New Economic Policy and calls for elimination of kulaks; forced industrialization intensifies, and collectivization begins.
1930	March	Collectivization slows temporarily.
	April	Poet Vladimir Maiakovskii commits suicide.
	November	"Industrial Party" put on trial.
1931	March	Mensheviks put on trial.
	August	School system reformed.
1932	May	Five-year plan against religion declared.
	December	Internal passports introduced for domestic travel; peasants not issued passports.
1932–33		Terror and forced famine rage in countryside, primarily in southeastern Ukrainian Republic and northern Caucasus.
1933	November	Diplomatic relations with United States established.
1934	August	Union of Writers holds its First Congress.
	September	Soviet Union admitted to League of Nations.
	December	Sergei Kirov assassinated in Leningrad; Great Terror begins, causing intense fear among general populace, and peaks in 1937 and 1938 before subsiding in latter year.
1935	February	Party cards exchanged; many members purged from party ranks.
	May	Treaties signed with France and Czechoslovakia.

Table A.—Continued

Period		Description
	Summer	Seventh Congress of Comintern calls for "united front" of political parties against fascism.
	August	Stakhanovite movement to increase worker productivity begins.
	September	New system of ranks issued for Red Army.
1936	June	Restrictive laws on family and marriage issued.
	August	Zinov'ev, Kamenev, and other high-level officials put on trial for alleged political crimes.
	September	Nikolai Ezhov replaces Genrikh Iagoda as head of NKVD (police); purge of party deepens.
	October	Soviet Union begins support for antifascists in Spanish Civil War.
	December	New constitution proclaimed; Kazakhstan and Kirgizia become Soviet republics; Transcaucasian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic splits into Armenian, Azerbaydzhan, and Georgian republics.
1937	January	Trial of "Anti-Soviet Trotskyite Center."
	June	Marshal Mikhail N. Tukhachevskii and other military leaders executed.
1938	March	Russian language required in all schools in Soviet Union.
	July	Soviet and Japanese forces fight at Lake Khasan.
	December	Lavrenty Beria replaces Ezhov; Great Terror diminishes.
1939	May	Viacheslav Molotov replaces Maksim M. Litvinov as commissar of foreign affairs; armed conflict with Japan at Halhin Gol in Mongolia continues until August.
	August	Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact signed; pact includes secret protocol.
	September	Stalin joins Adolf Hitler in partitioning Poland.
	October	Soviet forces enter Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.
	November	Remaining (western) portions of Ukraine and Belorussia incorporated into Soviet Union; Soviet forces invade Finland.

Table A.—Continued

Period		Description
	December	Soviet Union expelled from League of Nations.
1940	March	Finland sues for peace with Soviet Union.
	April	Polish officers massacred in Katyn Forest by NKVD.
	June	Northern Bukovina and Bessarabia seized from Romania and subsequently incorporated into Ukrainian Republic and newly created Moldavian Republic, respectively.
	August	Soviet Union annexes Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania; Trotsky murdered in Mexico.
1941	April	Neutrality pact signed with Japan.
	May	Stalin becomes chairman of Council of People's Commissars.
	June	Nazi Germany attacks Soviet Union under Operation Barbarossa.
	August	Soviet and British troops enter Iran.
	November	Lend-Lease Law of United States applied to Soviet Union.
	December	Soviet counteroffensive against Germany begins.
1942	May	Red Army routed at Khar'kov; Germans halt Soviet offensive; treaty signed with Britain against Germany.
	July	Battle of Stalingrad begins.
	November	Red Army starts winter offensive.
1943	February	German army units surrender at Stalingrad; 91,000 prisoners taken.
	May	Comintern dissolved.
	July	Germans defeated in tank battle at Kursk.
	September	Stalin allows Russian Orthodox Church to appoint patriarch.
	November	Teheran Conference held.
1944	January	Siege of Leningrad ends after 870 days.
	May	Crimea liberated from German army.

Table A.—Continued

Period		Description
	June	Red Army begins summer offensive.
	October	Tuva incorporated into Soviet Union; armed struggle against Soviet rule breaks out in western Ukrainian, western Belorussian, Lithuanian, and Latvian republics and continues for several years.
1945	February	Stalin meets with Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt at Yalta.
	April	Soviet Union renounces neutrality with Japan.
	May	Red Army captures Berlin.
	July–August	Potsdam Conference attended by Stalin, Harry S Truman, and Churchill, who is later replaced by Clement R. Attlee.
	August	Soviet Union declares war on Japan; Soviet forces enter Manchuria and Korea.
1946	March	Regime abolishes Ukrainian Catholic Church (Uniate); Council of People's Commissars becomes Council of Ministers.
	Summer	Beginning of "Zhdanovshchina," a campaign against Western culture.
1947		Famine in southern and central regions of European part of Soviet Union.
	September	Cominform established to replace Comintern.
1948	June	Blockade of Berlin by Soviet forces begins and lasts through May 1949.
	Summer	Trofim D. Lysenko begins his domination of fields of biology and genetics that continues until 1955.
1949	January	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance formed; campaign against "cosmopolitanism" launched.
	August	Soviet Union tests its first atomic bomb.
1952	October	All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik) becomes Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU); name of Polituro is changed to Presidium.
1953	January	Kremlin "doctors' plot" exposed, signifying political infighting.

Table A.—Continued

Period		Description
	March	Stalin dies; Georgii M. Malenkov, Beria, and Molotov form troika (triumvirate); title of party chief changes from general secretary to first secretary.
	April	"Doctors' plot" declared a provocation.
	June	Beria arrested and later shot; Malenkov, Molotov, and Nikita S. Khrushchev form troika.
	August	Soviet Union tests hydrogen bomb.
	September	Khrushchev chosen CPSU first secretary; rehabilitation of Stalin's victims begins.
1955	February	Nikolai A. Bulganin replaces Malenkov as prime minister.
	May	Warsaw Pact organized.
1956	February	Khrushchev's "secret speech" at Twentieth Party Congress exposes Stalin's crimes.
	September	Minimum wage established.
	November	Soviet forces crush Hungarian Revolution.
1957	July	"Anti-party group" excluded from CPSU leadership.
	August	First Soviet intercontinental ballistic missile tested successfully.
	October	World's first artificial satellite, Sputnik I, launched.
1958	March	Khrushchev named chairman of Council of Ministers.
	October	Nobel Prize for Literature awarded to Boris Pasternak; campaign mounted against Pasternak, who refuses to accept award.
1959	September	Khrushchev visits United States.
1960	May	Soviet air defense downs United States U-2 reconnaissance aircraft over Soviet Union.
1961	April	Cosmonaut Iurii Gagarin launched in world's first manned orbital space flight.
	July	Khrushchev meets with President John F. Kennedy in Vienna.
	August	Construction of Berlin Wall begins.

Table A.—Continued

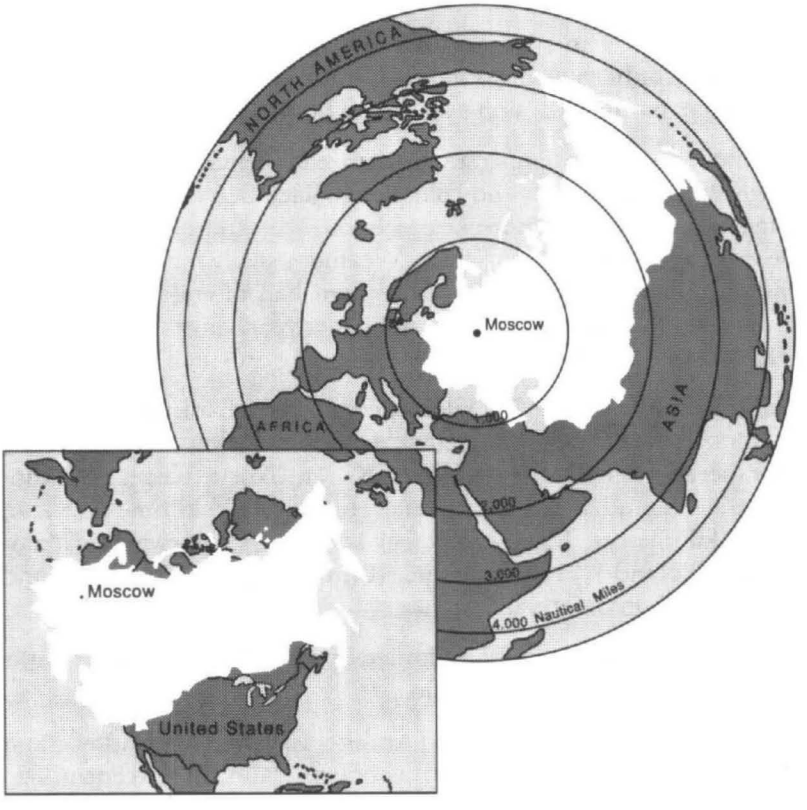
Period		Description
	October	Stalin's remains removed from Lenin Mausoleum.
1962	June	Workers' riots break out in Novocherkassk.
	October	Cuban missile crisis begins, bringing United States and Soviet Union close to war.
	November	Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* published in Soviet journal.
1963	August	Limited Test Ban Treaty signed with United States and Britain.
1964	October	Khrushchev removed from power; Leonid I. Brezhnev becomes CPSU first secretary.
1965	August	Volga Germans rehabilitated.
1966	February	Dissident writers Andrei Siniavskii and Iulii Daniel tried and sentenced.
	April	Brezhnev's title changes from first secretary to general secretary; name of Presidium is changed back to Politburo.
1967	April	Stalin's daughter, Svetlana Alliluyeva, defects to West.
	September	Crimean Tatars rehabilitated but not allowed to return home.
1968	June	Andrei Sakharov's dissident writings published in samizdat.
	July	Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons signed by Soviet Union.
	August	Soviet-led Warsaw Pact armies invade Czechoslovakia.
1969	March	Soviet and Chinese forces skirmish on Ussuri River.
	May	Major General Petr Grigorenko, a dissident, arrested and incarcerated in psychiatric hospital.
1970	October	Solzhenitsyn awarded Nobel Prize for Literature.
	December	Jewish emigration to avoid persecution begins to increase substantially.
1972	May	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) result in signing of Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty

Table A.—Continued

Period		Description
		(ABM Treaty) and Interim Agreement on the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms; President Richard M. Nixon visits Moscow.
1973	June	Brezhnev visits Washington.
1974	February	Solzhenitsyn arrested and sent into foreign exile.
1975	July	Apollo-Soiuz space mission held jointly with United States.
	August	Helsinki Accords signed, confirming East European borders and calling for enforcement of human rights.
	December	Sakharov awarded Nobel Prize for Peace.
1976		Helsinki watch groups formed to monitor human rights safeguards.
1977	June	Brezhnev named chairman of Presidium of Supreme Soviet.
	October	New constitution promulgated for Soviet Union.
1979	June	Second SALT agreement signed but not ratified by United States Senate.
	December	Soviet armed forces invade Afghanistan.
1980	January	Sakharov exiled to Gor'kiy.
	August	Summer Olympics held in Moscow and boycotted by United States.
1981	February	CPSU holds its Twenty-Sixth Party Congress.
1982	June	Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) begin.
	November	Brezhnev dies; Iurii V. Andropov named general secretary.
1983	September	Soviet fighter aircraft downs South Korean civilian airliner KAL 007 near Sakhalin.
1984	February	Andropov dies; Konstantin U. Chernenko becomes general secretary.
1985	March	Chernenko dies; Mikhail S. Gorbachev becomes general secretary.
	November	Gorbachev meets with President Ronald W. Reagan in Geneva.

Table A.—Continued

Period		Description
1986	February-March	CPSU holds its Twenty-Seventh Party Congress.
	April-May	Nuclear power plant disaster at Chernobyl' releases deadly radiation.
	October	Gorbachev and Reagan hold summit at Reykjavik.
	December	Ethnic riots break out in Alma-Ata.
1987	December	Soviet Union and United States sign Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty).
1988	Winter	Ethnic disturbances begin in Caucasus.
	May	Soviet authorities stop jamming Voice of America broadcasts.
	May-June	Reagan visits Moscow.
	June	Millennium of establishment of Christianity in Kievan Rus' celebrated in Moscow.
	June-July	CPSU's Nineteenth Party Conference tests limits of *glasnost'* and *perestroika* in unprecedented discussions.
	October	Gorbachev replaces Andrei Gromyko as chairman of Presidium of Supreme Soviet; Gromyko and others removed from Politburo.
	December	Earthquake registering 6.9 on Richter scale strikes Armenian Republic, destroying much of cities of Leninakan and Spitak and resulting in 25,000 deaths.
1989	February	Soviet combat forces complete withdrawal from Afghanistan.
	March-April	Initial and runoff elections held for the 2,250 seats in Congress of People's Deputies; some seats have more than one candidate running; about 87 percent of elected deputies CPSU members or candidate members.
	May	Congress of People's Deputies meets, openly criticizes past and present regimes before television audiences, and elects 542 members to serve in Supreme Soviet; Gorbachev elected by Congress of People's Deputies to new position of chairman of Supreme Soviet.



Country

Formal Name: Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; abbreviated: USSR; transliterated: Soiuz Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik—SSSR.

Informal Name: Soviet Union.

Term for Citizens: Formally, Soviet people; informally, Soviets.

Capital: Moscow.

Geography

Size: Approximately 22,402,200 square kilometers (land area 22,272,000 square kilometers); slightly less than 2.5 times size of United States.

Location: Occupies eastern portion of European continent and northern portion of Asian continent. Most of country north of 50° north latitude.

Topography: Vast steppe with low hills west of Ural Mountains; extensive coniferous forest and tundra in Siberia; deserts in Central Asia; mountains along southern boundaries.

Climate: Generally temperate to Arctic continental. Wintry weather varies from short-term and cold along Black Sea to long-term and frigid in Siberia. Summer-like conditions vary from hot in southern deserts to cool along Arctic coast. Weather usually harsh and unpredictable. Generally dry with more than half of country receiving fewer than forty centimeters of rainfall per year, most of Soviet Central Asia and northeastern Siberia receiving only half that amount.

Land Boundaries: 19,933 kilometers total: Afghanistan 2,384 kilometers; China 7,520 kilometers; Czechoslovakia 98 kilometers; Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) 17 kilometers; Finland 1,313 kilometers; Hungary 135 kilometers; Iran 1,690 kilometers; Mongolia 3,441 kilometers; Norway 196 kilometers; Poland 1,215 kilometers; Romania 1,307 kilometers; and Turkey 617 kilometers.

Water Boundaries: 42,777 kilometers washed by oceanic systems of Arctic, Atlantic, and Pacific.

Land Use: 11 percent of land arable; 16 percent meadows and pasture; 41 percent forest and woodland; and 32 percent other, including tundra.

Natural Resources: Oil, natural gas, coal, iron ore, timber, gold, manganese, lead, zinc, nickel, mercury, potash, phosphates, and most strategic minerals.

Society

Population: 286,717,000 (January 1989 census). Average annual growth rate 0.9 percent. Density twelve persons per square kilometer; 75 percent of people lived in European portion.

Nationalities: About 51 percent of population Russian, 15 percent Ukrainian, 6 percent Uzbek, 3.5 percent Belorussian, and 24.5 percent about 100 other nationalities.

Religions: Religious worship authorized by Constitution, but Marxism-Leninism, the official ideology, militantly atheistic. Reliable statistics unavailable, but about 18 percent Russian Orthodox;

17 percent Muslim; and nearly 7 percent Roman Catholic, Protestant, Armenian Orthodox, Georgian Orthodox, and Jewish combined. Officially, most of remainder atheist.

Languages: Russian the official language. Over 200 other languages and dialects spoken, often as the primary tongue; 18 languages spoken by groups of more than 1 million each. About 75 percent of people spoke Slavic languages.

Education: Highly centralized school system with standardized curriculum. Compulsory attendance through eleventh grade. Strong emphasis on training for vocations selected by central authorities. Indoctrination in Marxist-Leninist ideology at all levels. Science and technology emphasized at secondary level and above. As of 1979 census, official literacy rate 99.8 percent for persons between nine and forty-nine years old. Over 5.3 million studied at universities and institutes, nearly 50 percent part time. All education free, and in many cases students received stipends.

Health and Welfare: Medical care by government health institutions; free but of poor quality for general public despite highest number of physicians and hospital beds per capita in world. Welfare and pension programs provided, albeit marginally, for substantial segments of population.

Politics and Government

Political Party: Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), only party permitted by Constitution, controlled government apparatus and decisions affecting economy and society. CPSU followed ideology of Marxism-Leninism and operated on principle of democratic centralism. Primary CPSU bodies: Politburo, highest decision-making organ; Secretariat, controller of party bureaucracy; and Central Committee, party's policy forum. CPSU membership more than 19 million (9.7 percent of adult population) in 1987, dominated by male Russian professionals. Party members occupied positions of authority in all officially recognized institutions throughout country.

Government: As authorized by 1977 Constitution, fourth since 1918, government executed decisions of CPSU pertaining primarily to economy but also to security affairs and social issues. Congress of People's Deputies created in 1988 by amendment to Constitution; highest organ of legislative and executive authority; consisted of 2,250 deputies, about 87 percent of whom CPSU members or candidate members and some of whom selected in first multicandidate

(although not multiparty) elections since early Soviet period; slated to meet once a year for a few days; met for first time in May 1989; deputies openly discussed issues, elected a chairman, and selected 542 deputies from among its membership to constitute a reorganized, bicameral Supreme Soviet, a standing legislature slated to remain in session six to eight months annually. Prior to 1989, former Supreme Soviet was constitutionally highest organ of legislative and executive authority but met only a few days annually; its Presidium managed affairs throughout year. Council of Ministers administered party decisions, mainly regarding economic management, by delegating authority to its Presidium; chairman of Council of Ministers also sat on CPSU Politburo.

Judicial System: Supreme Court, highest judicial body, had little power, lacking authority to determine constitutionality of laws, to interpret laws, or to strike laws down.

Administrative Divisions: Country administratively divided into one soviet federated socialist republic (Russian) and fourteen soviet socialist republics (Armenian, Azerbaydazhan, Belorussian, Estonian, Georgian, Kazakh, Kirgiz, Latvian, Lithuanian, Moldavian, Tadzhik, Turkmen, Ukrainian, and Uzbek). Below republic level, administrative subdivisions complicated, varying with each republic and including following categories: autonomous oblast, autonomous *okrug,* autonomous republic, *krai,* oblast, and *raion.* Only Russian Republic had all categories.

Foreign Relations: Diplomatic relations with majority of world's nations. Main foreign policy objectives as determined by CPSU Politburo: enhance national security, maintain presence in Eastern Europe, continue "peaceful coexistence" with free world democracies, and seek increased influence in Third World.

International Agreements and Memberships: Dominant partner in Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon) and Warsaw Pact. Active participant in United Nations and its specialized agencies. Signatory to Final Act of Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki Accords) and many other multilateral and bilateral agreements.

Economy

Salient Features: Centrally planned socialist economy. Government owned and operated all industries: banking, transportation, and communications systems; trade and public services; and most

of agricultural sector. CPSU, guided by principles of Marxism-Leninism, controlled planning and decision-making processes; central planners determined investment, prices, distribution of goods and services, and allocation of material and human resources according to CPSU priorities. Defense and heavy industries emphasized over consumer and agricultural sectors. Availability and quality of food, clothing, housing, and services often inadequate for average citizen. Economy planned as being largely self-sufficient. Economic development and population centers primarily in European portion, but many raw material and energy resources in Asian areas, making access difficult and both exploration and transportation costly. Declining economic growth since mid-1970s. Beginning in 1985, regime attempted to implement economic reform.

Gross National Product (GNP): Estimated at US$2.4 trillion in 1986; US$8,375 per capita in 1986; real growth rate in 1988 about 1.5 percent, continuing deceleration begun in mid-1970s.

Revenue: Largest source of government funds taxation of enterprise profits and turnover taxes; personal income taxes provided less than 10 percent.

Industry: Diversified industrial base directed by complicated, centralized bureaucratic system. Highest priorities given to machine-building and metal-working industries and to military matériel manufacturing; consumer industries not allocated comparable human, financial, or material resources. Technological advances applied primarily to defense industries. Major industrial branches: manufacturing (including defense), chemicals, metallurgy, textiles, food processing, and construction. Employment in industry and construction 38 percent in 1988.

Energy: Self-sufficient in energy and a major energy exporter. World's largest producer of oil and natural gas and second largest coal producer. Enormous energy resources in Siberia, but cost of extraction and transportation over great distances to western industrial areas high. Main generators of electric power: thermoelectric (coal, oil, natural gas, and peat), nuclear power plants, and hydroelectric stations.

Agriculture: Collective farms and state farms supplied bulk of agricultural needs. Wheat and other grains, potatoes, sugar beets, cotton, sunflower seeds, and flax main crops. Private plots—small percentage of sown area—produced substantial quantities of meat, milk, eggs, and vegetables. Large amounts of grain and meat imported. Despite high investment, serious problems in agriculture

persisted: insufficient fertilizer; inadequate refrigeration, storage, and transportation; wasteful processing; and unrealistic planning and management. More fundamental problems: only 1.3 percent of arable land receives optimal precipitation; widely fluctuating crop yields; and many fertile areas have insufficient growing seasons because of northern latitudes or moisture deficiency.

Fishing: World's largest oceangoing fishing fleet, accompanied by large, modern, fish-processing ships, operated in Atlantic and Pacific ocean systems. Inland seas and rivers accounted for less than 10 percent of catch.

Forestry: With a third of world's forested areas, country's production of logs and sawn timber exceeded that of all other countries, despite inefficient and wasteful processing. Inadequate processing capacity made production of pulp, paper cardboard, plywood, and other wood products low.

Foreign Trade: Government policies of self-sufficiency and strict control maintained trade in minor economic role. In 1985 exports and imports totaled US$185.9 billion, but each accounted for only 4 percent of GNP. Major trade partners included other communist countries, particularly those of Eastern Europe, which accounted for 67 percent of trade. Industrialized countries accounted for 22 percent and Third World countries for 11 percent. Major exports petroleum and petroleum products, natural gas, metals, wood, agricultural products, and manufactured goods, primarily machinery, arms, and military equipment. Major imports grain and other agricultural products, machinery and industrial equipment, steel products (especially large-diameter pipe), and consumer goods. Balance of trade favorable in mid-1980s. Trade with socialist countries conducted on bilateral basis with imports balancing exports. Value of exports to Third World countries, including arms and military equipment, exceeded hard-currency deficit caused by unfavorable trade balance with West. Merchant fleet consisted of about 2,500 oceangoing ships.

Exchange Rate: Officially, 0.61 ruble per US$1 (1988 average), but rubles had no official value outside of Soviet Union. Soviet authorities set exchange rates based on policy rather than market factors. Unofficial (black market) exchange rates offered considerably more rubles per United States dollar.

Fiscal Year: Calendar year.

Science and Technology: Marked by highly developed pure science and innovation at theoretical level, but interpretation and

application fell short. Biology, chemistry, materials science, mathematics, and physics were fields in which Soviet citizens excelled. Science emphasized at all levels of education, and very large number of engineers graduated each year. Shortfall in science and technology could be attributed to centrally planned and controlled economy and to priority given to national security, all of which provided little incentive to design and create prototypes of products for mass market. Without orders from central government, no product design and prototype saw fruition or stimulated innovation of other products. Soviet regimes, in many cases, have chosen to adopt foreign technology rather than to invest money, talent, and time to develop Soviet Union's indigenous technological capacity.

Transportation and Communications

Railroads: In 1986 about 145,600 kilometers of track, of which 50,600 kilometers electrified, almost all wide gauge; 3.8 trillion ton-kilometers of freight and 4.3 billion passenger fares, of which 3.9 billion on suburban lines, transported in 1986.

Highways: 1,609,900 kilometers in 1987, of which 1,196,000 kilometers hard-surfaced (asphalt, concrete, stone block, asphalt-treated, gravel, or crushed stone) and 413,900 kilometers earth; 488.5 billion ton-kilometers of freight transported by trucks, primarily on short hauls for agricultural sector in 1986; 48.8 billion passengers boarded, primarily commuters transported by bus. Use of private automobiles limited.

Inland Waterways: 122,500 kilometers in 1987, exclusive of Caspian Sea; 255.6 billion ton-kilometers of freight transported by inland waterways in 1986.

Pipelines: 81,500 kilometers for oil and 185,000 kilometers for natural gas in 1986.

Ports: Over 100 major maritime and river ports, including Archangel, Astrakhan', Baku, Leningrad, Moscow, Murmansk, Odessa, Riga, Tallin, and Vladivostok. Many maritime ports on Arctic Ocean, northern Pacific Ocean, and Baltic Sea closed annually because of ice. Many river ports also closed for varying periods annually.

Civil Aviation: 4,500 major transport aircraft. Airfields: 4,530 usable; 1,050 with permanent surface runways; 30 with runways over 3,659 meters, 490 with runways 2,440 to 3,659 meters; and 660 with runways 1,220 to 2,439 meters.

Communications: Mass media controlled and directed by CPSU. More than 8,000 daily newspapers in about sixty languages with combined circulation of about 170 million. Nearly 5,500 weekly, monthly, and quarterly magazines and journals with combined circulation of about 160 million. About 83,500 books and brochures published in 1986 in 2.2 million copies. Radio broadcasting 1,400 hours of daily programs in seventy languages. Main programming emanated from Moscow's eight radio channels. 162 million radio sets. Television broadcasting, mainly from Moscow, by way of 350 stations and 1,400 relay facilities to 75 million households with television sets. Private telephones very limited.

National Security

Defense Establishment: Based on Marxist-Leninist theory of war, CPSU determined missions and directed management of world's largest military organization. Defense Council provided strategic leadership. Five armed services, numbering about 3,750,000 out of a total of nearly 6 million troops in uniform in 1989, and numerous logistical and support services. Of the 6 million, 75 percent conscripts, 5 percent career enlisted, and 20 percent officers, most of whom were Russian. Compulsory premilitary training; military conscription of males at age eighteen, with few exceptions.

Strategic Rocket Forces: Primary strategic offensive forces, numbering about 300,000 in 1989. Controlled all ground-based nuclear missiles and operations in space.

Ground Forces: Largest of services, with a force of about 2 million troops in 1989 and comprising 150 motorized rifle and 52 tank divisions, in three states of readiness, as well as rocket and artillery troops, air defense troops, and other combat and support troops.

Air Forces: In 1989 numbered about 450,000. Consisted of Strategic Air Armies, for long-range bombing; Frontal Aviation, for support of Ground Forces; and Military Transport Aviation, for strategic mobility of armed services.

Air Defense Forces: Numbered about 500,000 in 1989. Operated extensive air defense system, controlling surface-to-air missile launchers, air defense aircraft and missiles, and space defenses.

Naval Forces: In 1989 numbered about 500,000. Consisted of substantial numbers of surface combatants and support ships, missile and attack submarines, and naval aircraft. Organized into four fleets and several flotillas with shore-based support facilities in strategic locations.

Paramilitary Forces: Seven airborne divisions subordinate to Supreme High Command. Elite Special Purpose Forces subordinate to General Staff. Internal Troops and Border Troops organized, equipped, and trained as military forces but assigned to Ministry of Internal Affairs (Ministerstvo vnutrennykh del—MVD) and to Committee for State Security (Komitet gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti—KGB), respectively.

Defense Spending: Estimated between 15 and 17 percent of gross national product (GNP) in 1989. Military matériel production, supervised by military, received best available managers, workers, technology, and materials.

Military Presence Overseas: Naval combatants in Mediterranean Sea and Indian Ocean with limited presence, mainly submarines, elsewhere. Ground Forces in Afghanistan numbered 115,000 until withdrawal in 1989; withdrawals announced in German Democratic Republic (East Germany) and elsewhere but, as of 1989, substantial forces remained in East Germany, and some forces remained in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Mongolia, and Cuba. Military advisers in several Third World nations.

Security Police: Substantial political and regular police protected authoritarian CPSU from perceived internal and external threats and combated ordinary crimes. KGB maintained internal and external espionage and counterintelligence networks and controlled Border Troops and other specialized security troops. MVD investigated nonpolitical crime, operated labor camps for prisoners, and controlled militarized Internal Troops.

Figure 1. Administrative Divisions of the Soviet Union, 1989

Introduction

IN MID-1991 THE SOVIET UNION remained in a state of turmoil after the weakening of the authority of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) had profoundly disturbed the socialist system and unleashed broad nationality unrest. Mikhail S. Gorbachev, the general secretary of the CPSU and president of the Soviet Union, had recognized that the development of socialism (see Glossary) was faltering and that the cooperation of the Soviet people was needed to revitalize the country's economy and society. He endeavored to reform both the party and the socialist system without radically altering either one. But Gorbachev's attempts at political reform and economic restructuring shook the centralized, authoritarian system that had been dominated and controlled by the party since the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The seriously flawed Soviet system could not readily adapt to extensive reform and restructuring.

The historical experience of the multinational Soviet Union is varied and complex and helps illuminate contemporary events and institutions. The histories of the predecessor states of the Soviet Union—Muscovy and the Russian Empire—demonstrate some long-term trends having applicability to the Soviet period: the predominant role of the East Slavs, particularly the Russians; the dominance of the state over the individual; territorial acquisition, which continued sporadically; nationality problems, which increased as diverse peoples became subjects of the state as a result of territorial expansion; a general xenophobia, coupled with admiration for Western ideas and technology and disruptive sporadic campaigns to adopt them; and cyclical periods of repression and reform.

The death knell of the Russian Empire came in March 1917, when the people of Petrograd (present-day Leningrad) rose up in an unplanned and unorganized protest against the tsarist regime and continued their efforts until Tsar Nicholas II abdicated. His government collapsed, leaving power in the hands of an elected Duma, which formed the Provisional Government. That government was in turn overthrown in November 1917 by the Bolsheviks, led by Vladimir I. Lenin. The Bolsheviks (who began calling themselves Communists in 1918) emerged victorious after a bitterly fought Civil War (1918–21). They secured their power and in December 1922 established the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Soviet Union), which included almost all the territory of the former Russian Empire. The new government prohibited other political organizations

and inaugurated one-party rule, which exerted centralized control over the political, economic, social, and cultural lives of the people. Lenin, as head of the party, became the de facto ruler of the country.

After Lenin's death in 1924, Joseph V. Stalin gradually assumed supreme power in the party and the state by removing opponents from influential positions. Stalin ordered the construction of a socialist economy through the appropriation by the state of private industrial and agricultural properties. His ruthless policy of forced industrialization and collectivization of agriculture caused massive human suffering, as did his purge of party members. As the initiator of the Great Terror (see Glossary), Stalin also decimated the economic, social, military, cultural, and religious elites in the Russian Republic and in some of the non-Russian republics. Millions of citizens were executed, imprisoned, or starved. Nevertheless, the Soviet state succeeded in developing an industrial base of extraordinary dimensions, albeit skewed toward military and heavy industry rather than consumer needs. Stalin believed that the rapid development of heavy industry was necessary to ensure the Soviet Union's survival. His fear of attack led to the signing of the Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact of 1939, enabling the Soviet Union to acquire the eastern portion of Poland (western Ukraine), the Baltic states, and Bessarabia but failing to forestall for long the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union that began in June 1941. After several crushing military defeats, the Red Army finally gained the offensive in 1943, expelled the enemy, and, by 1945, had occupied most of Eastern Europe. Although more than 20 million Soviet citizens died as a result of the war, the world was forced to acknowledge the tremendous power of the Soviet military forces.

In the postwar period, the Soviet Union converted its military occupation of the countries of Eastern Europe into political and economic domination by installing regimes dependent on Moscow. It also pursued its goal of extending Soviet power abroad. The Western powers reacted to Soviet expansionism, and thus began the Cold War. Simultaneously, Stalin rebuilt the devastated Soviet economy while retaining central planning and the emphasis on heavy industry and military production rather than satisfying the needs of the citizens. Suppression of dissent and human rights continued unabated.

After Stalin's death in 1953, Nikita S. Khrushchev gradually became the dominant Soviet leader and, in a dramatic move, renounced his predecessor's use of terror and repression. He continued, however, a confrontational foreign policy toward the West. His attempts at domestic reform, particularly in agriculture, and

his instigation of a missile crisis in Cuba, which almost launched a nuclear war, contributed to his ouster as party leader and head of state in 1964. After an extended period of collective leadership, Leonid I. Brezhnev assumed party and government power and initiated a foreign policy of détente with the West. He continued the traditional economic policy of emphasizing heavy industry and military production over civilian needs.

At the death of Brezhnev in 1982, the political, economic, and cultural life of the country was controlled by a conservative, entrenched, and aging bureaucracy. Brezhnev's successors, Iurii V. Andropov and Konstantin U. Chernenko, were in power too briefly before their deaths to effect lasting change, although Andropov attempted to initiate some reforms. When Gorbachev was selected general secretary of the CPSU and head of the Soviet state in 1985, the deterioration of the Soviet socialist system had nearly reached crisis proportions. Gorbachev announced that "revolutionary" change was required to revitalize the country, and he began his programs of *perestroika, glasnost'*, and *demokratizatsiia* (see Glossary).

Gorbachev's efforts at political and economic reform, however, unleashed a flood of events leading to a profound political crisis and broad nationality unrest while leaving fundamental economic problems unresolved. Several of the nationalities having union republic (see Glossary) status began to seek greater political and economic autonomy; indeed, some sought complete independence from the Soviet multinational federation. Longstanding rivalries and enmities among nationality groups that had been suppressed by successive Soviet regimes exploded in some areas of the country, causing loss of life and property. Thus, the authoritarian socialist system, although undergoing tentative restructuring, became less capable of effectively responding to societal disorder and of implementing necessary fundamental change rapidly. In the 1990s, Gorbachev's policy of *perestroika* offered the people little in substantive, near-term economic improvement, and his policies of *glasnost'* and *demokratizatsiia* resulted in rapidly raising their expectations while lessening the regime's controls over society. As a result, in mid-1991 the Soviet Union appeared to be a disintegrating federation with a collapsing economy and a despairing, confused society.

Internationally, the Soviet Union's affairs also appeared to be in a state of fundamental change. Beginning in late 1989, the Soviet Union's East European empire crumbled as citizens in Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), and Romania overthrew their communist dictators with at least the tacit approval of Gorbachev. Earlier in the year, the people of Poland and Hungary had overthrown their communist systems. The actions

of the peoples of Eastern Europe led to the dissolution, in May and June 1991, respectively, of the two Soviet-dominated, multinational organizations, the Warsaw Pact (see Appendix C) and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon; see Appendix B) that had helped bind Eastern Europe to the Soviet Union. In a collaborative effort with the United States, Gorbachev met with President George H.W. Bush at Malta in December 1989 and at Washington in May–June 1990 to effectively end the Cold War and to move toward a cooperative relationship. In August 1991, Bush and Gorbachev signed the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, which required the United States and the Soviet Union to cut their nuclear weapons within seven years so that each side would have only 4,900 ballistic missile nuclear warheads as part of a total of 6,000 "accountable" warheads. The two countries had been engaged in the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) since 1982. In another collaborative effort, the Soviet Union voted with the United States and an international coalition of nations to oppose the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, a nation that had been the recipient of substantial amounts of Soviet military advice, equipment, and weapons.

It was Gorbachev's "new thinking" (see Glossary) in foreign policy that produced the most dramatic and far-reaching results of his reform efforts. In addition to the significant developments just mentioned, these included the withdrawal of Soviet armed forces from Afghanistan; acceptance of national self-determination for the East European communist countries and a promised complete withdrawal of Soviet troops from those countries; agreement to a unified Germany remaining in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO); and the ending of support for Cuban military operations in Angola. The international community began to regard the Soviet Union as less menacing and acknowledged that the actions it had taken contributed substantially to the ending of the Cold War. Gorbachev was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1991 for his foreign policy initiatives and for their impact on world affairs. By no means, however, did the Soviet Union abandon its foreign policy goals. It continued its economic and military support of some longstanding allies, such as Afghanistan, Cuba, and Vietnam, as well as Third World client states, although it often chose to act covertly, in the hope of receiving economic aid from the West.

In 1991 the Soviet economy continued to be beset with serious problems that had brought the Soviet Union to the point of crisis. The problems included poor planning by government officials; inefficient production methods; lack of incentives to boost efficiency; lack of worker discipline; unemployment, underemployment, and

strikes; shortages of food and consumer goods; theft of state property; wasteful use of resources; prices distorted by a lack of market mechanisms; and investments of scarce funds in projects of dubious value. The system of central planning and rigid control by Moscow bureaucrats was partially disrupted by economic problems and the regime's policy of *perestroika.* Nevertheless, almost all natural resources, agricultural and industrial enterprises (see Glossary), transportation and communications systems, and financial institutions remained in the hands of the party-controlled government. In addition, the vast majority of workers remained, effectively, salaried employees of the government. Although the 1977 Constitution, as amended and changed, provided for cooperative or collective ownership of property, it also stated that the "socialist ownership of the means of production" was the foundation of the economy, and socialist ownership remained the preferred form of ownership. The Gorbachev regime, however, sought to devise a restructuring program that would enable market forces rather than government planners to make many economic decisions. Thus, in the early 1990s the economic reform envisioned by Gorbachev in the late 1980s seemed to be shifting away from centralized planning to a market-oriented economy.

Indeed, in 1990 the Supreme Soviet debated several proposals for economic reform before it, in October of that year, approved one endorsed by Gorbachev called "Guidelines for the Stabilization of the Economy and Transition to a Market Economy." This program saw no alternative to shifting toward a market economy but provided neither a detailed plan nor a schedule for implementation. It did, however, establish four phases for the transition: first, stabilization of the economy and initiation of the privatization of state-owned enterprises; second, liberalization of prices, establishment of a safety net for people adversely affected, and exercise of fiscal restraints over government expenditures; third, adjustment of the pay scale for workers and institution of housing and financial reforms; and fourth, as markets stabilized, transformation of the ruble from being nonconvertible to convertible, so as to enable Soviet and foreign businesses to exchange currencies at international rates. Price reform, a key element of the transition to a market economy, was to be administered and monitored carefully by central authorities. This transition was estimated to require two years. An important, but not easily achieved, requirement for its success was the integrity of the union and its constituent republics.

In spite of its many economic and political problems, the Soviet Union had more of the natural and human resources essential for industrial production than any other country in the world. It had

vast quantities of important minerals and abundant energy supplies. It also had a very large, technically qualified labor force and a higher percentage of people working in industry than most Western nations. Yet, industrial productivity regularly fell behind planned goals for several reasons. First, raw materials, including fuels, had become less readily available in the heavily industrialized and heavily populated European part of the Soviet Union, while the Asian part of the country, which contained abundant natural resources, continued to lack an industrial infrastructure and the stable, skilled labor force necessary to extract the needed materials. Second, the formidable, and perhaps impossible, task of uniting materials, energy, and skilled workers with appropriate industrial enterprises on a timely and cost-effective basis was the responsibility of the increasingly bureaucratic central planning agencies that responded to political, rather than economic, priorities. Third, industrial enterprises, particularly those engaged in exclusively nondefense production, were constrained by obsolescent machinery and a lack of innovation.

Producing and distributing food in sufficient quality, variety, and quantity had eluded the Gorbachev regime, as well as all the other regimes since the Bolshevik Revolution. Fresh fruits, vegetables, and meats were in chronically short supply in the stores owned and operated by the government, and imports of grain and meat were frequent and necessary. Nevertheless, possessing the world's most extensive cultivated area, a large agricultural labor force, considerable investment in machinery, chemical fertilizers, and irrigation, the Soviet Union had made itself the world's second largest grower of agricultural commodities and was first in many of them. The main reason for the anomaly between the high agricultural potential and the low food availability in the stores was the centralized administration of agriculture by bureaucratic planners who had little understanding of local conditions. Other reasons for the anomaly included the inadequacy of incentives, equipment, and modern techniques available to farm workers; the cold climate and uncertain moisture conditions; the failure of the transportation system to move harvested crops promptly; the lack of adequate storage facilities; and the paucity of refrigerated transportation. Massive amounts of foodstuffs simply rotted in the fields or in storage.

Bypassing the government system, peasant farmers, most of whom were women, raised about one-fourth of the country's food on their private plots and then sold their produce privately. The area thus farmed amounted to about 3 percent of the total cultivated area, most of which was on collective farms (see Glossary) and state farms (see Glossary).

The transportation system, owned and operated by the government, continued in 1991 to exhibit serious deficiencies, particularly with respect to its limited capacity, outdated technologies, and poor maintenance. The main purpose of transportation in the Soviet Union, as determined by successive regimes, was to fulfill national economic needs that the party decided on, rather than to serve the interests of private businesses or citizens. The structure of the subsidized Soviet transportation system was greatly affected by the large size, geographic features, and northern climate of the country. Also, the distribution of the population and industry (largely in the European part) and the natural resources (largely in the Asian part) helped determine the transportation system's structure. Railroads were the primary mode of transporting freight and passengers over long distances. Trucks were used mainly in urban and industrialized areas to transport raw materials from rail lines and manufactured products to them. Buses were the primary mode of conveyance for people in urban areas. For the vast majority of people, automobiles, which numbered only about 12 million, were not an important means of transportation. Without perceiving a need to move people or freight long distances on roads, successive Soviet regimes saw little economic reason to build a modern network of highways, even in the European part of the country. Roads outside of cities generally had gravel or dirt surfaces and were poor by Western standards. For intercity and long-distance travel where time was a factor, the government airline, Aeroflot, provided low-cost transportation but had few amenities, and it had a safety record that concerned many Western passengers.

Foreign trade, which might conceivably contribute to solving the Soviet Union's economic problems, traditionally played a minor role. The Soviet government preferred instead to strive for self-sufficiency in all areas of the economy. With extensive natural resources, including energy sources, decision makers saw foreign trade primarily as a device to serve international political interests. Thus, after World War II the Soviet Union's primary trading partners were the East European communist countries and other socialist and socialist-oriented countries. Trade with Third World countries was also conducted primarily for political rather than economic reasons and often involved the exchange of Soviet-made weapons and military equipment for raw materials. Trade with the West, particularly the United States, varied according to the political climate and the requirement for hard-currency (see Glossary) payments. The Soviet Union acquired hard currency by selling its minerals, fuels, and gold bullion on the world market, primarily to the West. In turn, the Soviet Union bought Western manufactures, especially high-technology

items, and agricultural products, mainly grains. In the late 1980s, Soviet foreign indebtedness, principally to West European commercial banks, rose substantially, reaching US$54 billion in 1989, in part because the price of oil and natural gas, the main hard-currency exports, fell on the world market. Soviet exports to communist and other socialist countries consisted primarily of energy, manufactures, and consumer goods. In mid-1991 increasing hard-currency indebtedness, decreasing oil production, mounting domestic economic problems, and a requirement for advanced technology forced Gorbachev to seek increased participation in international economic organizations, trade with foreign countries, foreign economic assistance, and reduction of unprofitable trade with the Soviet Union's allies. Foreign trade and economic assistance were urgently needed to make the economy more efficient, as well as to help improve the standard of living.

The living conditions of the majority of the Soviet people were more comparable to some Third World countries than to those of an industrially developed superpower. Even Soviet sources acknowledged that about 55 million people (approximately 20 percent of the population) were living below the official poverty level, but some Western analysts considered that far more people were, in fact, impoverished. The availability and distribution of food, clothing, and shelter were controlled by the government, but the supply was inadequate and generally became worse as the Gorbachev regime attempted economic reforms.

The cost to Soviet consumers of many essential consumer items and services was remarkably low compared with the cost of similar items and services in the West. Soviet prices were set artificially low by the government, which subsidized the cost of selected items in an attempt to ensure accessibility by all citizens. The practical impact of the subsidies, however, was to distort the real production and distribution costs, reduce the availability of the items, and inflate the real cost of other items that were not subsidized. Another impact was to increase the resistance of citizens to price increases when the regime tried to adjust the prices of items and services to correspond more closely to the real costs of their production and distribution.

Many educational benefits were free and guaranteed to the citizens by the Constitution. Education, mandatory through the eleventh grade, provided excellent schooling in mathematics, foreign languages, and the physical sciences. Training in these fields was offered at universities, which were generally available to children of the elite, and at institutes, which were available to students without political connections. Universities and institutes were

excellent by Western standards but tended to be very narrowly focused. The main purpose of education in the Soviet Union was to produce socially motivated and technically qualified people who were able to serve the state-run economy. In 1991 educators were developing reforms for the state-controlled system that included the privatization of schools.

Medical services were also guaranteed by the Constitution and enabled government officials to claim that the Soviet Union had the world's highest number of doctors and hospital beds per capita. Similar to the purpose of education, the main purpose of medical care was to ensure a healthy work force for the centrally controlled economy. Training of health care professionals, although not as advanced as that in the West, prepared the large numbers of doctors, the majority of whom were women, and medical assistants to attend to the basic medical needs of the people, millions of whom lived in rural or geographically remote areas. Medical care was free of charge, but to obtain specialized, or sometimes even routine, medicines or care, ordinary citizens used bribes or *blat* (see Glossary). Although hospital care was available without charge, it was comparable to some Third World countries because of the lack of modern medical equipment and some medicines and supplies, such as sterile syringes, and because of poor sanitation in general. Members of the elite, particularly high-level party, government, economic, and cultural officials and their families, were served by a much higher quality health care system than that available to average citizens.

Soviet society, although officially classless according to Marxism-Leninism, was divided into four socio-occupational groups by Western sociologists: peasants and agricultural specialists; blue-collar workers; white-collar workers; and the party and government elite and cultural and scientific intelligentsia. Social status was also affected by the level and field of education, place of residence, nationality, and party membership and party rank. High socio-occupational status was generally accompanied by above-average pay, but more important for the individual, it offered increased access to scarce consumer goods, and even foreign goods, as well as social prestige and other perquisites for the individual and his or her family. The pay of some skilled laborers exceeded that of many professionals, including teachers, doctors, and engineers, because Marxism-Leninism exalted manual work. Despite earning less money, however, professionals generally had higher social status than manual workers. The pay for many occupations was set low by government planners, requiring two incomes to maintain a family's living standard that often was at the poverty

level. In contrast, the members of the elite of Soviet society not only received substantially higher salaries but also had access to special food and consumer goods stores, better housing and health care, and increased educational opportunities.

Women, although according to the Constitution the equal of men, were treated as if they were of a political, economic, and social status that was inferior to men. The vast majority of women worked because of economic necessity, but most often in low-paying positions. They endured the greater share of the burden of living in a country where the regime placed superpower military status above citizens' needs and desires for adequate housing, food, clothing, and other consumer goods. Crowded living quarters, often with shared bathrooms and kitchens that usually lacked modern kitchen appliances made life difficult. Waiting in long lines every day to purchase food and other essentials was another burden borne mostly by women, who received little assistance from their spouses and even less from the male-dominated society and the socialist regime. Although given some special benefits, including generous maternity and child care leave by the government, Soviet women were generally overburdened. As a consequence of the domestic stresses, the Soviet Union had high rates of abortion, alcoholism, and divorce, most evident among the Slavic nationalities.

The Soviet Union comprised more than 100 nationalities, twenty-two of which had populations of over 1 million. The Russian nationality made up only about 51 percent of the total population, according to the 1989 census, but the two other East Slavic nationalities—the Belorussians and the Ukrainians—together constituted about another 23 percent of the population. Some of the cultural and linguistic diversity of the Soviet nationalities could be seen when contrasting the North European heritage of the Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians with the Mongol, Persian, and Turkic roots of the Central Asian Kazakhs, Kirgiz, Tadzhiks, Turkmens, and Uzbeks. The cultures and languages of the three major nationalities of the Caucasus region—the Armenians, Azerbaydzhanis, and Georgians—were significantly different from each other as well as from the other nationalities. These fourteen nationalities, together with the Moldavians, each had union republic status. Many other nationalities were granted "autonomous" status in territorial and administrative subdivisions (i.e., autonomous republics, autonomous oblasts, and autonomous *okruga*—see Glossary). It should be noted, however, that despite the semblance of autonomy, real political and economic power was retained in Moscow, and the Russians remained, in mid-1991, the dominant nationality in the political and economic life of the Soviet

Union. It should also be noted that some nationalities were brought into the Soviet Union under duress, and others were annexed by force by its predecessor, the Russian Empire.

Several of the non-Russian nationalities formally objected to being part of the communist-controlled Soviet Union and had long viewed Russians as oppressors. In addition, many of the non-Russian peoples had had serious and longstanding disagreements and rivalries with neighboring peoples of other nationalities. Partly as a defense against criticism by non-Russian nationalities, Russians in some areas began to reassert their own nationality, but in other areas they felt compelled to leave their homes in some non-Russian republics because of anti-Russian sentiments. Successive Soviet regimes, including that of Gorbachev until the late 1980s, maintained that all peoples of the Soviet Union lived harmoniously and were content with their circumstances. When Gorbachev initiated reforms that relaxed the regime's system of constraints, the latent discontent erupted into disturbances and violence, resulting in hundreds of deaths.

Each nationality, having its own history, language, and culture, attempted to preserve its distinctive heritage and, in most cases, was permitted by the government to provide language instruction for children to that end. Nevertheless, instruction in Russian was also required, and Russian was the official language of the Soviet regime, although only a small percentage of non-Russians spoke and read Russian fluently. The religions of the various nationalities were almost universally repressed by the official antireligious policies of successive regimes. Although Gorbachev authorized the reopening of many churches in 1989 and 1990, most churches, mosques, and synagogues remained closed. Nevertheless, by mid-1991 religion was playing an increasingly significant role in the lives of some of the people.

An important domestic reform put forward by Gorbachev was *demokratizatsiia,* the attempt to introduce greater participation by citizens, including younger party members, in the political process. Having risen to leadership in the Soviet state through the party, Gorbachev attempted to use the party to implement his reform program. Since 1917 the party had held, in fact, the "leading and guiding role in Soviet society," but that role was formally abolished in March 1991 when the Supreme Soviet, as part of its program of *demokratizatsiia,* amended the Constitution and revised Article 6 to permit other parties to exist. The party thereby lost the legal basis for its authority over the government, economy, and society throughout the Soviet Union. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, even before the constitutional change, the CPSU's effectiveness

in leading the Soviet Union appeared, to most observers, to have diminished markedly. The party had been unable to implement reform or make the Marxist-Leninist system function effectively on a continuing basis. This systemic failure, however, had not led to a complete renunciation of the underlying socialist ideology by mid-1991. This fact led many party members to resign in protest against the party's failure to promote genuine change, or in acknowledgment of the declining relevance of the party, or as a renunciation of Marxism-Leninism as a viable doctrine, or, perhaps, in recognition of the fact that continued membership could be detrimental to their future careers.

Among the many prominent party members who had resigned by mid-1991 were three former Politburo members: Boris N. Yeltsin, formerly also the Moscow party secretary; Eduard A. Shevardnadze, formerly also the minister of foreign affairs; and Aleksandr N. Iakovlev, formerly also a member of the CPSU Secretariat. The latter two were long-term, close advisers to Gorbachev. Yeltsin, however, was probably the most politically powerful of the former party members. He had been picked by Gorbachev for the Moscow post in 1985 but angered the party hierarchy with his outspoken criticism of the party and was dismissed from both that post and the Politburo in 1987. In a remarkable political comeback, however, Yeltsin was elected to the Congress of People's Deputies in 1989 and in 1990 was elected chairman of the supreme soviet of the Russian Republic, by far the largest and most important of the fifteen constituent republics of the Soviet Union. But his most significant victory came in June 1991, when he was elected to the newly created position of president of the Russian Republic by a majority of 57 percent of the voters in the Russian Republic in a direct, popular election. Meanwhile, the popularity of Gorbachev among Soviet citizens had fallen to less than 10 percent, according to a Soviet poll. Yeltsin's popularity among citizens of the Russian Republic was apparently based, in part, on his political agenda, which included establishing a market economy with private property rights and denationalizing government-owned enterprises; shifting more decision-making power from the central authorities to the republics; and reducing the power of the party, the size of the armed forces, and the influence of the Committee for State Security (Komitet gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti—KGB). This ambitious agenda could not be accomplished quickly or easily under the best of circumstances, and some intellectuals and other Soviet citizens mistrusted Yeltsin as a leader.

Despite the CPSU's loss of many members—both prominent and rank-and-file members—and despite its loss of constitutional

exclusivity and its failure to lead the country effectively, the party remained the Soviet Union's major political force and bastion of reaction in mid-1991. No longer the monolithic, disciplined power it had once been and often divided along nationality lines, the party retained as members, however, a large percentage of the male population over the age of thirty and having at least ten years of education, the segment of the population that had traditionally made the decisions and managed the affairs of the country. They and the party as a whole appeared to give Gorbachev their support. The party's de facto power appeared strong in the central government bureaucracy, in most city governments, in some republic governments, and in many administrative subdivisions but was weak in certain other republics and administrative subdivisions. Party members generally remained in charge of the Soviet government's controlled economy from the central planning organs and the military-industrial complex to the individual enterprises. And party members remained in positions of responsibility in the transportation, communications, agriculture, education, mass media, legal, and judicial systems. The party's power was weakest among the non-Russian nationalities, where some party leaders were prompted to advocate national sovereignty in an effort to maintain their positions. Significantly, the party was strongest among the leadership of the armed forces, the KGB, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Ministerstvo vnutrennykh del—MVD). These organs of party power—and their predecessor organizations—had been used to maintain the party's preeminence since the Bolshevik Revolution, and in mid-1991 the party continued to use them.

During the late 1980s, the popular elections that Gorbachev had instigated produced revitalized legislative bodies that could compete with the party for power at the all-union, republic, and lower levels of government. These elections spurred millions of ordinary citizens to become more politically involved than they had ever been and prompted many of their elected representatives to challenge party officials and other central authorities. Politically active individuals, including CPSU members, former prisoners in the Gulag (see Glossary), and citizens motivated by a variety of concerns created or joined disparate political action groups. For the most part, these groups represented liberal and democratic viewpoints, particularly in urban areas such as Moscow and Leningrad, or nationality interests in the non-Russian republics and administrative subdivisions. But conservative, reactionary, and pro-Russian groups also sprang up. The various liberal groups often opposed the CPSU and the central authorities but lacked positive, unifying goals and programs, as well as practical experience in democracy's way of

coalition building, compromise, and the rule of law. They struggled to form political parties with broadened geographical and popular bases. But without the extraordinary financing, organization, communications, and material support retained by the CPSU, the emergent political groups found the competition especially difficult.

Political leaders in all fifteen republics asserted the precedence of their republics' laws over those of the central government and demanded control over their own natural resources, agricultural products, and industrial output. Leaders of several republics proclaimed complete independence, national sovereignty, and separation from the Soviet Union. Within many of the republics, however, officials of various minority nationalities in administrative subdivisions sometimes proclaimed their subdivision's independence from their republics or passed laws contradictory to the laws of higher legislative or executive bodies. Hence the Constitution, Gorbachev's decrees, and laws passed by the Supreme Soviet, by the supreme soviets of the republics, or by the soviets (see Glossary) of the various subdivisions were often disobeyed with impunity.

This so-called "war of laws" among the legislative and executive bodies at various levels contributed to the forging of an agreement between Gorbachev and the leaders of nine of the fifteen republics in April 1991. This agreement, which Yeltsin played a key role in formulating, promised that the central government would permit the republics to have more economic and political autonomy and that the republics would fulfill their economic and financial obligations to Moscow. At the time of the agreement, Gorbachev and Yeltsin and the eight other republic leaders endorsed, in principle, a revised draft of a new treaty, which would in effect reestablish the Soviet Union on a different basis from the original union treaty of 1922. The republics that did not sign the agreement were to be excluded from its provisions.

The six republics refusing to join the agreement between Gorbachev and the nine republics were the Armenian, Estonian, Georgian, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Moldavian republics. In these republics, the people had elected to their republic legislatures representatives who, for the most part, were not CPSU members but rather were advocates of the primacy of their nationality vis-à-vis the central regime in Moscow. The leaders of these republics indicated that they did not wish to be part of the Soviet Union and were attempting to sever their political ties with it and establish themselves as independent countries. The six republics together constituted about 1.4 percent of the territory and about 7.2 percent of the population of the Soviet Union.

Meanwhile, the Gorbachev regime continued its efforts to finalize a new union treaty that would replace the 1922 union treaty. During 1990 the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian republics elected noncommunist governments. The elected representatives voted for independence from the Soviet Union and sought the same independent status that they had had before being absorbed into the Soviet Union in 1940. (It should be noted that the United States never recognized the incorporation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union.) Gorbachev and the Supreme Soviet did not recognize the independence of the three Baltic states, and the Soviet armed forces were employed to disrupt their independence drives. It is likely that separation of the three republics was also hindered, in part, because their economies were closely intertwined with those of the other republics, particularly with that of the Russian Republic.

In March 1990, the regime created the office of the presidency in accordance with changes in the Constitution. The president and vice president were supposed to be elected by direct popular vote, but, by special exception, Gorbachev and Gennadii I. Ianaev were elected as the first president and vice president, respectively, by vote of the Congress of People's Deputies. The president, who could serve a maximum of two five-year terms, was authorized by the changes in the Constitution to appoint and remove high-level government officials; veto laws and suspend orders of the Council of Ministers; and declare martial law or a state of emergency, subject to approval by a two-thirds majority of the Supreme Soviet.

Also created in 1990 were two organizations designed to support the presidency. The new Presidential Council was given responsibility for implementing foreign and domestic policies and for ensuring the country's security. The new Council of the Federation, which was headed by the president of the Soviet Union and consisted also of the "supreme state official from each of the fifteen constituent republics," had duties that included developing ways to implement a nationalities policy, recommending to the Supreme Soviet solutions for interethnic problems, and ensuring that the union republics complied with international treaties. The creation of the presidency with its two supporting bodies was seen by some Western observers as helping Gorbachev to provide his regime with a renewed political power that was based on constitutionally established government organs rather than on the CPSU, the traditional source of political power.

In November 1990, Gorbachev proposed the establishment of several other new bodies (all directly subordinate to him) designed to strengthen the executive branch of the government. The new

bodies included the Cabinet of Ministers (replacing the Council of Ministers), the Security Council, and the Coordinating Agency for the Supervision of Law and Order. The Presidential Council was dissolved, and its functions were given to the Council of the Federation, which was designated the chief policy-making organ in the country. These administrative changes appeared to some analysts to be an attempt by Gorbachev to recover the authority and control that his regime had lost during conflicts with several secessionist republics, as well as during disputes with radical and conservative opponents of his reforms. Gorbachev was, in the view of some analysts, also attempting to counter calls for his resignation for failing to initiate and implement measures that would cure the country's economic and political ills.

One of Gorbachev's main instruments in his attempt to improve the country's condition was his policy of *glasnost'*. Through this policy, he used the mass media to arouse the people who would help change the way the bureaucratic system functioned. He and all prior leaders of the Soviet Union had used the mass media and artistic expression to help govern the people and direct the society's course. Politicizing the mass media and the arts served not only to secure the regime's power but also furthered the role of the CPSU and the dominance of Marxism-Leninism (see Glossary) in the social, cultural, and economic life of the country. In the late 1980s, however, Soviet mass media and the arts became part of the revolution in information technologies that swept the globe and could not be sealed off from the Soviet Union. The regime needed those same technologies to compete with the West and to prevent falling further behind economically and technologically.

In the late 1980s, the Soviet regimes, first that of Andropov and then that of Gorbachev, relaxed their monopoly on the press and modern communications technology and eased the strictures of socialist realism (see Glossary), thus permitting open discussion of many themes previously prohibited. The implementation of the policy of *glasnost'* made much more information about government activities, past and present, accessible to ordinary citizens, who then criticized not only the government but also the CPSU and even Lenin, the founder of the Soviet state. Editors, journalists, and other writers transformed newspapers, journals, and television broadcasts into media for investigative reports and lively discussions of a wide variety of subjects that had been heavily censored before *glasnost'*. The works of previously banned writers, including Joseph Brodsky and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, both exiled winners of the Nobel Prize for Literature, and such exiled authors as Vasilii Aksionov and Vladimir Voinovich, were published in the Soviet

Union. Thus, the regime began to lose control of the policy of *glasnost'*, and the censors began to lose control of the mass media. In June 1990, the Supreme Soviet passed a law that purportedly sanctioned freedom of the press, but later that year the regime began again to restrict news reporting, particularly on radio and television. Still, in mid-1991 the mass media continued to offer interesting news and diverse viewpoints—although some less independent and revelatory than they had been in the late 1980s—that were eagerly followed by the people.

Another side effect of Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost'* was the exposure and public discussion of the severe degradation and official neglect of the environment that had been perpetuated by successive regimes in the drive to achieve industrial and national security goals at any price. As a consequence of this neglect, two of the twentieth century's worst man-made environmental disasters struck the Soviet Union: the Chernobyl' nuclear power plant accident, the consequence of an insufficient regard for safety to obtain increased energy; and the loss of huge amounts of water from the Aral Sea. Although the death toll from the Chernobyl' accident in 1986 was initially low, millions of people continued to live on radioactive land and raise and consume contaminated food. In addition to the human costs, cleaning up and repairing the aftereffects of the accident, which continued to leak radioactive gases in 1991, were estimated to cost hundreds of billions of rubles (see Glossary) by the year 2000. The other major environmental disaster was the near destruction of the Aral Sea, whose main sources of water were diverted to irrigate arid land for the purpose of raising cotton and other crops beginning in 1960. Subsequently, the Aral Sea's coast receded sixty kilometers, in places, from its former location. Other environmental problems included the severe pollution of rivers, lakes, and the air resulting from the direct discharge of pollutants, particularly in the European part of the Soviet Union.

In the late 1980s, environmental concern spurred the formation of genuine grass-roots ecology groups that pressed the authorities to remedy the harmful conditions. Often these groups were supported by or were merged with nationality groups advocating increased self-determination or independence but nevertheless had little political power. Despite the efforts of the grass-roots groups, resolving the Soviet Union's many environmental problems, in the view of many Western specialists, will be costly and long-term. The Gorbachev regime as of mid-1991 had not redirected its economic policies regarding industrial and agricultural production, resource extraction, and consumption to provide adequate protection for the environment.

Another effect of *glasnost'* was the official acknowledgment of past civil and human rights abuses and the marked improvement in people's rights during Gorbachev's regime. The advancement of civil and human rights for the people of the Soviet Union was courageously sought by Andrei Sakharov, a winner of the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1975, who moved from internal exile in Gor'kiy to membership in the Congress of People's Deputies in Moscow before his death in December 1989. Freedom of speech and the press grew enormously after censorship was officially abolished. Freedom to assemble peacefully for political purposes, with or without government authorization, was tested frequently, generally without serious incident. (In January 1991, however, armed Soviet troops on two different occasions reportedly killed or wounded several dozen unarmed demonstrators occupying buildings in the Latvian and Lithuanian republics.) Political rights of individuals were enhanced when the Supreme Soviet approved legal authority for a multiparty system. But in 1991 the emerging political groups were too fragmented and weak to seriously challenge the power of the CPSU except in cities such as Leningrad and Moscow and in several of the republics' legislatures. In 1990 the regime expanded the right of citizens to emigrate. About 180,000 Jews departed for Israel, 150,000 Germans departed for a united Germany, and about 55,000 citizens emigrated to the United States. And, finally, independent trade unions were allowed to form, and strikes, made legal in 1989, were permitted by the regime, even one involving over 600,000 miners in several areas of the Soviet Union in 1990.

In the late 1980s, the Gorbachev regime released many prisoners of conscience (persons imprisoned for their political or religious beliefs) from imprisonment in the Gulag, from internal exile, and from psychiatric hospitals. Although authorities could still legally detain and arrest people without warrants, political killings, disappearances, or psychiatric hospitalizations for political or religious beliefs were rare. Nevertheless, human rights practices in the Soviet Union remained in transition in 1991.

Of major concern to successive Soviet regimes was the system of internal security, which in 1991 consisted primarily of the KGB and the MVD. They had been powerful tools for ferreting out and suppressing political and other internal threats to rule by the CPSU. The party always considered the KGB its most vital arm and maintained the closest supervision and control over it. The party controlled the KGB and MVD by approving personnel appointments through the *nomenklatura* (see Glossary) system and by exercising general oversight to ensure that party directives were followed. Party control was also exerted specifically and individually because all

KGB officers and the majority of MVD officers were members of the CPSU. Party membership subjected them to the norms of democratic centralism (see Glossary) and party discipline.

Internal security forces, particularly the KGB, had broad authority to employ severe and sometimes violent methods against the Soviet people while enforcing the regime's directives and thereby preserving the party's dominant role in the Soviet Union. In mid-1991 the KGB, under Vladimir A. Kriuchkov, and the MVD, under Boris K. Pugo beginning in October 1990, continued to give their loyalty and substantial support to the party. Thus, the internal security organs continued to oppose radical change and remained a significant, and perhaps immobilizing, threat to some citizens advocating substantial economic and political reform. At the same time, the internal security organs, particularly the KGB, continued to take advantage of the party's need for their vital support by exerting influence on the party's policies and the regime's decisions.

Like the KGB and MVD, the armed forces traditionally were loyal to the party and beneficiaries of the party's decisions. Control of the armed forces by the party was exercised primarily through the military leaders, the overwhelming majority of whom were loyal party members and followers of Marxism-Leninism. The armed forces were controlled by the party through networks of uniformed party representatives and covert informers who reported to the CPSU. Most of the middle and junior grade officers, although probably members of the CPSU or its youth affiliate, the Komsomol (see Glossary), were, in the view of some Western observers, less bound to party doctrine than were the senior military leaders. The vast majority of the military rank and file, however, were not affiliated with the party and resented the covert informers in their midst and the political indoctrination they endured.

The Soviet Union's military establishment was the justification for its international ranking as a superpower. With the world's largest military establishment—nearly 6 million people in uniform and a large arsenal of nuclear missiles—the Soviet Union's superpower status appeared justified on a military, if not on an economic, basis. The military establishment consisted not only of the armed forces but also of the internal security forces and an extensive military-industrial complex, all of which had priority use of human and economic resources. Decisions regarding the use of most human and material economic resources continued to be made by party members. The majority of the citizens, however, were dissatisfied with the party's decision-making role and were not in favor of Gorbachev's reform efforts. But the majority of the people were not

allowed to choose alternative national leadership and appeared unwilling to exert their influence to radically change the course of events out of fear of the armed forces, and perhaps of civil war.

The armed forces consisted of the five armed services (Strategic Rocket Forces, Ground Forces, Air Forces, Air Defense Forces, and Naval Forces), extensive support and rear service organizations, and specialized and paramilitary forces, such as the Airborne Troops, the Internal Troops of the MVD, and the Border Troops of the KGB. The Internal Troops and the Border Troops had military equipment, organization, training, and missions. The most strategically significant of the five armed services were the Strategic Rocket Forces, whose main purpose was to attack an opponent's nuclear weapons, military facilities, and industry with nuclear missiles. The Ground Forces, the largest and most prestigious of the armed services, were also important, in part because the senior officers typically held high-level positions in the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff of the Armed Forces. Of the five armed services, the Strategic Rocket Forces in mid-1991 maintained the capability of destroying targets in the United States and elsewhere, and the Ground Forces continued to have the world's largest numbers of tanks, artillery pieces, and tactical nuclear weapons.

The armed forces were not without internal problems, however. The combat losses sustained in Afghanistan and the withdrawal without victory had a profound effect on the armed forces and tarnished their image in the eyes of the party and the society as a whole. The armed forces were also disturbed by mounting nationality problems, including the refusal of many non-Russian conscripts to report for induction, the continuing interethnic conflicts among conscripts, and the demographic trend in which non-Russians were likely to outnumber Russians in the biannual conscript inductions. The Soviet armed forces also lacked a well-trained, experienced, and stable noncommissioned officer corps, such as that forming the basis of many Western armies. Gorbachev's announcement in 1988 of a unilateral reduction of 500,000 officers and men from the armed forces and his announced cutbacks in the armed forces' share of the government budget were not received with enthusiasm by the military hierarchy.

The doctrine, structure, and mission of the Soviet armed forces were based on the theories of Marxism-Leninism. One of these theories rested on the principle, formulated by the nineteenth-century Prussian military theorist Carl von Clausewitz, that war is a continuation of politics and that an aim of war is the attainment of military victory. Marxism-Leninism added that military victory can accelerate the victory of the world socialist system (see Glossary).

Marxism-Leninism also provided the theoretical basis for Soviet military science and for the tactical operations of military units. In practice, Marxism-Leninism was interpreted and applied solely by the CPSU, which closely monitored military leaders' adherence to party policies and directives. Thus, when Gorbachev characterized Marxism-Leninism as an outdated dogma in July 1991 and called on the CPSU Central Committee to abandon it in favor of social democratic principles, military leaders probably were surprised and dismayed.

Under the direction of the party, the armed forces were organized and equipped mainly to accomplish offensive missions, the success of which were indispensable to victory in war. Although Soviet military doctrine was always defensive, according to Soviet leaders, Western specialists regarded it as offensive in emphasis because it stressed offensive strategy, weapons, and forces to achieve victory in war. As directed by Gorbachev, however, military leaders emphasized the defensive aspects of the doctrine. Gorbachev also directed that the military establishment adopt the doctrine of "reasonable sufficiency," new to the Soviet Union in the 1980s, to facilitate the conversion of portions of the military industrial complex to support civilian, consumer-oriented requirements.

With the apparent support of the armed forces, the internal security organs, and the governmental economic bureaucracies, the CPSU continued its efforts to control events in the country in mid-1991. Despite its problem-plagued economy and society and its altered international situation, the Soviet Union remained one of the two most powerful countries in the world. Its size and location, natural resources, industrial capacity, population, and military strength made it of continuing importance. Having large quantities of almost all the strategic minerals and large reserves of coal, iron ore, natural gas, oil, timber, gold, manganese, and other resources, the Soviet Union required little material support from beyond its borders. It was self-sufficient in coal, natural gas, and oil, the major fuels needed for its extensive industry. Industrial development had been a keystone of economic policies of all Soviet regimes beginning with the Bolshevik Revolution and had resulted in a higher percentage of Soviet citizens working in industry than in most Western nations. Soviet industrial development, however, always favored heavy industry, for reasons of national security and military production. Light industry, which mainly produced goods for consumers other than nonmilitary needs, such as agriculture, always had low priority. The emphasis on heavy industry produced some spectacular successes, particularly with regard to the production of large quantities of military equipment

and weapons systems. As a result of this emphasis, however, the Soviet people had to settle for food, clothing, and housing of generally poor quality and insufficient quantity.

In mid-1991 the people gave the Gorbachev regime only minimal support and were beginning to reject the party's right to rule the Soviet Union. Gorbachev, however, continued to proclaim himself a Communist and to align himself with opponents of reform on some issues but with advocates of reform on other issues. He thus lost the support of almost all the democratic and market-oriented reformers and remained acceptable to the hard-line opponents of reform mainly because they lacked an alternative leader. Gorbachev apparently could not permanently join either the reformers or their opponents, but neither could he allow either group to gain continuing supremacy because his role as the arbiter of conflicting views would be unnecessary. His zigzags perhaps enabled him to remain in a position of power, but he continued to lose effectiveness as the director of major events in the country and therefore his relevance as a leader and reformer. His six years of historic political reform opened the Soviet Union to fundamental change. The reform effort, however, was not accompanied by significant changes in the party's ideology or the government's functions, and the irresolute and sporadic attempts to transform the centrally controlled economy into a market-based system had had little real success. Meanwhile, the country continued in its chaotic turmoil as the economy worsened, the regime became weaker, and several of the republics became more insistent on their national independence. The Soviet Union remained in flux and unpredictable.

August 16, 1991

* * *

Early in the morning of August 19, 1991, events began to occur that would have a greater historical impact than the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, according to George F. Kennan, one of America's foremost specialists on the Soviet Union. The events began when Soviet radio and television broadcasts announced that Gorbachev, who was vacationing in Crimea, had been replaced by a committee of high-ranking party and government officials because "ill health" prevented him from performing his presidential duties at a time when the country faced "fatal dangers." The officials, who called themselves the State Committee for the State of Emergency, placed themselves in charge of the country and put Gorbachev under house arrest. The committee was headed by the vice

president of the Soviet Union, Gennadii I. Ianaev, who was named acting president, and included the chairman of the KGB, Vladimir A. Kriuchkov; the minister of internal affairs, Boris K. Pugo; the minister of defense, Dmitrii T. Iazov; and the chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers, Valentin Pavlov. Anatolii I. Luk'ianov, the chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, supported the committee, as did other CPSU leaders in the government, armed forces, internal security forces, and military-industrial complex. The committee issued several decrees that suspended democratic political organizations; promised housing improvements and the freezing or reduction of prices on some food items; banned publication of several newspapers and journals; forbade labor strikes and public gatherings; and declared martial law in Moscow. In an appeal to the people, Ianaev pledged to ensure the territorial integrity of the Soviet Union and indicated that the new union treaty, which was scheduled to be signed on August 20, would be reevaluated before final acceptance. In an appeal to foreign leaders, Ianaev stated that treaties and other international agreements signed by the Soviet Union would be upheld by the committee, but he warned against attempts by foreign governments to change Soviet boundaries.

The announcements by the leaders of the coup d'état brought immediate reactions, mostly negative. In Moscow crowds of people protested in the streets and eventually confronted tanks of the armed forces in defense of the building housing the Russian Republic's supreme soviet. Tens of thousands of people rallied around Yeltsin, who urged them to continue resisting the coup and asked the troops not to fire on fellow citizens. Masses of people in many other Soviet cities demonstrated against the coup, and leaders of most of the republics denounced the coup. On the second day of the coup, three people were killed attempting to defend the supreme soviet building against tanks. Soviet troops occupied radio and television facilities in the Estonian and Lithuanian republics, and the Estonian and Lithuanian legislatures declared immediate secession from the Soviet Union. President Bush and other foreign leaders voiced strong opposition to the coup, which they termed "illegal," and called for the organizers to restore Gorbachev to power.

Firm opposition from the Soviet people, Yeltsin and other republic leaders, and international figures was not the only problem facing the initiators of the coup. Some of the armed forces defected to the opposition, and some others—for example, General Evgenii Shaposhnikov, commander in chief of the Air Forces, and Lieutenant General Pavel Grachev, commander of the Airborne Troops—refused to obey the orders to deploy. Many other military leaders, as well

as many senior members of the party, government, and media, apparently took no overt stand but waited to see if the coup was likely to succeed.

Early on the third day, the coup collapsed. The committee disbanded, and the Ministry of Defense directed all troops to leave Moscow. The Supreme Soviet of the Soviet Union formally reinstated Gorbachev as president, and he returned to Moscow from Crimea. Gorbachev returned to find that the political environment in Moscow and in many other places in the Soviet Union was radically different from the one that had existed before the coup attempt. At the urging of Yeltsin, Gorbachev, who had originally replaced coup members with their close subordinates, appointed persons more acceptable to the reformers. Shaposhnikov was appointed minister of defense, Vadim V. Bakatin the chairman of the KGB, and Viktor Barannikov the minister of internal affairs.

The failed coup and the events immediately following it represented a historic turning point for many reasons. The CPSU, which was a main bond linking the coup leaders, was thrown into further disarray, and it, together with the party-dominated central government, was seriously discredited. The position of conservative and reactionary leaders, who were mainly party members, was weakened relative to that of the advocates of substantial political and economic reform. In addition, Gorbachev, who had appointed or approved the appointment of the coup leaders and failed to forestall the coup, was diminished politically. Although he rejected collaborating with the coup leaders, Gorbachev fully advocated neither democracy nor a free-market economy and was viewed by many observers as a figure of mainly historical importance. Yeltsin, who had publicly defied the coup leaders, rallied the people to resist, and faced the tanks, used his position as the popularly elected president of the Russian Republic and his forceful personality to change the course of events. He altered Gorbachev's appointments, made economic and political agreements affecting the whole country, and revised the proposed new union treaty.

Although the precise roles that the armed forces, KGB, and MVD took during the coup were unclear, some people in these organs failed to respond to manipulation by the party apparatchiks (see Glossary). Some elements of the armed services, for example, opted not to support the coup. The vast majority of the armed forces, KGB, and MVD, however, were not actively involved in the coup and therefore did not attempt to influence the course of events. These organs traditionally had opposed change, and their considerable power

remained available for commitment in a future struggle. The positions of the nationalities seeking independence, sovereignty, and secession was also strengthened as a result of the failure of the coup. Ten of the fifteen republics declared or reaffirmed their independence. The United States, as well as the European Community, recognized Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania as separate and independent states. Finally, advocates of reform, in general, and democratic reform, in particular, were seen as ascendant by some Western observers, as a result of the coup. But perhaps equally as important, the advocates began to include not only members of the intelligentsia but also tens of thousands of ordinary citizens. Their activism helped defeat the coup, and it was possible they would be encouraged to participate in the democratic movement and thus help alter their political condition.

On August 24, 1991, the people received further encouragement when an evening television news program announced that Gorbachev had resigned as CPSU general secretary. Also announced was a plea from Gorbachev for the CPSU Central Committee to disband itself. On the same day, Gorbachev decreed that "soviets of people's deputies" should seize CPSU property and decide on its future use in accordance with Soviet law and the laws of the republics. In another decree, Gorbachev directed that political parties and political organizations must cease activities in the armed forces, MVD, KGB, and in the central government bureaucracy. Decrees limiting party activities had been issued earlier by Yeltsin for the Russian Republic and by some other republic leaders, but those decrees had generally not been carried out. Gorbachev did not quit the party, but although neither he nor Yeltsin outlawed it entirely, the people reacted as if the reign of the party had ended. They toppled numerous statues of Lenin and other party leaders, assaulted party members, and attempted to take over party buildings in several cities. The people's anger at the party erupted not only because of the coup attempt but because of the years of corruption, deceit, and tyranny that party members had inflicted on them in the exercise of near total power. Meanwhile, the Party Control Committee expelled the coup leaders from the party and claimed that the party as a whole should not be condemned for the illegal actions of a few "adventurers."

On September 5, 1991, perhaps the most significant aftereffect of the failed coup occurred: the Congress of People's Deputies, after being given an ultimatum by Gorbachev, dissolved both itself and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, after voting to transfer state power to a transitional government. The transitional government, which was largely controlled by the republics, was designed to rule until a new constitution and a new union treaty could be

prepared and approved. It consisted of the State Council, a new bicameral Supreme Soviet, and the Interrepublican Economic Committee. The State Council, with Gorbachev as the head, had as members the leaders of the republics participating in the new "voluntary" union. The State Council acted as the collective executive, and its responsibilities included foreign affairs, national defense, and internal security. The Interrepublican Economic Committee, with members chosen by the republics, was responsible for coordinating the economic relations of the republics and the management of the national economy. Gorbachev chose the committee chairman with approval of the State Council. In one of its first acts, the State Council recognized the complete independence of the former Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian republics.

By successfully withstanding a coup and instituting a transitional government, Gorbachev once again displayed his masterful talent for tactical improvisation and political survival. Nevertheless, the political situation in the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was unstable, and the economy continued to worsen. Most of the people were apprehensive about their future.

September 7, 1991 Raymond E. Zickel

Chapter 1. Historical Setting: Early History to 1917

Icon, Mother of God (Georgian)

THE SOVIET UNION is inhabited by many nationalities with complex origins and different histories. Its historical roots, however, are chiefly those of the East Slavs, who evolved into the Russian, Ukrainian, and Belorussian peoples. The major pre-Soviet political formations of the East Slavs were, in order, medieval Kievan Rus', Muscovy, and the Russian Empire. Three other states—Poland, Lithuania, and the Mongol Empire—also played crucial roles in the historical development of the Soviet Union.

The first East Slavic state, Kievan Rus', emerged along the Dnepr River Valley, where it controlled the trade route between Scandinavia and the Byzantine Empire. By adopting Christianity from Constantinople, Kievan Rus' began a synthesis of Byzantine and Slavic cultures. Kievan Rus' was the collective possession of a princely family, a fact that led to armed struggles between princes and ultimately to the territorial disintegration of the state. Conquest by the Mongols was the final blow, and subsequently a number of states claimed to be heirs of Kievan Rus'. One of these was Muscovy, located on the northeastern periphery of Kievan Rus' and populated primarily by Russians. Muscovy gradually dominated neighboring territories and expanded into the Russian Empire.

The historical characteristics that emerged in Muscovy were to affect both Russia and the Soviet Union. One such characteristic was the state's dominance over the individual. Mongol, Byzantine, and native Russian roots all contributed to what was referred to as Russian autocracy: the idea that Russian rulers, or tsars, were unlimited in their power. All institutions, including the Russian Orthodox Church, were subordinated to the state and the autocrat. The idea of autocracy survived until the fall of the last tsar.

Continual territorial expansion was another characteristic of Russian history. Beginning with Muscovy's "gathering of the Russian lands," expansion soon went beyond ethnically Russian areas. As a result, Muscovy developed into the huge Russian Empire, eventually stretching from the border with Poland to the Pacific Ocean. Because of its size and military might, Russia became a major power, but acquisition of non-Russian lands and peoples posed continuing nationality problems.

Expansion westward forced Russia to face the perennial questions of its backwardness and its relationship to the West. Muscovy had grown in isolation from the West, but Russia had to adopt

Western technology to compete militarily in Europe. Thus, Peter the Great attempted to modernize the country, as did subsequent rulers who struggled, largely unsuccessfully, to raise Russia to European levels of technology and productivity. With the acquisition of technology came Western cultural and intellectual currents that disrupted the development of an independent Russian culture. Native and foreign cultural values were often in contention, and questions of Russia's relationship to the West became an enduring obsession of Russian intellectuals.

Russia's defeat in the Crimean War triggered another attempt at modernization, including the emancipation of the serfs—peasants bound to the land they tilled. Despite major reforms, agriculture remained inefficient, industrialization proceeded haltingly, and new problems emerged. In addition to masses of land-hungry peasants, a budding industrial proletariat and a small but important group of middle-class professionals were becoming dissatisfied. Non-Russians, resentful of Russification (see Glossary), struggled for autonomy. In response to these continuing problems, successive regimes vacillated between repression and reform. The tsars were unwilling to give up autocratic rule or to share power. They, their supporters, and government bureaucrats became more isolated from the rest of society. Intellectuals became more radical, and some became professional revolutionaries.

Despite its internal problems, Russia continued to play a major role in international politics. Its defeat in the Russo-Japanese War, however, sparked a revolution in 1905. Professionals, workers, peasants, non-Russians, and soldiers demanded fundamental reforms. Reluctantly, the last tsar granted a limited constitution, but for a decade he circumvented it and continued autocratic rule.

When World War I began, Russian patriotism at first compensated for the war's disruption and suffering. The government, however, proved incompetent in pursuing the war, and as war-weariness and revolutionary pressures increased, fewer and fewer defended autocracy.

Emergence of the East Slavs

Many ethnically diverse peoples migrated onto the East European Plain, but the East Slavs remained and gradually became dominant. Kievan Rus', the first East Slavic state, emerged in the late ninth century A.D. and developed a complex and frequently unstable political system. Nonetheless, Kievan Rus' flourished until the thirteenth century, when it rapidly declined. A Slavic variant of the Eastern Orthodox religion and a synthesis of Byzantine and Slavic cultures are among its lasting achievements. The

disintegration of Kievan Rus' played a crucial role in the evolution of the East Slavs into the Russian, Ukrainian, and Belorussian peoples.

The Peoples of the East European Plain

Long before the appearance of Kievan Rus', Iranian and other peoples lived in the area of the present-day Ukrainian Republic. The most famous of these were the Scythians (ca. 600–200 B.C.), whose stylized animal jewelry can be seen in museums throughout the world. From A.D. 100 to 900, Goths and nomadic Huns, Avars, and Magyars passed though this region but left little of lasting import. More significant was the simultaneous spread of the Slavs, who were agriculturists and beekeepers, as well as hunters, fishers, herders, and trappers. The Slavs demographically dominated the region.

Little is known of the origins of the Slavs. Philologists and archaeologists have surmised that they settled very early in the Carpathian Mountains or in the area of the present-day Belorussian Republic. By A.D. 600, they had split linguistically into southern, western, and eastern branches. The East Slavs settled along the Dnepr River and its tributaries and then spread northward to Lake Ladoga and the Neva River Basin, northeastward to the northern Volga River region, and westward to the northern Dnestr and western Bug river basins. In the eighth and ninth centuries, many of the East Slavic tribes paid tribute to the Khazars, a Turkic-speaking people living in the southern Volga and Caucasus regions.

The East Slavs and the Varangians

By the ninth century, Scandinavian warriors and merchants, called Varangians, had penetrated the East Slavic regions. According to the earliest chronicle of Kievan Rus', a Varangian named Rurik first established himself in Novgorod ca. 860 before moving south and extending his authority to Kiev. The chronicle cited Rurik as the progenitor of the Rurikid Dynasty. This princely clan was to rule in eastern Europe until 1598. Another Varangian, named Oleg, moved south from Novgorod, expelled the Khazars from Kiev, and founded Kievan Rus' ca. 880. In a period of thirty-five years, he subdued the various East Slavic tribes. In 907 he led a campaign against Constantinople, and in 911 he signed a commercial treaty with the Byzantine Empire on the basis of equality. The new state prospered because it controlled the trade route stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea and because it had an abundant supply of furs, wax, honey, and slaves for export.

Source: Based on information from David MacKenzie and Michael W. Curran, *A History of Russia and the Soviet Union,* Chicago, 1987, 61.

Figure 2. The Principalities of Kievan Rus', 1136

Historians have debated the role of the Varangians in the establishment of Kievan Rus'. Most Russian—and particularly Soviet—historians have stressed the Slavic influence in the development of the state. Although Slavic tribes had formed their own regional entities by 860, the Varangians undoubtedly accelerated the crystallization of Kievan Rus'.

The Golden Age of Kiev

Kiev dominated Kievan Rus' for the next two centuries (see fig. 2). The grand prince controlled the lands around Kiev, while his theoretically subordinate relatives ruled in other cities and sent

him tribute. The zenith of Kievan Rus' came during the reigns of Prince Vladimir (978–1015) and Prince Iaroslav the Wise (1019–54). Both rulers continued the steady expansion of Kievan Rus', begun under Prince Oleg. To enhance his power, Vladimir married the sister of the Byzantine emperor. Iaroslav arranged marriages for his sister and three daughters to the kings of Poland, France, Hungary, and Norway. Vladimir's greatest achievement was the Christianization of Kievan Rus', starting in 988, and he built the first great edifice of Kievan Rus', the Tithe Church in Kiev. Iaroslav promulgated the first East Slavic law code, *Ruska Pravda* (Rus' Justice); built the St. Sofia cathedrals in Kiev and Novgorod; patronized native clergy and monasticism; and is said to have founded a school system. Kiev's great Monastery of the Caves, which functioned in Kievan Rus' as an ecclesiastical academy, was developed under Iaroslav's sons.

Vladimir's choice of Eastern Orthodoxy reflected his close political ties with Constantinople, which dominated the Black Sea and hence the Dnepr River trade. His decision had long-range political, cultural, and religious consequences. The Eastern Orthodox Church had a liturgy written in Cyrillic (see Glossary) and a corpus of translations, which had been produced earlier for the South Slavs. This literature facilitated the conversion to Christianity and introduced East Slavs to rudimentary Greek philosophy, science, and historiography without their having to learn Greek. In contrast, educated people in medieval western and central Europe learned Latin. East Slavs learned neither Greek nor Latin and thus were isolated from Byzantine culture as well as from the culture of their European neighbors to the west.

Rurik's purported descendants organized Kievan Rus' as their shared possession. Princely succession devolved from elder to younger brother and from uncle to nephew, as well as from father to son. Junior members of the dynasty usually began their princely careers by ruling a minor district, then sought to obtain a more lucrative principality, and finally competed for the coveted golden throne of Kiev.

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the princes and their retinues—a mixture of Varangian and native Slavic elites plus small Finno-Ugric and Turkic elements—dominated the society of Kievan Rus'. Leading warriors and officials, who sometimes constituted an advisory council, or duma (see Glossary), received income or land from the princes in return for their services. The society of Kievan Rus' did not develop class institutions, the concept of legal reciprocity, or autonomous towns, all of which characterized Western feudalism. Nevertheless, urban merchants, artisans, and

laborers sometimes exercised political influence through a popular assembly, or *veche.* In some cases, the *veche* either made agreements with princes or expelled them and invited others to take their places. At the bottom of society was a small stratum of slaves. More important were tribute-paying peasants, who gradually came under the influence of the Orthodox Church and landlords. As in the rest of eastern Europe, the peasants owed labor duty to the princes, but the widespread personal serfdom characteristic of western Europe did not exist in Kievan Rus'.

The Rise of Regional Centers

Kievan Rus' was not able to maintain its position as a powerful and prosperous state. Many factors contributed to its decline, among them its being an amalgamation of disparate lands held together by a ruling clan. As the descendants of Rurik multiplied, they identified themselves with regional interests rather than with a larger patrimony. The princes fought among themselves, frequently forming alliances with Polovtsians, Poles, Hungarians, and others. The decline of Kievan Rus' was further accelerated by a shift in European trade routes resulting from the Crusades. The sacking of Constantinople in 1204 by the Crusaders made the Dnepr trade route marginal. As it declined, Kievan Rus' splintered into many principalities and several large regional centers. The people inhabiting the regional centers evolved into several nationalities: Ukrainians in the southeast and southwest, Belorussians in the northwest, and Russians in the north and northeast.

In the north, Novgorod prospered because it controlled trade routes from the Volga River to the Baltic Sea. As Kievan Rus' declined, Novgorod became more independent. It was ruled by a town oligarchy, and major decisions, including the election or dismissal of a prince, were made at town meetings. In the twelfth century, Novgorod acquired its own archbishop—a sign of its importance and its political independence. In its political structure and mercantile activities, Novgorod, which became a republic in 1136, resembled the north European towns of the Hanseatic League more than the other principalities of Kievan Rus'.

In the northeast, the territory that eventually became Muscovy was colonized by East Slavs who intermingled with the Finno-Ugric tribes of the area. The city of Rostov was the oldest center of the northeast but was supplanted first by the city of Suzdal' and then by the city of Vladimir. By the twelfth century, the combined principality of Vladimir-Suzdal' had become a major power in Kievan Rus'. In 1169 Prince Andrei Bogoliubskii of Vladimir-Suzdal' dealt a severe blow to the waning power of the Kievan Rus' capital of

Kiev when his armies sacked the city. Prince Andrei installed his younger brother in Kiev and continued to rule his realm from the city of Suzdal'. Political power had shifted to the northeast. In 1299, in the wake of a Mongol invasion, the head of the Orthodox Church, the metropolitan of Kiev and all Rus', moved to the city of Vladimir. Thus Vladimir-Suzdal', with its increased political power and with the metropolitan in residence, acted as a continuator of Kievan Rus'.

The principality of Galicia-Volhynia, which had highly developed trade relations with its Polish, Hungarian, and Lithuanian neighbors, emerged as another successor to Kievan Rus' in the southwest. In the early thirteenth century, Prince Roman Mstislavich united the two previously separate principalities, conquered Kiev, and assumed the title of grand prince of Kievan Rus'. His son, Prince Daniil (1230–64), was the first ruler of Kievan Rus' to accept a crown from the Roman papacy, apparently without breaking with Orthodoxy. Early in the fourteenth century, the patriarch of the Orthodox Church in Constantinople granted the rulers of Galicia-Volhynia a metropolitan to compensate for the Kievan metropolitan's move to Vladimir.

A long and losing struggle against the Mongols, however, as well as internal opposition to the prince and foreign intervention, weakened Galicia-Volhynia. With the end of the Mstislavich Dynasty in the mid-fourteenth century, Galicia-Volhynia ceased to exist: Lithuania took Volhynia, and Poland annexed Galicia.

The Mongol Invasion

During its fragmentation, Kievan Rus' faced its greatest threat from invading Mongols. An army from Kievan Rus', together with the Turkic Polovtsians, met a Mongol raiding party in 1223 at the Kalka River. The army of Kievan Rus' and its Polovtsian allies were soundly defeated. A much larger Mongol force overran much of Kievan Rus' in the winter of 1237–38. In 1240 the city of Kiev was sacked, and the Mongols moved on to Poland and Hungary. Of the principalities of Kievan Rus', only the Republic of Novgorod escaped the invasion; it did, however, pay tribute to the Mongols. One branch of the Mongols withdrew to Sarai on the lower Volga River and established the Golden Horde (see Glossary). From Sarai the Golden Horde Mongols controlled Kievan Rus', ruling indirectly through its princes and tax collectors.

The impact of the Mongol invasion was uneven. Some centers, Kiev for example, never recovered from the devastation of the initial attack. The Republic of Novgorod continued to prosper unscathed, and a new entity, the city of Moscow, flourished under

the Mongols. Although a Russian army defeated the Golden Horde at Kulikovo in 1380, Mongol domination of territories inhabited by Russians, and demands for tribute from Russian princes, continued until about 1480. In the early fourteenth century, however, Lithuania pushed the Mongols from territories inhabited by Ukrainians and Belorussians and claimed these lands. The Lithuanians accepted the Ruthenian language (Ukrainian-Belorussian) as the state language and maintained the judicial and administrative practices of Kievan Rus'. The grand duke of Lithuania became a contender for the political and cultural heritage of Kievan Rus'. Ultimately, the traditions of Kievan Rus' were superseded by Polish influences in Lithuania.

Historians have debated the long-term impact of Mongol rule on Russian and Soviet society. The Mongols have been blamed for the destruction of Kievan Rus'; the breakup of an old "Russian" nationality into Ukrainian, Belorussian, and Russian components; and the introduction of "oriental despotism" to Russia. But most historians have agreed that Kievan Rus' was not a homogeneous political, cultural, or ethnic entity and that the Mongols merely accelerated its breakup, which had begun before the invasion. Nevertheless, modern historians have tended to credit the Mongol regime with a very important role in the development of Muscovy as a state. Muscovy, for example, adopted its postal road network, census, fiscal system, and military organization from the Mongols.

Kievan Rus' left a powerful legacy. Under the leadership of the Rurikid Dynasty, a large territory inhabited by East Slavs was united into an important, albeit unstable, state. After the acceptance of Eastern Orthodoxy, Kievan Rus' was united by a church structure and developed a Byzantine-Slavic synthesis in culture, the arts, and traditions. In the western part of this area, these traditions helped form the Ukrainian and Belorussian nationalities. On the northeastern periphery of Kievan Rus', these traditions were adapted to form the Russian autocratic state.

Muscovy

The development of the Russian state can be traced from Vladimir-Suzdal' through Muscovy to the Russian Empire. Muscovy drew people and wealth to the northeastern periphery of Kievan Rus'; established trade links to the Baltic, White, and Caspian seas and to Siberia; and created a highly centralized and autocratic political system. Muscovite political traditions, therefore, have exerted a powerful influence on Russian and Soviet society.

St. Sofia Cathedral (completed in 1046), Kiev, Ukrainian Republic Courtesy Jimmy Pritchard

Cathedral of the Assumption (completed in 1479) in Moscow's Kremlin, where coronations of tsars took place, the last one for Tsar Nicholas II in 1894 Courtesy Jimmy Pritchard

The Rise of Muscovy

When the Mongols invaded the lands of Kievan Rus', Moscow was an insignificant trading outpost in the principality of Vladimir-Suzdal'. Muscovy's remote, forested location offered some security from Mongol attack and occupation, while a number of rivers provided access to the Baltic and Black seas and to the Caucasus region. More important to Moscow's development in the state of Muscovy, however, was its rule by a series of princes who were ambitious, determined, and lucky. The first ruler of the principality of Muscovy, Daniil Aleksandrovich (d. 1303), secured the principality for his branch of the Rurikid Dynasty. His son, Ivan I (1325–40), known as Kalita ("Money Bags"), obtained the title of "Grand Prince of Vladimir" from his Mongol overlords. He closely cooperated with the Mongols and collected tribute from other Russian principalities on their behalf. This enabled him to gain regional ascendancy, particularly over Muscovy's rival, Tver'. In 1327 the Orthodox metropolitan transferred his residency from Vladimir to Moscow, further enhancing the prestige of the new principality.

The grand princes of Muscovy began gathering Russian lands to increase the population and wealth under their rule. The most successful "gatherer" was Ivan III (1462–1505), who in 1478 conquered Novgorod and in 1485 Tver' (see table 2, Appendix A). Through inheritance, Ivan obtained part of Ryazan', and the princes of Rostov and Yaroslavl' voluntarily subordinated themselves to him. Pskov, which remained independent, was conquered in 1510 by Ivan's son, Vasilii III (1505–33). By the beginning of the sixteenth century, Muscovy had united virtually all ethnically Russian lands.

Muscovy gained full sovereignty as Mongol power waned, and Mongol overlordship was officially terminated in 1480. Ivan III was the first Muscovite ruler to use the titles of tsar and "Ruler of all Rus'," laying claim not only to Russian areas but also to parts of the Ukrainian and Belorussian lands of Kievan Rus'. Lithuania, then a powerful state, included other parts of Belorussia and central Ukraine. Ivan III competed with Lithuania for control over some of the semi-independent former principalities of Kievan Rus' in the upper Dnepr and Donets river basins. Through defections of some princes, border skirmishes, and an inconclusive war with Lithuania, Ivan III was able to push westward, and Muscovy tripled in size under his rule.

The Evolution of Russian Autocracy

Outward expansion was accompanied by internal consolidation. By the fifteenth century, the rulers of Muscovy considered the entire

territory their collective property. Various semi-independent princes still claimed specific territories, but Ivan forced the lesser princes to acknowledge the grand prince of Muscovy and his descendants as unquestioned rulers and having control over military, judicial, and foreign affairs.

Gradually, the Muscovite ruler emerged as a powerful, autocratic ruler, a "tsar." By assuming the title "tsar," the Muscovite prince underscored that he was a major ruler or emperor, much like the emperor of the Byzantine Empire or the Mongol khan. Indeed, Byzantine terms, rituals, emblems such as the double-headed eagle, and titles were adopted by the Muscovite court after Ivan III's marriage to Sophia Paleologue, the niece of the last Byzantine emperor. Ivan III was the first Russian prince to begin using the title "tsar and autocrat," mimicking the titles used by Christian emperors of Constantinople. At first, "autocrat" indicated merely that the tsar was an independent ruler, but in the reign of Ivan IV (1533–84) the concept was enlarged until it came to mean unlimited rule. Ivan IV was crowned tsar and was thus recognized, at least by the Orthodox Church, as emperor. An Orthodox monk had claimed that, with the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Empire in 1453, the Muscovite tsar was the only legitimate Orthodox ruler and that Moscow was the Third Rome because it was the final successor to Rome and Constantinople, the centers of Christianity in earlier eras.

Ivan IV

The development of the tsar's autocratic powers reached a culmination during the reign of Ivan IV. Ivan, who became known as "the Terrible" or "the Dread," strengthened the position of the tsar to an unprecedented degree, thus demonstrating the risks of unbridled power in the hands of an unbalanced individual. Although apparently intelligent and energetic, he suffered from bouts of paranoia and depression, and his rule was prone to extreme violence.

Ivan IV became grand prince of Muscovy in 1533 at the age of three. Various boyar (see Glossary) factions competed for control over the regency until Ivan assumed the throne in 1547. Reflecting Muscovy's new imperial claims, Ivan was crowned tsar in an elaborate ritual modeled after the coronation of the Byzantine emperors. Ivan continued to be assisted by a group of boyars, and his reign began a series of useful reforms. During the 1550s, a new law code was promulgated, the military was revamped, and local government was reorganized. These reforms were undoubtedly intended to strengthen Muscovy in the face of continuous warfare.

During the late 1550s, Ivan became angry with his advisers, the government, and the boyars. Historians have not determined whether his wrath was caused by policy differences, personal animosities, or mental imbalance. In any case, he divided Muscovy into two parts: his private domain and the public realm. For his private domain, Ivan chose some of the most prosperous and important districts in Muscovy. In these areas, Ivan's agents attacked boyars, merchants, and even common people, summarily executing them and confiscating their land and possessions. A decade of terror descended over Muscovy. As a result of the *oprichnina* (see Glossary), Ivan broke the economic and political power of the leading boyar families, thereby destroying precisely those persons who had built up Muscovy and were the most capable of running it. Trade was curtailed, and peasants, faced with mounting taxes and physical violence, began to leave central Muscovy. Efforts to curtail the mobility of the peasants brought Muscovy closer to legal serfdom. In 1572 Ivan finally abandoned the practices followed during the *oprichnina.*

Despite domestic turmoil, Muscovy continued to wage wars and to expand. Ivan defeated and annexed the Kazan' Khanate in 1552 and later the Astrakhan' Khanate. With these victories, Muscovy gained access to the entire Volga River littoral and Central Asia. Muscovy's expansion eastward encountered relatively little resistance. In 1581 the Stroganov merchant family, interested in the fur trade, hired a cossack (see Glossary) leader, Ermak, to lead an expedition into western Siberia. Ermak defeated the Siberian Khanate and claimed the territories west of the Ob' and Irtysh rivers for Muscovy (see fig. 3).

Expanding northwest toward the Baltic Sea proved to be much more difficult. In 1558 Ivan invaded Livonia, which eventually embroiled him in a twenty-five-year war against Poland, Lithuania, Sweden, and Denmark. Despite occasional successes, Ivan's army was pushed back, and Muscovy failed to secure a position on the Baltic Sea. The war drained Muscovy. Some historians believe that the *oprichnina* was initiated to mobilize resources for the war and to counter opposition to it. In any case, Ivan's domestic and foreign policies were devastating for Muscovy, and they led to a period of social struggle and civil war, the so-called Time of Troubles (1598–1613).

The Time of Troubles

Ivan IV was succeeded by his son Fedor, who was mentally deficient. Actual power was exercised by Fedor's brother-in-law, Boris Godunov, a boyar. Perhaps the most important event of Fedor's

reign was the proclamation of the patriarchate of Moscow in 1589. The patriarchate culminated the evolution of a separate and totally independent Russian Orthodox Church.

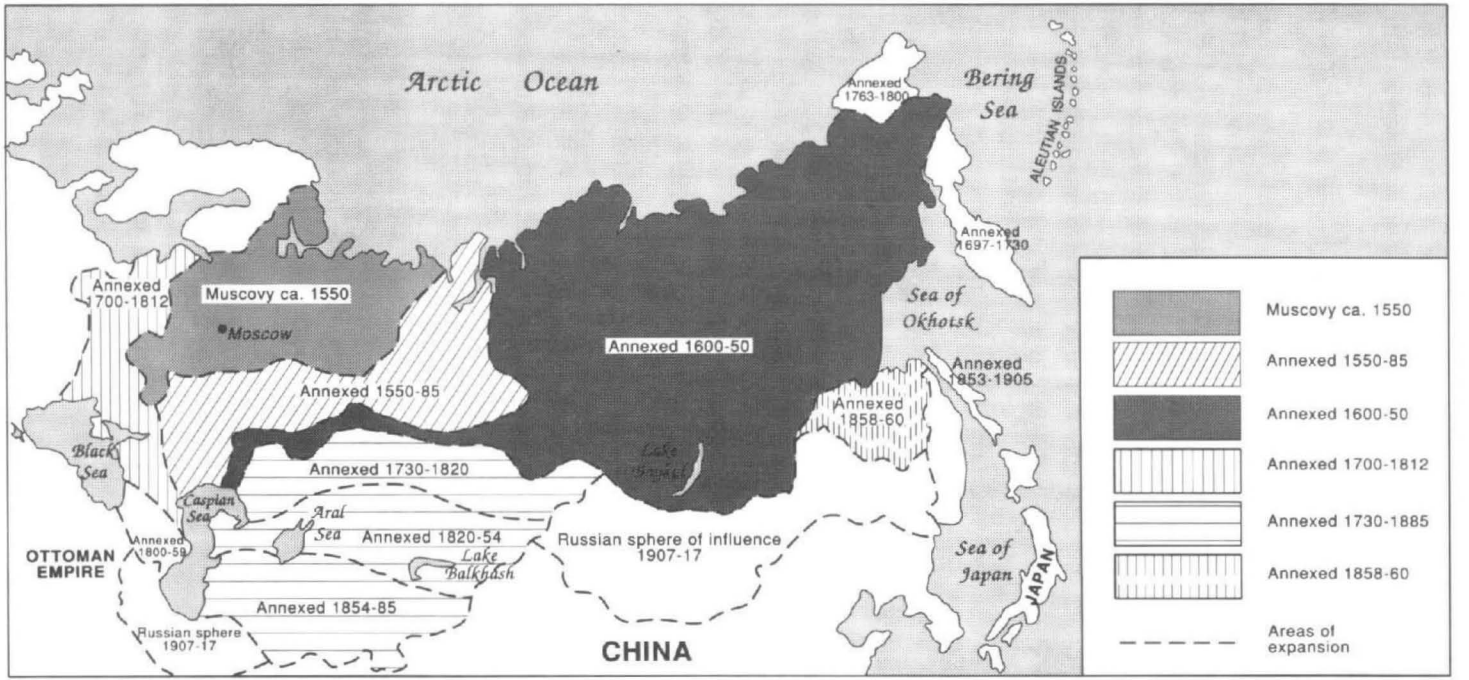
In 1598 Fedor died without an heir, ending the Rurikid Dynasty. Boris Godunov called a *zemskii sobor* (see Glossary), which proclaimed him tsar, although various boyar factions refused to accept him. Widespread crop failures caused a famine between 1601 and 1603, and in the ensuing discontent, a leader emerged who claimed to be Dmitrii, a son of Ivan IV (the actual Dmitrii had died in 1591). This First False Dmitrii obtained military support in Poland and began a march toward Moscow. On his way, he was joined by dissatisfied elements ranging from peasants to boyars. Historians speculate that Godunov would have weathered the crisis, but he died in 1605, and, as a result, the pretender entered Moscow and was crowned tsar, following the murder of Fedor II, Boris Godunov's son.

Subsequently, Muscovy entered a period of continuous chaos. The Time of Troubles included a civil war in which a struggle over the throne was complicated by the machinations of rival boyar factions, the intervention of Poland and Sweden, and intense popular discontent. The First False Dmitrii and his Polish garrison were overthrown, and a boyar, Vasilii Shuiskii, was proclaimed tsar in 1606. In his attempt to retain the throne, Shuiskii allied himself with the Swedes. A Second False Dmitrii, allied with the Poles, appeared. In 1610 the Polish heir apparent was proclaimed tsar, and the Poles occupied Moscow. The Polish presence led to a patriotic revival among the Russians, and a new army—financed by northern merchants and blessed by the Orthodox Church—drove the Poles out of Moscow. In 1613 a *zemskii sobor* chose the boyar Mikhail Romanov as tsar, thus beginning 300 years of Romanov rule.

For over a decade, Muscovy was in chaos, but the institution of autocracy remained intact. Despite the tsar's persecution of the boyars, the dissatisfaction of the townspeople, and the gradual enserfment of the peasantry, efforts at restricting the tsar were only halfhearted. Finding no institutional alternative to autocracy, the discontented rallied behind various pretenders. During this period, politics consisted of gaining influence over an autocrat or placing one's candidate on the throne. The boyars fought among themselves, the lower classes revolted blindly, and foreign armies occupied the Kremlin in Moscow, prompting many to accept tsarist absolutism and autocracy as necessary to restore unity and order in Muscovy.

The Romanovs

The most immediate task of Romanov rule was to restore order. Fortunately for Muscovy, its major enemies, Poland and Sweden,



Source: Based on information from Basil Dmytryshyn, *A History of Russia,* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1977, 410.

Figure 3. Territorial Expansion of Muscovy and the Russian Empire, 1550–1917

were in bitter conflict with each other, and Muscovy obtained peace with Sweden in 1617 and a truce with Poland in 1619. After an unsuccessful attempt to regain Smolensk from Poland in 1632, Muscovy made peace with Poland in 1634. The Polish king, who had been elected tsar during the Time of Troubles, renounced all claims to the title.

Mikhail Romanov was a weak monarch, and state affairs were actually in the hands of his father, Filaret, who in 1619 became patriarch of the Orthodox Church. Similarly, Mikhail's son, Alexis (1645–76), relied on a boyar, Boris Morozov, to run the government. Morozov abused his position by exploiting the populace, and in 1648, after an uprising in Moscow, he was dismissed.

The autocracy survived the Time of Troubles and the rule of weak or corrupt tsars because of the strength of the government's central bureaucracy. Its functionaries continued to serve, regardless of the tsar's legitimacy or the boyar faction controlling the tsar. In the seventeenth century, this bureaucracy expanded dramatically. The number of government departments (*prikazi*) increased from twenty-two in 1613 to eighty by mid-century. Although the departments often had overlapping and conflicting jurisdictions, the central government, through provincial governors, controlled and regulated all social groups, trade, manufacturing, and even the Orthodox Church.

The extent of state control of Russian society was demonstrated by the comprehensive legal code introduced in 1649. By that time, the boyars had largely merged with the elite, who were obligatory servitors of the state, to form a new nobility (*dvorianstvo*). Both groups, whether old or new nobility, were required to serve the state, primarily in the military. In return, they received land and peasants. Peasants, whose right to move to another landlord had been gradually curtailed, were thereafter attached to their domicile. The state fully sanctioned serfdom, and runaway peasants became state fugitives. Landlords had complete power over their peasants and sold, traded, or mortgaged them. Peasants living on state-owned land, however, were not considered serfs. They were organized into communes, which were responsible for taxes and other obligations. Like serfs, however, state peasants were attached to the land they farmed. Burghers, who lived in urban areas and engaged in trade and handicrafts, were assessed taxes and were also prohibited from changing residences. All segments of the population were subject to military levies and special taxes. Flight was the most common escape from state-imposed burdens. By chaining much of Muscovite society to its domicile, the legal code of 1649 curtailed movement and subordinated the people to the interests of the state.

Increased state exactions and regulations exacerbated the social discontent that had been simmering since the Time of Troubles. A major uprising occurred in the Volga region in 1670 and 1671. Stenka Razin, a cossack from the Don River area, spearheaded a revolt that drew together dissatisfied cossacks, escaped serfs, and Turkic ethnic groups. The uprising swept the Volga River Valley and even threatened Moscow. Ultimately, tsarist troops defeated the rebels, and Stenka Razin was publicly tortured and executed.

Expansion and Westernization

Muscovy continued its territorial growth. In the southwest, it acquired eastern Ukraine, which had been under Polish rule. The Ukrainian Cossacks, warriors organized into military formations, lived in the frontier areas bordering Poland, the Tatar lands, and Muscovy. Although they had served the Polish king as mercenary troops, the Ukrainian Cossacks remained fiercely independent and staged a number of uprisings against the Poles. In 1648 the Ukrainian Cossacks revolted and were joined by most of Ukrainian society, which had suffered political, social, religious, and ethnic oppression under Polish rule. After the Ukrainians threw off Polish rule, they needed military help to sustain their gains. In 1654 the leader of the Ukrainian Cossacks, Bohdan Khmel'nyts'kyi, offered to place Ukraine under the protection of the Muscovite tsar rather than the Polish king. After some hesitation, the tsar accepted Khmel'nyts'kyi's offer, which led to a protracted war between Muscovy and Poland. The war was concluded by the Treaty of Andrusovo in 1667. Ukraine was split along the Dnepr River. The western bank was retained by Poland, and the eastern bank remained self-governing under the suzerainty of the tsar.

In the east, Muscovy had obtained western Siberia in the sixteenth century. From this base, merchants, traders, and explorers continued to push east from the Ob' River to the Yenisey River and then from the Yenisey River to the Lena River. By the middle of the seventeenth century, Muscovites had reached the Amur River and the outskirts of the Chinese Empire. After a period of conflict, Muscovy made peace with China in 1689. By the Treaty of Nerchinsk, Muscovy gave up claims to the Amur River Valley. By the middle of the seventeenth century, Muscovy extended eastward through Eurasia to the Pacific Ocean.

Muscovy's southwestern expansion, particularly its incorporation of eastern Ukraine, had unintended consequences. Most Ukrainians were Orthodox, but, having had to compete with the Polish Counter-Reformation, they combined Western intellectual currents with their religion. Through Kiev, Muscovy obtained links

to Polish and central European influences and to the wider Orthodox world. Historically, Ukrainians had been under the jurisdiction of the patriarch of Constantinople. Although the Ukrainian link stimulated creativity, it also undermined traditional Russian religious practices and culture. The Russian Orthodox Church discovered that because of its isolation from Constantinople, variations had crept into its liturgical books and practices. The Russian Orthodox patriarch, Nikon, was determined to correct the texts according to the Greek originals. Nikon, however, encountered fierce opposition because many Russians viewed the corrections as inspired by foreigners or the devil. The Orthodox Church forced the reforms, which resulted in a schism in 1667. Those who did not accept the reforms, the Old Believers, were pronounced heretics and were persecuted by the church and the state. The chief opposition figure, Avvakum, was burned at the stake. The split subsequently became permanent, and many merchants and prosperous peasants joined the Old Believers.

The impact of Ukraine and the West was also felt at the tsar's court. Kiev, through its famed scholarly academy, founded by Metropolitan Mohila in 1631, was a major transmitter of new ideas and introduced the Muscovite elite to a central European variant of the Western world. Among the results of this infusion of ideas were baroque architecture, literature, and icon painting. Other more direct channels to the West opened as international trade increased and more foreigners came to Muscovy. The tsar's court was interested in the West's more advanced technology, particularly if its applications were military in nature. By the end of the seventeenth century, Ukrainian, Polish, and West European penetration had undermined the Muscovite cultural synthesis—at least among the elite—and had prepared the way for an even more radical transformation.

Early Imperial Russia

In the eighteenth century, Muscovy was transformed from a static, somewhat isolated, traditional state into the more dynamic, partially Westernized, and secularized Russian Empire. This transformation was in no small measure a result of the vision, energy, and determination of Peter the Great (1682–1725). Historians disagree about the extent to which Peter himself transformed Russia, but they generally concur that he laid the foundations that shaped the empire over the next two centuries. The era he initiated signaled the advent of Russia as a major European power. But although the Russian Empire would play a leading political role for the next century, its retention of serfdom precluded economic progress of any significant

degree. As west European economic growth accelerated during the Industrial Revolution, Russia began to lag ever further behind, creating new problems for the empire as a great power.

Peter the Great and the Formation of the Russian Empire

As a child of the second marriage of Tsar Alexis, Peter was at first relegated to the background of Russian politics as various court factions struggled for control of the throne. Tsar Alexis was succeeded by his son from his first marriage, Fedor III, a sickly boy who died in 1682. Peter was then made co-tsar with his half brother, Ivan V, but real power was held by Peter's half sister, Sofia. She ruled as regent while the young Peter was allowed to play war games with his friends and roam in Moscow's foreign quarters. These early experiences instilled in him an abiding interest in Western warfare and technology, particularly in military engineering, artillery, navigation, and shipbuilding. In 1689, using troops he had drilled during childhood games, Peter foiled a plot to have Sofia crowned. With the death of Ivan V in 1696, Peter became the sole tsar of Muscovy.

Much of Peter's reign was spent at war. At first he attempted to secure Muscovy's southern borders against the Tatars and the Ottoman Turks. His campaign against a fort on the Sea of Azov failed at first, but having created Russia's first navy, Peter was able to take the port of Azov in 1696. To continue the war with the Ottoman Empire, Peter began looking for allies in Europe. He traveled to Europe, the first tsar to do so, in a so-called Grand Embassy that included visits to Brandenburg, Holland, England, and the Holy Roman Empire. Peter learned a great deal and enlisted into his service hundreds of European technical specialists. The embassy was cut short by a revolt in Moscow that attempted to place Sofia on the throne. Peter's followers crushed the revolt. Peter had hundreds of the participants tortured and killed, and he publicly displayed their bodies as a lesson to others.

Although Peter was unsuccessful in forging an anti-Ottoman coalition in Europe, he found interest in waging war against Sweden during his travels. Seeing an opportunity to break through to the Baltic Sea, Peter made peace with the Ottoman Empire in 1700 and then attacked the Swedes at Narva. Sweden's young king, Charles XII, however, proved to be a military genius and crushed Peter's army. Fortunately for Peter, Charles did not follow his victory with a counteroffensive, but rather became embroiled in a series of wars over the Polish throne. The respite allowed Peter to build a new Western-style army. When the two met again in the town of Poltava in 1709, Peter defeated Charles. Charles escaped to

Column of Glory in Poltava, Ukrainian Republic. The bronze eagle at its top faces the battlefield where, in 1709, Peter the Great defeated King Charles XII of Sweden. Courtesy Jimmy Pritchard

Ottoman territories, and Russia subsequently became engaged in another war with the Ottoman Empire. Russia agreed to return the port of Azov to the Ottoman Empire in 1711. The Great Northern War, which in essence was settled at Poltava, dragged on until 1721, when Sweden agreed to the Treaty of Nystad. Muscovy retained what it had conquered: Livonia, Estonia, and Ingria on the Baltic Sea. Through his victories, Peter had acquired a direct link to western Europe. In celebration, Peter assumed the title of emperor as well as tsar, and Muscovy became the Russian Empire in 1721.

Muscovy's expansion into Europe and transformation into the Russian Empire had been accomplished by restructuring the military, streamlining the government, and mobilizing Russia's financial and human resources. Peter had established Russia's naval forces and reorganized the army along European lines. Soldiers, who served for life, were drafted from the taxed population. Officers were drawn from the nobility and were required to spend lifelong service in either the military or the civilian administration. In 1722 Peter introduced the Table of Ranks, which determined position and status on the basis of service to the tsar rather than on birth or seniority. Even commoners were ennobled automatically if they achieved a certain rank.

Peter also reorganized the governmental structure. The *prikazi* were replaced with colleges, or boards, and the newly created Senate

coordinated government policy. Peter's reform of the local governmental system was less successful, but its operations were adequate for collecting taxes and maintaining order. As part of the governmental reform, the Orthodox Church was partially incorporated into the administrative structure of the country. The patriarchate was abolished and replaced by a collective body, the Holy Synod, which was headed by a lay government official.

Peter managed to triple the revenues coming into the state treasury. A major innovation was a capitation, or poll tax, levied on all males except clergy and nobles. A myriad of indirect taxes on alcohol, salt, and even beards added further income. To provide uniforms and weapons for the military, Peter developed a metallurgical and textile industry based on the labor of serfs.

Peter wanted Russia to have modern technologies, institutions, and ideas. He required Western-style education for all male nobles, introduced "cipher" schools to teach the alphabet and basic arithmetic, established a printing house, and funded the Academy of Sciences (see Glossary), established just before his death in 1725. He demanded that aristocrats acquire Western dress, tastes, and social customs. As a consequence, the cultural rift between the nobles and the mass of Russia people deepened. Peter's drive for Westernization, his break with past traditions, and his coercive methods were epitomized in the construction of the new, architecturally Western capital, St. Petersburg, situated on land newly conquered on the Gulf of Finland. St. Petersburg faced westward but was constructed by conscripted labor. Westernization by coercion could not arouse the individualistic creative spirit that was an important element of the Western ways Peter so much admired.

Peter's reign raised questions regarding Russia's backwardness, its relationship to the West, its coercive style of reform from above, and other fundamental problems that have confronted subsequent rulers. In the nineteenth century, Russians debated whether Peter correctly pointed Russia toward the West or violated its natural traditions. Historians' views of Peter's reign have tended to reveal their own political and ideological positions as to the essence of Russia's history and civilization.

Era of Palace Revolutions

Having killed his own son, Alexis, who had opposed his father's reforms and served as a rallying point for antireform groupings, Peter changed the rules of succession. A new law provided that the tsar would choose his own heir, but Peter failed to do so before his own death in 1725. The absence of clear rules of succession left the monarchy open to intrigues, plots, coups, and countercoups.

Henceforth, the crucial factor for obtaining the throne was the support of the elite palace guard stationed in St. Petersburg.

At first, Peter's wife, Catherine I, seized the throne. But she died in 1727, and Peter's grandson, Peter II, was crowned tsar. In 1730 Peter II succumbed to smallpox, and Anna, a daughter of the former co-tsar, Ivan V, ascended the throne. The clique of nobles that put Anna on the throne attempted to impose various conditions on her. Although initially accepting these "points," Anna repudiated them after becoming tsarina. Anna was supported by other nobles, who apparently feared oligarchic rule more than autocracy. Despite continuing chaotic struggles for the throne, the nobles did not question the principle of autocratic absolutism.

Anna died in 1740, and her infant grandnephew, Ivan VI, was proclaimed tsar. After a series of coups, however, he was replaced by Peter the Great's daughter Elizabeth (1741–62). During Elizabeth's reign, a Westernized yet Russian culture began to emerge, as witnessed by the founding of Moscow University (1755) and the Academy of Fine Arts (1757). In the same period, Russia also produced its first eminent scientist and scholar, Mikhail V. Lomonosov.

During the rule of Peter's successors, Russia increased its role in the European state system. From 1726 to 1761, Russia was allied with Austria against the Ottoman Empire, which, in turn, was usually supported by France. In the War of Polish Succession (1733–35), Russia and Austria blocked the French candidate to the Polish throne. In a costly war with the Ottoman Empire (1734–39), Russia reacquired the port of Azov. Russia's greatest reach into Europe was during the Seven Years' War (1756–63). Russia had continued its alliance with Austria, but in the "diplomatic revolution" of the period Austria allied itself with France against Prussia. In 1760 Russian forces were at the gates of Berlin. Fortunately for Prussia, Elizabeth died in 1762, and her successor, Peter III, was devoted to the Prussian emperor, Frederick the Great. Peter III allied Russia with Prussia.

Peter III had a very short and unpopular reign. Although a grandson of Peter the Great, he was the son of the duke of Holstein and was raised in a German Lutheran environment. He was therefore considered a foreigner. Making no secret of his contempt for all things Russian, Peter created deep resentment by foisting Prussian military drills on the Russian military, attacking the church, and creating a sudden alliance with Prussia, which deprived Russia of a military victory. Making use of the discontent and fearing for her own position, Peter III's wife, Catherine, deposed her husband in a coup. Peter III was subsequently murdered by Catherine's

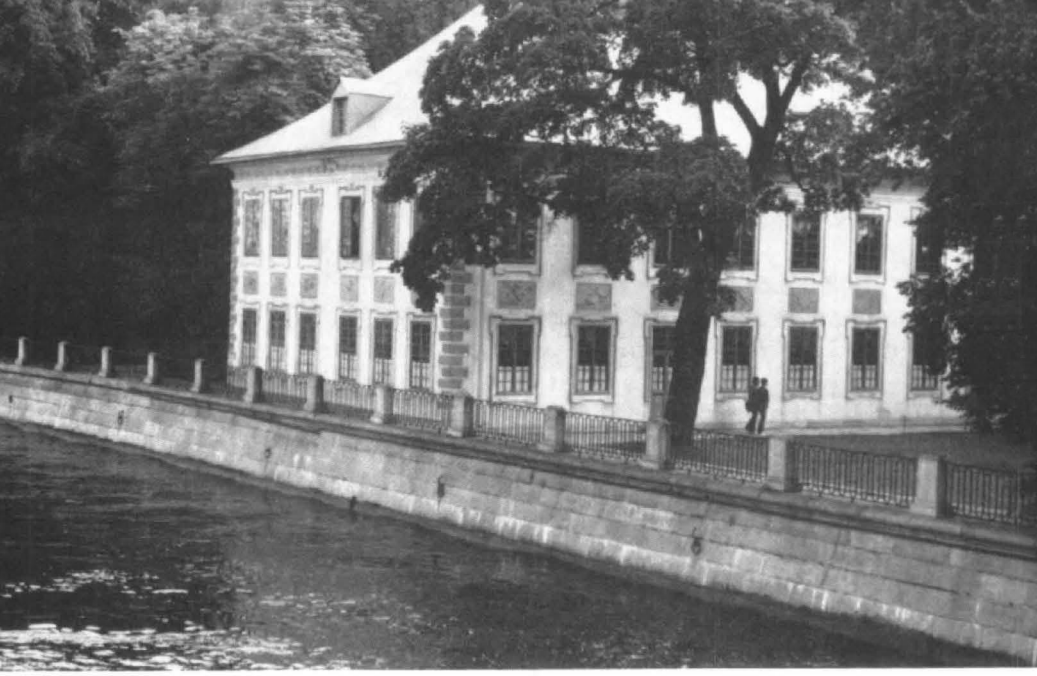
lover, Aleksei Orlov. Thus, in June 1762 a German princess, who had no legitimate claim to the Russian throne, became Tsarina Catherine II, empress of Russia.

Imperial Expansion and Maturation: Catherine II

Catherine II's reign was notable for imperial expansion and internal consolidation. The empire acquired huge new territories in the south and west. A war that broke out with the Ottoman Empire in 1768 was settled by the Treaty of Kuchuk-Kainarji in 1774. Russia acquired an outlet to the Black Sea, and the Crimean Tatars were made independent of the Ottomans. In 1783 Catherine annexed Crimea, helping to spark the next war with the Ottoman Empire in 1787. By the Treaty of Jassy in 1792, Russia acquired territory south to the Dnestr River. The terms of the treaty fell far short of the goals of Catherine's reputed "Greek project"—the expulsion of the Ottomans from Europe and the renewal of a Byzantine empire under Russian control. The Ottoman Empire, nevertheless, was no longer a serious threat to Russia and was forced to tolerate an increasing Russian influence over the Balkans.

Russia's westward expansion was the result of the partitioning of Poland. As Poland became increasingly weak in the eighteenth century, each of its neighbors—Russia, Prussia, and Austria—tried to place its own candidate on the Polish throne. In 1772 the three agreed on the first partition, by which Russia received parts of Belorussia and Livonia. After the partition, Poland initiated an extensive reform program, which in 1793 led to the second partition. This time Russia obtained most of Belorussia and Ukraine west of the Dnepr River. The partition led to an anti-Russian and anti-Prussian uprising in Poland, which ended with the third partition in 1795. The result was that Poland was wiped off the map.

Although the partitioning of Poland greatly added to Russia's territory and prestige, it also created new difficulties. Russia, having lost Poland as a buffer, had to share borders with both Prussia and Austria. In addition, the empire became more ethnically heterogeneous as it absorbed large numbers of Poles, Ukrainians, Belorussians, and Jews. The fate of the Ukrainians and Belorussians, who were primarily serfs, changed little at first under Russian rule. Roman Catholic Poles, however, resented their loss of independence and proved to be difficult to integrate. Jews, who had been barred from Russia in 1742, were viewed as an alien population, and a decree of January 3, 1792, formally initiated the Pale of Settlement (see Other Major Nationalities, ch. 4). The decree permitted Jews to live only in the western part of the empire, thereby setting the stage for anti-Jewish discrimination in later periods. At



Summer Palace of Peter the Great in Leningrad, Russian Republic. The palace, completed in 1712 in the Dutch style of architecture by the Italian Domenico Trezzini, was converted into a museum under the Soviet regime.
Courtesy Jimmy Pritchard

the same time, the autonomy of Ukraine east of the Dnepr, the Baltic states, and various cossack areas was abolished. With her emphasis on a uniformly administered empire, Catherine presaged the policy of Russification practiced by later tsars and by their successors.

Historians have debated Catherine's sincerity as an enlightened monarch, although few have doubted that she believed in government activism aimed at developing the empire's resources and making its administration more rational and effective. Initially, Catherine attempted to rationalize government procedures through law. In 1767 she created the Legislative Commission, drawn from nobles, townsmen, and others, to codify Russia's laws. Although no new law code was formulated, Catherine's Instruction to the Commission introduced some Russians to Western political and legal thinking.

During the 1768–74 war with the Ottoman Empire, Russia experienced a major social upheaval, the Pugachev Uprising. In 1773, a Don Cossack, Emelian Pugachev, announced that he was Peter III. He was joined in the rebellion by other cossacks, various Turkic tribes who felt the impingement of the Russian centralizing state,

and industrial workers in the Ural Mountains, as well as by peasants hoping to escape serfdom. Russia's preoccupation with the war enabled Pugachev to take control of a part of the Volga area, but the regular army crushed the rebellion in 1774.

The Pugachev Uprising bolstered Catherine's determination to reorganize Russia's provincial administration. In 1775 she divided Russia, strictly according to population statistics, into provinces and districts and gave each province an expanded administrative, police, and judicial apparatus. Nobles, who were no longer required to serve the central government, were given significant roles in administering provincial governments.

Catherine also attempted to organize society into well-defined social groups, or estates. In 1785 she issued charters to nobles and townsmen. The Charter to the Nobility confirmed the liberation of the nobles from compulsory service and gave them rights that not even the autocracy could infringe upon. The Charter to the Towns proved to be complicated and ultimately less successful than the one issued to the nobles. Failure to issue a similar charter to state peasants, or to ameliorate the conditions of serfdom, made Catherine's social reforms incomplete.

The intellectual Westernization of the elite continued during Catherine's reign. An increase in the number of books and periodicals also brought forth intellectual debates and social criticism. In 1790 Aleksandr Radishchev published his *Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow,* a fierce attack on serfdom and the autocracy. Catherine, already frightened by the French Revolution, had Radishchev arrested and banished to Siberia. Radishchev was later recognized as "the father of Russian radicalism."

In many respects, Catherine brought the policies of Peter the Great to fruition and set the foundation for the nineteenth-century empire. Russia became a power capable of competing with its European neighbors on military, political, and diplomatic grounds. Russia's elite became culturally more like the elites of central and west European countries. The organization of society and the government system, from Peter the Great's central institutions to Catherine's provincial administration, remained basically unchanged until the emancipation of the serfs in 1861 and, in some respects, until the fall of the monarchy in 1917. Catherine's push to the south, with the founding of the city of Odessa on the Black Sea, provided the basis for Russia's nineteenth-century grain trade.

Despite such accomplishments, the empire built by Peter I and Catherine II was beset with fundamental problems. A small Europeanized elite, alienated from the mass of ordinary Russians, raised questions about the very essence of Russia's history, culture, and

identity. Russia's military preeminence was achieved by reliance on coercion and a primitive command economy based on serfdom. Although economic development was almost sufficient for Russia's eighteenth-century needs, it was no match for those of the Western countries that were being transformed by the Industrial Revolution. Catherine's attempt at organizing society into corporate estates was already being challenged by the French Revolution, which emphasized individual citizenship. Russia's territorial expansion and the incorporation of an increasing number of non-Russians into the empire set the stage for the future nationalities problem. Finally, the first questioning of serfdom and autocracy on moral grounds foreshadowed the conflict between the state and the intelligentsia that was to become dominant in the nineteenth century.

Ruling the Empire

During the early nineteenth century, Russia's population, resources, international diplomacy, and military forces made it one of the most powerful states in the world. Its power enabled it to play an increasingly assertive role in the affairs of Europe. This role drew it into a series of wars against Napoleon, which had far-reaching consequences not only for Europe but also for Russia. After a period of enlightenment, Russia became an active opponent of liberalizing trends in central and western Europe. Internally, Russia's population had grown more diverse with each territorial acquisition. The population included Lutheran Finns, Baltic Germans, Estonians, and some Latvians; Roman Catholic Lithuanians, Poles, and some Latvians; Orthodox and Uniate (see Glossary) Belorussians and Ukrainians; Muslim peoples of various sects; Orthodox Greeks and Georgians; and Apostolic Armenians. As Western influence and opposition to Russian autocracy mounted, the regime reacted by curtailing the activities of persons advocating change, by creating a secret police, and by increasing censorship. The regime remained increasingly committed to its serf-based economy as the means of supporting the upper classes, the government, and the military forces. But Russia's backwardness and inherent weakness were revealed when several powers attacked a Russian fortress in Crimea and forced its surrender.

War and Peace, 1796–1825

Catherine II died in 1796 and was succeeded by her son Paul (1796–1801). Painfully aware that Catherine had planned to bypass him and name his son, Alexander, as tsar, Paul instituted primogeniture in the male line as the basis for succession. It was one

of the few lasting reforms of Paul's brief reign. He also chartered a Russian-American company, which led to Russia's acquisition of Alaska. Paul was haughty and unstable, and he frequently reversed his previous decisions, creating administrative chaos and accumulating enemies.

As a major European power, Russia could not escape the wars involving revolutionary and Napoleonic France. Paul became an adamant opponent of France, and Russia joined Britain and Austria in a war against France. Russian troops under one of Russia's most famous generals, Aleksandr Suvorov, performed brilliantly in Italy and Switzerland. Paul, however, reversed himself and abandoned his allies. This reversal, coupled with increasingly arbitrary domestic policies, sparked a coup, and in March 1801 Paul was assassinated.

The new tsar, Alexander I (1801–25), came to the throne as the result of the murder of his father, in which he was implicated. Groomed for the throne by Catherine II and raised in the spirit of enlightenment, Alexander also had an inclination toward romanticism and religious mysticism, particularly in the latter period of his reign. Alexander tinkered with changes in the central government, and he replaced the colleges set up by Peter the Great with ministries, but without a coordinating prime minister. The liberal statesman Mikhail Speranskii proposed a constitutional reform, but it was never implemented.

Alexander's primary focus was not on domestic policy but on foreign affairs, and particularly on Napoleon. Fearing Napoleon's expansionist ambitions and the growth of French power, Alexander joined Britain and Austria against Napoleon. The Russians and Austrians were defeated at Austerlitz in 1805, and the Russians were trounced at Friedland in 1807. Alexander was forced to sue for peace, and by the Treaty of Tilsit, signed in 1807, he became Napoleon's ally. Russia lost little territory under the treaty, and Alexander made use of his alliance with Napoleon for further expansion. He wrested the Grand Duchy of Finland from Sweden in 1809 and acquired Bessarabia from Turkey in 1812.

The Russo-French alliance gradually became strained. Napoleon was concerned about Russia's intentions in the Bosporous and Dardenelles straits. At the same time, Alexander viewed the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, the French-controlled reconstituted Polish state, with suspicion. The requirement of maintaining a continental blockade against Britain made trading difficult, and in 1810 Alexander repudiated the obligation. In June 1812, Napoleon invaded Russia with 600,000 troops—a force that was twice as large as the Russian regular army. Napoleon hoped to inflict a major defeat on

the Russians and have Alexander sue for peace. As Napoleon pushed the Russian forces back, he became seriously overextended. Although Napoleon occupied a burning Moscow, the Russians refused to surrender, and Napoleon had to retreat. The harsh wintry weather, combined with continuous harassment by Russian forces, resulted in the destruction of Napoleon's Grand Army. Fewer than 30,000 troops returned from the Russian campaign.

As the French retreated, the Russians pursued them into central and western Europe, to the gates of Paris. After the defeat of Napoleon by the allies, Alexander became known as the "savior of Europe," and he played a prominent role in the redrawing of the map of Europe at the Congress of Vienna in 1815. In the same year, under the influence of religious mysticism, Alexander initiated the creation of the Holy Alliance, an agreement pledging the rulers of the nations involved to act according to Christian principles. More pragmatically, in order to prevent the resurgence of an expansionist France, the Quadruple Alliance had been formed by Russia, Britain, Austria, and Prussia in 1814. The allies created an international system to maintain the territorial status quo. This system, confirmed by a number of international conferences, ensured Russia's influence in Europe.

At the same time, Russia continued its expansion. The Congress of Vienna created the Russian Kingdom of Poland (Russian Poland), to which Alexander granted a constitution. Thus Alexander I became the constitutional monarch of Poland while remaining the autocratic tsar of Russia. He was also the limited monarch of Finland, which had been annexed in 1809 but awarded autonomous status. In 1813 Russia gained territory in the Baku area of the Caucasus at the expense of Iran. By the early nineteenth century, the empire also was firmly ensconced in Alaska.

Historians have generally agreed that a revolutionary movement was born during the reign of Alexander I. Young officers who had pursued Napoleon into western Europe came back to Russia with revolutionary ideas, including liberalism, representative government, and mass democracy. Whereas in the eighteenth century intellectual Westernization had been fostered by a paternalistic, autocratic state, in the nineteenth century Western ideas included opposition to autocracy, demands for representative government, calls for the abolition of serfdom, and, in some instances, advocacy of a revolutionary overthrow of the government. Officers were particularly incensed that Alexander had granted Poland a constitution while Russia remained without one. Several clandestine organizations were preparing for an uprising when Alexander died unexpectedly in 1825. Following his death, there was confusion

as to who would succeed him because his heir, Constantine, had relinquished his right to the throne. A group of officers commanding about 3,000 men refused to swear allegiance to the new tsar, Nicholas I, and proclaimed their loyalty to "Constantine and Constitution." Because these events occurred in December 1825, the rebels were called Decembrists. Nicholas had them surrounded and, when they refused to disperse, ordered the army to fire on them. The revolt was soon over, and the Decembrists who remained alive were arrested. Many were exiled to Siberia.

To some extent, the Decembrists were in the tradition of a long line of palace revolutionaries who wanted to place their candidate on the throne. But because the Decembrists also wanted to implement a liberal political program, their revolt has been considered the beginning of a revolutionary movement. The "Decembrists' revolt" was the first open breach between the government and liberal elements—a breach that subsequently widened.

Period of Reaction: Nicholas I, 1825–55

Having experienced the trauma of the Decembrists' revolt, Nicholas I was determined to restrain Russian society. A secret police, the so-called Third Section, ran a huge network of spies and informers. Government censorship and controls were exercised over education, publishing, and all manifestations of public life. The minister of education, Sergei Uvarov, devised a program of "autocracy, Orthodoxy, and nationality" as the guiding principle of the regime. The people were asked to show loyalty to the unlimited authority of the tsar, the traditions of the Orthodox Church, and, in a vague way, to the Russian nation. These principles did not gain the support of the population but instead led to repression in general and to suppression of non-Russian nationalities and religions other than Russian Orthodoxy in particular. For example, the Uniate Church in Ukraine and Belorussia was suppressed in 1839.

The official emphasis on Russian nationalism to some extent contributed to a debate on Russia's place in the world, the meaning of Russian history, and the future of Russia. One group, the Westernizers, believed that Russia remained backward and primitive and could progress only through more thorough Europeanization. Another group, the Slavophiles, idealized the Russia that had existed before Peter the Great. The Slavophiles viewed old Russia as a source of wholeness and looked askance at Western rationalism and materialism. Some of them believed that the Russian peasant commune offered an attractive alternative to Western capitalism and could make Russia a potential social and moral savior

St. Nicholas Cathedral (completed in 1762), Leningrad, Russian Republic. This functioning church is an example of the Russian baroque style. Courtesy Jimmy Pritchard

of mankind. The Slavophiles, therefore, represented a form of Russian messianism.

Despite the repressions of this period, Russia experienced a flowering of literature and the arts. Through the works of Aleksandr Pushkin, Nikolai Gogol, Ivan Turgenev, and numerous others, Russian literature gained international stature and recognition. After its importation from France, ballet took root in Russia, and classical music became firmly established with the compositions of Mikhail Glinka.

In foreign policy, Nicholas I acted as the protector of ruling legitimism and as the guardian against revolution. His offers to suppress revolution on the European continent, accepted in some instances, earned him the label of "gendarme of Europe." In 1830, after an uprising in France, the Poles in Russia revolted. Nicholas crushed the rebellion, abrogated the Polish constitution, and reduced Russian Poland to the status of a province. In 1848, when a series of revolutions convulsed Europe, Nicholas was in the forefront of reaction. In 1849 he intervened on behalf of the Habsburgs and helped suppress an uprising in Hungary, and he also urged Prussia not to accept a liberal constitution. Having helped conservative forces repel the specter of revolution, Nicholas I seemed to dominate Europe.

Russian dominance proved illusory, however. While Nicholas I was attempting to maintain the status quo in Europe, he adopted

an aggressive policy toward the Ottoman Empire. Nicholas I was following the traditional Russian policy of resolving the "Eastern Question" by seeking to partition the Ottoman Empire and establish a protectorate over the Orthodox population of the Balkans. Russia fought a successful war with the Ottomans in 1828 and 1829. In 1833 Russia negotiated the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi with the Ottoman Empire. Western statesmen believed mistakenly that the treaty contained a secret clause granting Russia the right to send warships through the Bosporus and Dardanelles straits. As a result, the major European powers intervened and by the London Straits Convention of 1841 affirmed Ottoman control over the straits and forbade any power, including Russia, to send warships through the straits. Based on his role in suppressing the revolutions of 1848 and his mistaken belief that he had British diplomatic support, Nicholas moved against the Ottomans, who declared war in 1853. Thus the Crimean War began. But the European powers were frightened of Russia, and in 1854 Britain, France, and Sardinia joined the Ottoman Empire against Russia. Austria offered the Ottomans diplomatic support, while Prussia remained neutral. The European allies landed in Crimea and laid siege to a well-fortified base at Sevastopol'. After a year's siege the base fell, exposing Russia's inability to defend a major fortification on its own soil. Nicholas I died before the fall of Sevastopol', but even before then he had recognized the failure of his regime. Russia now had to initiate major reforms or cease to be a competitive major power.

The Transformation of Imperial Russia

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were difficult for Russia. Not only did technology and industry continue to develop more rapidly in the West but also new, dynamic, competitive great powers appeared on the world scene: Otto von Bismarck's united Germany, the post-Civil War United States, and Meiji Restoration Japan. Although it was an expanding regional giant in Central Asia straddling the borders of the Ottoman, Iranian, British Indian, and Chinese empires, Russia could not generate enough capital to undergo rapid industrial development or to compete with advanced countries on a commercial basis. Russia's fundamental dilemma was that either it could attempt to accelerate domestic development and risk upheaval at home or it could progress slowly and risk becoming an economic colony of the more advanced world. The transformation of the economic and social structure of Russia was accompanied by political ferment, particularly among the intelligentsia, and also by impressive developments in literature, music, the fine arts, and the natural sciences.

Economic Developments

Throughout the last half of the nineteenth century, Russia's economy developed more slowly than did that of the major European nations to its west. The population of Russia was substantially larger than those of the more developed Western countries, but the vast majority of the people lived in rural communities and engaged in relatively primitive agriculture. Industry, in general, had greater state involvement than in western Europe, but in selected sectors it was developing with private initiative, some of it foreign. The population doubled between 1850 and 1900, but it remained chiefly rural well into the twentieth century. Russia's population growth rate from 1850 to 1910 was the fastest of all the major powers except for the United States (see table 3, Appendix A).

Agriculture, which was technologically underdeveloped, remained in the hands of former serfs and former state peasants, who together constituted about four-fifths of the population. Large estates of more than fifty square kilometers accounted for about 20 percent of all farmland, but for the most part they were not worked in efficient, large-scale units. Small-scale peasant farming and the growth of the rural population produced extensive agricultural development because land was used more for gardens and fields of grain and less for grazing meadows than it had been in the past (see table 4, Appendix A).

Industrial growth was significant, although unsteady, and in absolute terms it was not extensive. Russia's industrial regions included Moscow, the central regions of the country, St. Petersburg, the Baltic cities, Russian Poland, some areas along the lower Don and Dnepr rivers, and the Ural Mountains. By 1890 Russia had about 32,000 kilometers of railroads and 1.4 million factory workers, the majority of them in the textile industry. Between 1860 and 1890, coal production had grown about 1,200 percent to over 6.6 million tons, and iron and steel production had more than doubled to 2 million tons. The state budget, however, had more than doubled, and debt expenditures had quadrupled, constituting 28 percent of official expenditures in 1891. Foreign trade was inadequate to meet the empire's needs, and surpluses sufficient to cover the debts incurred to finance trade with the West were not realized until high industrial tariffs were introduced in the 1880s.

Reforms and Their Limits, 1855–92

Tsar Alexander II, who succeeded Nicholas I in 1855, was a conservative who nonetheless saw no alternative to change and who initiated substantial reforms in education, the government, the

judiciary, and the military, in addition to emancipating the serfs. His reforms were accelerated after Russia's military weakness and backwardness had become apparent during the Crimean War. Following Alexander's assassination in 1881, his son Alexander III reasserted government controls.

In 1861 Alexander II proclaimed the emancipation of about 20 million privately held serfs. Local commissions, which were dominated by landlords, effected emancipation by giving land and limited freedom to the serfs. The former serfs usually remained in the village commune, or mir (see Glossary), but were required to make redemption payments, which were stretched out over a period of almost fifty years, to the government. The government compensated former owners of serfs by issuing them bonds.

The regime had envisioned that the 50,000 landlords who possessed estates of over 110 hectares would thrive without serfs and would continue to provide loyal political and administrative leadership in the countryside. The government also had envisioned that peasants would produce sufficient crops for their own consumption and for export sales, thereby helping to finance most of the government's expenses, imports, and foreign debt. Neither of the government's visions was realistic, and both the former serfs and the former owners of serfs were dissatisfied with the outcome of emancipation. Because the lands given to serfs by local commissions were often poor and because Russian agricultural methods were inadequate, the new peasants soon fell behind in their payments to the government. The former owners of serfs, most of whom could neither farm nor manage estates without their former serfs, often had to sell their lands to remain solvent. In addition, the value of their government bonds fell as the peasants failed to make their redemption payments.

Reforms of the local governmental system closely followed emancipation. In 1864 most local government in the European part of Russia was organized into provincial zemstvos (see Glossary) and district zemstvos, which included representatives of all classes. In 1870 elected city councils, or dumas, were formed. Dominated by nobles and other property owners and constrained by provincial governors and the police, the zemstvos and city dumas were empowered to raise taxes and levy labor to develop, maintain, and operate local transportation, education, and public health care systems.

In 1864 the regime implemented judicial reforms. In major towns, it established Western-style courts with juries. In general, the judicial system functioned effectively, but sometimes juries sympathized with obvious criminals and refused to convict them. The

government was unable, financially and culturally, to extend the court system to the villages, where traditional peasant justice continued to operate with minimal interference from provincial officials. In addition, judges were instructed to decide each case on its merits and not to use precedents, which would have enabled them to construct a body of law independent of state authority. Under the reform, the Senate, one of the highest government bodies, adopted more of the characteristics of a supreme court, with three major branches: civil, criminal, and administrative.

Other major reforms took place in the educational and cultural spheres. The accession of Alexander II brought a social restructuring that required a public discussion of issues. Accordingly, the regime lifted some manifestations of censorship, yet in 1863 it prohibited publishing in the Ukrainian language. In 1866, when an attempt was made to assassinate the tsar, censorship was reinstated, but pre-1855 levels of control were not restored. Universities, which were granted autonomy in 1861, were also restricted in 1866. The central government, attempting to act through the zemstvos but lacking effective resources, sought to establish uniform curricula for elementary schools and to control the schools by imposing conservative policies. Because many liberal teachers and school officials were only nominally subject to the reactionary Ministry of Education, the regime's educational achievements were mixed after 1866.

In the financial sphere, the State Bank was established in 1866, and Russia's currency was put on a firmer footing. The Ministry of Finance supported railroad development, facilitating vital exports, but it was cautious and moderate in its foreign ventures. The ministry also founded the Peasant Land Bank in 1882 to enable enterprising farmers to acquire more land. The Ministry of the Interior, however, countered this policy by establishing the Nobles' Land Bank in 1885 to forestall foreclosures of mortgages.

The regime also sought to reform the military. One of the chief reasons for the emancipation of the serfs was to facilitate the transition from a large standing army to a reserve army by instituting territorial levies and mobilization in times of need. Before emancipation, serfs could not be given military training and then returned to their owners. Bureaucratic inertia, however, obstructed military reform until the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71) demonstrated the necessity of building a modern army. The levy system introduced in 1874 gave the army a role in teaching many peasants to read and in pioneering medical education for women. But despite these military reforms, the army remained backward. Officers often preferred bayonets to bullets and feared that long-range sights on

rifles would induce cowardice. In spite of some notable achievements, Russia did not keep pace with Western technological developments in the construction of rifles, machine guns, artillery, ships, and naval ordnance. Also, naval modernization in the 1860s failed to spur broad development of Russia's industrial base.

In 1881 revolutionaries assassinated Alexander II. His son Alexander III (1881–94) initiated a period of political reaction, which intensified a counterreform movement that had begun in 1866. He strengthened the security police, reorganized as the Okhrana (see Glossary), gave it extraordinary powers, and placed it under the Ministry of the Interior. Dmitrii Tolstoi, Alexander's minister of the interior, instituted the use of land captains, who were noble overseers of districts, and he restricted the power of the zemstvos and dumas. Alexander III assigned his former tutor, the reactionary Konstantin Pobedonostsev, to be the procurator (see Glossary) of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church and Ivan Delianov to be the minister of education. In their attempts to "save" Russia from "modernism," they revived religious censorship, persecuted the non-Orthodox and non-Russian population, fostered anti-Semitism, and suppressed the autonomy of the universities. Their attacks on liberal and non-Russian elements alienated large segments of the population. The nationalities, particularly Poles, Finns, Latvians, Lithuanians, and Ukrainians, reacted to the regime's efforts to Russify them by intensifying their own nationalism. Many Jews emigrated or joined radical movements. Secret organizations and political movements continued to develop despite the regime's efforts to quell them.

Foreign Affairs after the Crimean War, 1856–93

After the Crimean War, Russia pursued cautious and intelligent foreign policies until nationalist passions and another Balkan crisis almost caused a catastrophic war in the late 1870s. The 1856 Treaty of Paris concluded at the end of the Crimean War demilitarized the Black Sea and deprived Russia of southern Bessarabia and a narrow strip of land at the mouth of the Danube River. It also nullified the 1774 Treaty of Kuchuk-Kainarji by theoretically providing European protection of the Christians living in the Ottoman Empire. Russian statesmen viewed Britain and Austria (Austria-Hungary as of 1867) as opposed to revising the Treaty of Paris, and they sought good relations with France, Prussia, and the United States. Prussia (Germany as of 1871) replaced Britain as Russia's chief banker.

Following the Crimean War, the regime revived its expansionist policies. Russian troops first moved to quell the lingering revolts

of Muslim tribesmen in the Caucasus. Once the revolts were crushed, the army resumed its expansion into Central Asia. Attempts were made to ensure that Britain would not be unduly alarmed by Russia's policy of leaving the territories directly bordering Afghanistan and Iran nominally independent. Russia also supported Iranian attempts to expand into Afghanistan—a move that strained the resources of British India. At the same time, Russia followed the United States, Britain, and France in establishing relations with Japan, and it, together with Britain and France, obtained concessions from China consequent to the Second Opium War (1856–60). By the Treaty of Aigun in 1858 and the Treaty of Beijing in 1860, China was forced to cede Russia extensive trading rights and regions adjacent to the Amur and Ussuri rivers, and it allowed Russia to begin building a port and naval base at Vladivostok. Meanwhile, in 1867 the logic of the balance of power and the cost of developing and defending the Amur-Ussuri region dictated that Russia sell Alaska to the United States in order to acquire much-needed funds.

As part of the regime's foreign policy goals in Europe, Russia gave guarded support to the anti-Austrian diplomacy of the French. A weak Franco-Russian entente soured, however, when France backed a Polish uprising against Russian rule in 1863. Russia then aligned itself more closely with Prussia and tolerated the unification of Germany in exchange for a revision of the Treaty of Paris and the remilitarization of the Black Sea. These diplomatic achievements came at a London conference in 1871, following Prussia's defeat of France. After 1871 Germany, united by Prussia, was the strongest continental power in Europe. It supported both Russia and Austria-Hungary, and in 1873 it formed the loosely knit League of the Three Emperors with those two powers to forestall them from forming an alliance with France.

Nevertheless, Austro-Hungarian and Russian ambitions clashed in the Balkans, where rival nationalities and anti-Ottoman sentiments seethed. In the 1870s, Russian nationalist opinion became a serious domestic factor, supportive of policies that advocated liberating Balkan Christians from Ottoman rule and making Bulgaria and Serbia quasi-protectorates of Russia. From 1875 to 1877, the Balkans crisis heated, with rebellions in Bosnia, Hercegovina, and Bulgaria, and with a Serbo-Ottoman war. Russia, however, promised not to exercise influence in the western Balkans.

In early 1877, Russia went to war with the Ottoman Empire, and by December its troops were nearing Constantinople. Russia's nationalist diplomats and generals persuaded Alexander II

to force the Ottomans to sign the Treaty of San Stefano in March 1878. The treaty created an enlarged Bulgaria that stretched into the southwestern Balkans. This development alarmed Britain, which threatened war, and an exhausted Russia backed down. At the Congress of Berlin in July 1878, Russia agreed to the creation of a smaller Bulgaria. Russian nationalists were furious with Austria-Hungary and Germany, but the tsar accepted a revived and strengthened League of the Three Emperors as well as Austrian hegemony in the western Balkans.

Russian diplomatic and military interests subsequently turned to the East. Russian troops occupied Turkmen lands on the Iranian and Afghan borders, raising British concerns, but German support of Russian advances averted a possible Anglo-Russian war. The Bulgarians became angry with Russia's continuing interference in Bulgarian affairs and sought support from Austria. In turn, Germany, displaying firmness toward Russia, protected Austria from the tsar while mollifying him with a bilateral defensive alliance, the Reinsurance Treaty of 1887 between Germany and Russia. Within a year, Russo-German acrimony led to Bismarck's forbidding further Russian loans, and France replaced Germany as Russia's financier. In 1890 Kaiser Wilhelm II dismissed Bismarck, and the loose Russo-Prussian entente, which had held fast for more than twenty-five years, collapsed. The consequence of this development was that Russia allied itself with France in 1893 by entering into a joint military convention, which matched the German-Austrian dual alliance of 1879.

The Age of Realism in Literature

Russian literature in the last half of the nineteenth century provided a congenial and artistic medium for the discussion of political and social issues that could not be addressed directly because of government restrictions. The writers of this period shared important qualities: great attention to realistic, detailed descriptions of everyday Russian life; the lifting of the taboo on describing the vulgar, unsightly side of life; and a satirical attitude toward mediocrity and routine. Although varying widely in style, subject matter, and viewpoint, these writers stimulated government bureaucrats, nobles, and intellectuals to think about important social issues. This period of literature, which became known as the Age of Realism, lasted from about mid-century to 1905. The literature of the Age of Realism owed a great debt to three authors and to a literary critic of the preceding half-century: Aleksandr Pushkin, Mikhail Lermontov, Nikolai Gogol, and Vissarion Belinskii. These figures set a pattern for language, subject matter, and narrative techniques,

Grave of Russian novelist Fedor Dostoevskii in the Tikhvin Cemetery of the Aleksandr Nevskii Monastery, Leningrad, Russian Republic
Courtesy Jimmy Pritchard

which before 1830 had been very poorly developed. The critic Belinskii became the patron saint of the radical intelligentsia throughout the century.

The main outlet for literary opinion in the Age of Realism was the "thick journal"—a combination of original literature, criticism, and a wide variety of other material. These publications reached a large portion of the intelligentsia. Most of the materials of the major writers and critics of the period were featured in such journals, and published debates were common between journals of various viewpoints. Much of the prose literature of the period contained sharply polemical messages, favoring either radical or reactionary positions concerning the problems of Russian society. Ivan Turgenev was perhaps the most successful at integrating social concerns with true literary art. His *Hunter's Sketches* and *Fathers and Sons* portrayed Russia's problems with great realism and with enough artistry that these works have survived as classics. Many writers of the period did not aim for social commentary, but the realism of their portrayals nevertheless drew comment from radical critics. Such writers included the novelist Ivan Goncharov, whose *Oblomov* is a very negative portrayal of the provincial gentry, and the dramatist Aleksandr Ostrovskii, whose plays uniformly condemned the bourgeoisie.

Above all the other writers stand two: Lev Tolstoy and Fedor Dostoevskii, the greatest talents of the age. Their realistic style transcended immediate social issues and explored universal issues such

as morality and the nature of life itself. Although Dostoevskii was sometimes drawn into polemical satire, both writers kept the main body of their work above the dominant social and political preoccupations of the 1860s and 1870s. Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* and Dostoevskii's *Crime and Punishment* and *The Brothers Karamazov* have endured as genuine classics because they drew the best from the Russian realistic heritage while focusing on broad human questions. Although Tolstoy continued to write into the twentieth century, he rejected his earlier style and never again reached the level of his greatest works.

The literary careers of Tolstoy, Dostoevskii, and Turgenev had ended by 1881. Anton Chekhov, the major literary figure in the last decade of the nineteenth century, contributed in two genres: short story and drama. Chekhov, a realist who examined not society as a whole but the foibles of individuals, produced a large volume of sometimes tragic, sometimes comic short stories and several outstanding plays, including *The Cherry Orchard,* a dramatic chronicling of the decay of a Russian aristocratic family.

The Rise of Revolutionary Populism and Russian Marxism, 1855–90

The reforms of Alexander II, particularly his lifting of state censorship, fostered the development of political and social thought. The regime relied on journals and newspapers to gain support for its domestic and foreign polices. But liberal, nationalist, and radical writers also helped mold opinion opposed to tsarism, private property, and the imperial state. Because many intellectuals, professionals, peasants, and workers shared these sentiments, the publications and the organizations that the radicals joined were perceived as dangerous to the regime. From the 1860s through the 1880s, Russian radicals, collectively known as "Populists" (Narodniki), focused chiefly on the peasantry, whom they identified as "the people" (*narod*).

Among the leaders of the Populist movement were radical writers, idealists, and advocates of terrorism. In the 1860s, Nikolai Chernyshevskii, the most important radical writer of the period, posited that Russia could bypass capitalism and move directly to socialism. His most influential work, *What Is to Be Done?* (1861), describes the role of an individual of a "superior nature" who guides a new, revolutionary generation. Other radicals such as the incendiary anarchist Mikhail Bakunin and his terrorist collaborator, Sergei Nechaev, urged direct action. The calmer Petr Tkachev argued against the advocates of Marxism (see Glossary), maintaining that a centralized revolutionary band had to seize power before socialism could

fully develop. Disputing his views, the moralist and individualist Petr Lavrov made a call "to the people" that was heeded in 1873 and 1874 when hundreds of idealists left their schools for the countryside to try to generate a mass movement among the *narod*. The Populist campaign failed, however, when the peasants showed hostility to the urban idealists and the government more willingly began to consider nationalist opinion.

The radicals reconsidered their approach, and in 1876 they formed a propagandist organization called Land and Liberty (Zemlia i volia), which leaned toward terrorism. It became even more oriented toward terrorism three years later, renamed itself the People's Will (Narodnaia volia), and in 1881 was responsible for the assassination of Alexander II. In 1879 Georgii Plekhanov formed a propagandist faction of Land and Liberty called Black Repartition (Chernyi peredel), which advocated reassigning all land to the peasantry. This group studied Marxism, which, paradoxically, was principally concerned with urban industrial workers. The People's Will remained underground, but in 1887 a young member of the group, Aleksandr Ulianov, attempted to assassinate Alexander III and was arrested and executed. Another Ulianov, Vladimir, was greatly affected by his brother's execution. Influenced by Chernyshevskii's writings, he also joined the People's Will and later, under the influence of Plekhanov, converted to Marxism. The younger Ulianov later changed his name to Lenin.

Serge Witte and Accelerated Industrialization, 1891–1903

In the late 1800s, Russia's domestic backwardness and vulnerability in foreign affairs reached crisis proportions. A famine claiming a half-million lives in 1891 exemplified the domestic crisis, and activities by Japan and China near Russia's borders were perceived as threats from abroad. In reaction, the regime was forced to adopt the ambitious but costly economic programs of Sergei Witte, the country's strong-willed minister of finance. Witte championed a combination of foreign loans, conversion to the gold standard, heavy taxation of the peasantry, accelerated development of heavy industry, and a trans-Siberian railroad. These policies were designed to modernize the country, secure the Russian Far East, and give Russia a commanding position with which to exploit the resources of China's northern territories, Korea, and Siberia. This expansionist foreign policy was Russia's version of the imperialism so characteristic of the relations of advanced capitalist countries with weak and backward areas during the nineteenth century. The accession of the pliable Nicholas II in 1894 resulted in the domination of the government by Witte and other powerful ministers.

The results of Witte's policies were mixed. In spite of a severe depression at the end of the century, Russia's coal, iron, steel, and oil production tripled between 1890 and 1900. Railroad mileage almost doubled, giving Russia the most track of any nation other than the United States. Yet Russian grain production and exports failed to rise significantly, and imports grew faster than exports, although the latter subsequently rose. The state budget also more than doubled, absorbing some of the country's economic growth. Western historians have differed as to the merits of Witte's reforms, with some believing that many domestic industries that did not benefit from subsidies or contracts suffered a setback. Moreover, most analysts have agreed that the Trans-Siberian Railway and the ventures into Manchuria and Korea were economic losses for Russia and a drain on the treasury. Certainly the financial costs of his reforms contributed to Witte's dismissal as minister of finance in 1903.

The Development of Radical Political Parties, 1892–1904

During the 1890s, Russia's industrial development led to a significant increase in the size of the urban bourgeoisie and the working class, setting the stage for a more dynamic political atmosphere and the development of radical parties. Because much of Russia's industry was owned by the state or by foreigners, the working class was comparatively stronger and the bourgeoisie comparatively weaker than in the West. Because the nobility and the wealthy bourgeoisie were politically timid, the establishment of working-class and peasant parties preceded that of bourgeois parties. Thus, in the 1890s and early 1900s strikes and agrarian disorders prompted by abysmal living and working conditions, high taxes, and land hunger became more frequent. The bourgeoisie of various nationalities developed a host of different parties, both liberal and conservative.

Socialist parties were formed on the basis of the nationalities of their members. Russian Poles, who had suffered significant administrative and educational Russification, founded the nationalistic Polish Socialist Party in Paris in 1892. Its founders hoped that it would help reunite a divided Poland from territories held by Austria and Germany and by Russia. In 1897 the Bund was founded by Jewish workers in Russia, and it became popular in western Ukraine, Belorussia, Lithuania, and Russian Poland. In 1898 the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party was formed. The Finnish Social Democrats remained separate, but the Latvians and Georgians associated themselves with the Russian Social Democrats. Armenians were inspired by both Russian and Balkan revolutionary

On March 1, 1881, the building in the foreground was a cheese shop, from which members of the radical revolutionary group People's Will, posing as shop employees, assassinated Tsar Alexander II. Leningrad, Russian Republic. Courtesy Stephen Burant

traditions, and they operated in both Russia and the Ottoman Empire. Politically minded Muslims living in Russia tended to be attracted to the pan-Islamic and pan-Turkic movements that developed in Egypt and the Ottoman Empire. Russians who fused the ideas of the old Populists and urban socialists formed Russia's largest radical movement, the United Socialist Revolutionary Party, which combined the standard Populist ingredients of propaganda and terrorist activities.

Vladimir I. Ulianov was the most politically talented of the revolutionary socialists. In the 1890s, he labored to wean young radicals away from populism to Marxism. Exiled from 1895 to 1899 in Siberia, where he took the name Lenin, he was the master tactician among the organizers of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party. In December 1900, he founded the newspaper *Iskra* (Spark). In his book *What Is to Be Done?* (1902), Lenin developed the theory that a newspaper published abroad could aid in organizing a centralized revolutionary party to direct the overthrow of an autocratic government. He then worked to establish a tightly organized, highly disciplined party to do so in Russia. At the Second Party Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party in 1903, he forced the Bund to walk out, and he induced a split between his majority Bolshevik faction and the minority Menshevik faction, which believed more in worker spontaneity than in strict organizational tactics. Lenin's concept of a revolutionary party and a worker-peasant