

HISTORY OF RUSSIA

The history of the Russian state may be divided into two component parts--the period from the earliest beginnings of the Russian Slavs to the revolutionary upheaval in 1917 which marked the downfall of the Russian empire and the rise of the modern state of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The Early Slavs

The history of the Russian Slavs first takes shape in the ninth and tenth centuries, when these people had already become an organized political community occupying the main waterways between the Baltic and the Black seas. They had settled in this region after migrations which had originated, along with the movements of other Slavic peoples, in the marshy Pripyat River area between the Vistula and the Dnepr (Dnieper) rivers. Some authorities state that a federation of eastern (Russian) Slavs occupied the southern steppe region of Russia between the Dnepr and Dnestr (Dniester) rivers as early as the third and fourth centuries A.D.

By the first of the ninth century a new movement southward had started. This originated with the penetration into the northern forest area of Scandinavian Varangians (Vikings) seeking trade opportunities with the Orient via the Russian waterways. The Varangians first encountered the Russian Slavs in the Lake Ilmen area, a northern outpost of Slavic migration. In the middle of the ninth century the Varangians began their advance toward the Black Sea, taking over existing trading posts along the water routes and consolidating a prosperous trading system. By the twelfth century they had been largely Russified and were the militant ruling class.

Kiyevan Russia

Tradition attributes the founding of the so-called Kiyevan state, which lasted from the ninth into the thirteenth century, to the Varangian prince, Rurik, who established himself at Novgorod, probably several years before 862, and to his relative, Oleg (879-912), who, as regent for the minor Igor, brought both Novgorod and Kiyev under his power. Kiyev soon became the "mother of Russian cities" and the center of political power, the seat of the grand prince. Defending the river trade route to Constantinople (ancient Byzantium, modern Istanbul) against nomads from the steppes, especially the 40-mile cataracts on the Dnepr, became the task of the grand princes of Kiyev. The Bulgars, Khazars, and Pechenegs (Patzinaks) made hazardous the half-trade and half-military Russian expeditions to Constantinople, of which there were at least four.

During the reign of Vladimir (980-1015) political power apparently

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was stabilized along the river trade route, the Orthodox Christianity of Constantinople was adopted c. 989, and Byzantine institutions and culture were introduced. Generally, Vladimir gave political and cultural unity to his state and raised it far above its former pagan level.

When Vladimir died he was succeeded by Yaroslav the Wise (1019-1054), who, of his twelve sons, emerged triumphant after four years of fratricidal strife. Yaroslav crushed the Pechenegs in 1036, regained Galicia from the Poles, and fought a last, but indecisive, war with Constantinople. In his reign originated the Russian Truth, Russkaya Pravda, the first Russian code of law. Based on Byzantine models of the eighth and ninth centuries, this brought order and unity into Russian legal and political institutions. To regulate the succession, he instituted a remarkable rotation system, the succession being vested in the oldest male in the entire family, members of which ruled over six different regions according to age and importance in a sort of aristocratic federacy of cities in which there were popular assemblies. A council of boyars advised the grand prince.

This system, revolving about Kiyev as a pivot and based on the river trade route known as the Great Waterway, lasted about a century. Grand Prince Vladimir Monomakh (1113-1125), sometimes described as the King Alfred of Russian history, was the last of its effective rulers. Andrew Bogolyubsky (1157-1175), who became grand prince of Kiyev in 1169, shifted his capital to Vladimir, located in the upper Volga River basin, not far from the future site of Moscow. He also abandoned the rotation system for direct descent in his own family. Later, the old system disintegrated as a result of the decline of Constantinople, begun even before the domination of the Latins after the Fourth Crusade (1204); the rise of the and Swedes on the Baltic; and, finally, the Mongol-Tatar invasions of Russia, beginning in 1223 and ending in the sack of Kiyev in 1240. These factors, coupled with such internal developments as civil strife among the princes and migration to the Volga Basin, caused the gradual and total disappearance of the so-called Kiyevan state. Originally based on agriculture in forest-cleared areas tilled by free peasants, bondmen, and slaves, and on extensive trade carried on by the boyars in furs, wax, forest products, and slaves, the old waterway system which had supported the state declined when its Black and Baltic sea areas ceased to function as termini of lucrative trade.

Rise of the Moscovite State.

The next period of Russian history has been epitomized as follows: "Moscow, an insignificant blockhouse, ostrog, built in the first half of the twelfth century, on an insignificant river by an insignificant princeling, became in the course of time, the pivot of an empire extending into two, and even three, continents." The city was built in a region of portages, the heart of Russian Mesopotamia, making communication possible with all the major rivers and trade routes of European Russia and Siberia. To a large extent, this helps to explain how the principality of Moscow became the basis, first of the Russian or Great Russian nation, and then of the empire.

Besides improved geographical position, Moscow benefited by the acquisition of a line of princes from Daniel, son of Alexander Nevsky,

who, like the princes of Vladimir, established the rule of primogeniture, and had many sons. These princes particularly knew when to bow before and when to fight their overlords, the Tatar khans, for whom they became not only tribute gatherers, but viceroys to the other Russian princes. They were recognized as grand princes of Moscow, and after 1328 secured for Moscow the residence of the metropolitan of Russia. Their influence helped to create national unity to back them when they challenged the weakening power of the Tatars, first at Kulikovo in 1380 under Dmitri Donskoy, and finally under Ivan III in 1480, when they rid themselves of Tatar rule.

Russian Nationalism

Eventually, by inheritance, purchase, and seizure, the grand princes of Moscow acquired control of all the major principalities of old Russia. In addition to Novgorod and its vast hinterland, Permian was conquered in 1472, and Vyatka in 1489. Under Ivan III (1462-1505), called the Great, the Russian national state first attained consolidation and political independence. After his marriage in 1472 to Zoë, daughter of Thomas of Morea and a niece of the last Byzantine emperor, the title of autocrat was used to designate the ruler of Moscow, which after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, was called the Third Rome. Stabilization of the Muscovite state was indicated by a new law code, adopted in 1497; a new system of precedence for the aristocracy, Miestnichestvo; and a reorganized administration, including a fixed number of members for the Duma of Boyars and eight to ten bureaus, Prikazes, with secretaries, Diaki.

The period of two centuries including the reigns of Ivan the Terrible, or the Dread (1533-1584), and his successors, to Peter the Great (1689-1725), was to pose the fundamental problems of whether Russia was to be ruled by a feudal aristocracy of boyars or by an autocratic tsar, and whether the Muscovite state was to remain landlocked or reach the seas and become an empire. It was in the reign of Peter the Great that Russia became an autocracy and an empire.

Ivan's illness in 1553 led to brooding and to mental instability in which suspicion that the boyars wanted to supplant him played a significant part. His wife, to whom he was much devoted, died in 1560. In 1564 he suddenly left the Kremlin in Moscow by sledge. It became apparent that he wanted to create an autocratic state and to remove the threat of feudal boyar rule. He gathered followers, and for two decades the boyars were banished, their estates confiscated, while the peasants, still half serf, half free, began to flee south from the central regions. Ivan the Dread had begun in earnest the conflict between autocrat and boyar; between the landlord, who was henceforth to be a member of the military serving class, and the peasant, who sought to escape serfdom; and between Russia and the countries which lay between it and the seas.

The Time of Troubles

These elements, under Ivan's son, the subnormal Fyodor I (1584-1598), and the latter's brother-in-law, Tsar Boris Godunov (1598-1605), developed into the Time of Troubles, 1605 to 1613, which in many respects was a political, economic and social revolution. The dynasty had died out with Fyodor I. The boyars conspired to seize power, first by recognizing the false Demetrius and, having attained this objective, by electing as tsar a boyar, Basil Shuisky, who ruled from 1606 to 1610. Then, after they had disavowed and dethroned Basil, the throne remained vacant while the Poles and Swedes seized territories and the boyars bargained with Ladislas, son of King Sigismund of Poland, for the crown, subject to the recognition of their conditions of aristocratic domination. But King Sigismund wanted the throne for himself, a circumstance which created a national reaction among the Russians, especially among the middle landowning groups, serving men, and city representatives.

The First Romanovs

National sentiment finally turned to a seventeen-year-old native son, Michael Romanov (1596-1645), who did not belong to the boyar class but was young enough to be acceptable to it. He was elected tsar by the Zemsky Sobor on Feb. 21, 1613.

In the reign of Tsar Michael's successor, Alexis (1645-1676), the Cossacks, who had played a social revolutionary role in alliance with the peasants in the Time of Troubles, swarmed southward into Polish Ukraine toward the Black Sea. Later defeated by the Polish landlords, their leader, offered the Ukraine as a protectorate to the tsar. The Zemsky Sobor, after some hesitation in the face of certainty of war with Poland and Turkey, accepted the offer in 1654.

The law code, Ulozhenie, of 1649 confirmed the enslavement of the Russian peasantry and the virtual enslavement of the other classes. The patriarch Nikon, who had the old books and rites corrected, inspired the religious council of 1667 to excommunicate those who believed in the old texts and practices, and thus created the historic Russian schism, raskol. This was not, however, a reformation in the Western sense, for Russia was not to experience either the Renaissance or the Reformation.

Peter the Great

The Russian Empire. It was Peter the Great (1689-1725) who laid the basis for the Russian empire. During the period after the death of Fyodor III in 1682 and Peter's assumption of power in 1689 at the age of seventeen, his half-sister, Sophia, in collusion with her favorite, Prince Basil Golitsyn, and with the assistance of the Strelitzky, made herself regent and the feeble Ivan, Peter's half-brother, a co-tsar. After a reign which was remarkable in internal policy as indicating the

beginnings of changes which were to come but was a failure in relations with the Crimean Tatars and the Chinese, she was deprived of power by a coup d'état which sent her to a convent and Golitsyn into exile, and put Peter on the throne. The latter continued to play at war games and consort with foreigners, among them especially François Lefort, a Swiss.

The campaign for Azov, a port on the Sea of Azov, was undertaken by Peter in 1695 and led to the inception of the Russian Navy through the building of a fleet on the Don River at Voronezh. Azov was captured in 1696, but this victory did not end hostilities against the Crimean Tatars or the Turks. To secure a European alliance against them and to obtain the latest western knowledge on shipbuilding and war industry, Peter traveled in the west in 1697 and 1698. He was unable to secure a coalition against Turkey, and for that reason, after patching up a temporary peace with Turkey, he joined the Northern Coalition against Sweden, the objective of which was to partition Sweden's Baltic empire when the young and inexperienced Charles XII came to the throne. This led to the Northern War, which was to last for two decades.

Peter's medieval army was disastrously defeated at Narva in 1700 by Charles XII, who, instead of finishing off Russia, which he could easily have done, turned his efforts toward defeating Poland and Denmark. Granted this reprieve, Peter began the reorganization of his armed forces. He invaded the region of the Neva River from the north while Sheremetiev came up from the south, founded St. Petersburg in 1703, and in the next year seized Narva and Tartu, thus securing access to the Baltic. Five years later, when Charles XII returned from victory in Poland to dispose of Russia, he was defeated by Peter in the battle of Poltava, July 8, 1709. This led to Russia's involvement in war with Turkey, which came near to being a complete disaster. At the Peace of Prut (1711) Azov was lost, but, with control of Poland restored, the Russians, after the death of Charles XII in 1718, ravaged Sweden, forcing the Peace of Nystadt (1721) whereby Russia secured Ingermanland, Estonia, and Livonia, and parts of Finnish territory west of Lake Ladoga. In other words, secure access to the Baltic Sea had been obtained and this was to last until 1920.

Reforms of Peter the Great

Peter the Great's reforms were eminently utilitarian. They came opportunistically and at critical times. At their base was reorganization or modernization of the armed forces, which necessitated reforms in nearly all aspects of Russian life. Industry was encouraged, especially that of the Urals, which helped to save Russia then, as in World War II. A new system of ministries, called colleges after the Swedes, as well as of provinces, guberniya, was introduced after 1718. Adoption in 1722 of the new Table of Ranks with obligatory service for landowners, either in the army or civil service, meant that they, like the peasants, were enserfed. After the first census of 1718 a poll tax on serfs tended to

amalgamate them into a single class. In 1711 the new Senate took the place of the extinct Duma of Boyars. After 1700, when Patriarch Adrian died, no new patriarch was appointed, and in 1721 a synod of higher clergy was established in his place; it had power only in the affairs of the church. Education for future officials, technicians, and scientists was encouraged, and in 1724 the Russian Academy of Sciences was established. Three years before he died, Peter changed the law of succession so that he could name his successor, but he died Jan. 28, 1725, without naming one, after helping to put his own recalcitrant son, Alexis, to death. His reign had marked the culmination of three centuries of development—from the rule of the boyars to that of the autocrat, and from a landlocked national state to an empire extending over two continents and ruling many peoples.

Peter the Great's Successors

So well had Peter the Great reorganized the state that he could be followed without disaster for three decades by six rulers, including three women (two dissolute), a boy of twelve, an infant of one year, and a madman. Russia adopted a single tariff, government banks encouraged economic development, and such educational institutions as the universities of St. Petersburg (1747) and Moscow (1755) were founded under the advice of Count Ivan Shuvalov. In foreign affairs, Russia played a decisive role in the Seven Years' War and could easily have decided the fate of Prussia had it not been for the death of Elizabeth and the accession in 1762 of Peter III (1728-1762), son of Anna Petrovna, whose idol was Frederick the Great. Peter III, a madman, reversed the policy of Russia from war against Prussia to one of alliance. He liberated the gentry from service to the state and began the confiscation of church lands. When he was about to divorce his German wife, Catherine, formerly Sophia of Anhalt-Zerbst, she seized power with the help of the gathering opposition, and banished him to the estate of Ropsha, where he was murdered.

Catherine II

By contrast with her husband, Catherine II (1762-1796), had become completely Russian in her outlook. Brilliant, capable, and vain, she extended the limits of empire over large portions of Poland, and to the shores of the Black Sea. She made Russia a great power in Europe. Interrupted in her ambition to be a law-giver by calling an assembly and drawing up a code, Catherine II prosecuted triumphantly the war with Turkey, 1768-1774, forced upon her by France. At the peace of Kuchuk Kainarji, July 10, 1774, a large section of the Black Sea coast to the Bug River was obtained; also, the Orthodox Church was permitted in Constantinople, developing into later claims for the protection of all Orthodox Christians in Turkey. Although Peter the Great's Polish policy had been to control all of Poland, Russia was obliged by Prussia during the war with Turkey to participate in Poland's partition in 1772.

The most important national achievement of Catherine II was the reorganization in 1775 of the provincial government which provided political, judicial, and financial functions and assemblies for the gentry. Also, a start in municipal self-government was made in 1785. The serfs resented the liberation of the gentry from service to the state and yearned to be free. As a consequence, it was not difficult for the Cossack Emelyan Ivanovich Pugachev to call himself Peter III and in 1773 to arouse the peasants. His hordes along the Volga, however, were no match for the Russian army, which remained loyal to Catherine II. This rebellion and the French Revolution turned her from the pretense of liberalism to that of demonstrative reaction. Her system of favorites cast a lurid light upon a reign otherwise remarkable..

Paul I

In 1796 Paul I (1754-1801), the son of Catherine II and Peter III, came to the throne at the age of forty-four, knowing that his mother had pushed him aside to rule herself, and suspicious that she had wished to pass him over for his own son. His reign was a series of contradictions and confused efforts to reverse Catherine's policies. He proposed to help the serfs by indicating that three days of labor per week for the landlords was sufficient, but he gave away in grants the land on which they lived. At first reversing Catherine II's policy toward France, he fought the French Directory in 1798; then, in 1801, he planned an expedition jointly with Napoleon for the conquest of India. Faced with abdication, he was murdered on the eve of this campaign. His son Alexander was implicated. In 1797, by ukase, Paul had promulgated a law of succession which established primogeniture in his own immediate family and defined the appanages, ranks, and titles in the imperial family as a whole. This statute remained the basic law until the end of the dynasty in 1917.

Alexander I

Alexander I (1777-1825), eldest son of Paul I, began his reign in 1801 as a liberal reformer and ended as a reactionary. He aspired to give Russia a constitution and Europe a federation. The liberal teachings in his youth of the Swiss, Frédéric César de La Harpe, and the advice of such liberals as Novosiltsev, Stroganov, Prince Kochubey, and the Polish prince Adam Czartorysky led him at the very start to stop the reactionary development encouraged by his father and to consider extensive reforms, among them even a constitution limiting autocracy, and providing for the abolition of serfdom. Actual developments, however, were very limited. The Senate was given increased powers in 1802, and landowners were permitted to free their serfs by mutual agreement without obligation to assign land to them.

The War of the Third Coalition against Napoleon, in which Russia joined, broke out in 1805. It led to Russian defeats at Austerlitz in

December 1805, and Friedland on June 14, 1807, bringing Napoleon to Poland and East Prussia. The Peace of Tilsit, July 9, 1807, created the duchy of Warsaw (out of Prussia's 1793 and 1795 acquisitions) under the king of Saxony, and gave the area of Bialystok to Russia. The two powers, unable to bring about peace with England and Turkey, proceeded to consolidate their positions. Russia went to war with Sweden, winning Finland as a grand duchy in 1809, and continued the war with Turkey until 1812, acquiring Bessarabia, with the Prut River and the Kilia mouth of the Danube as boundaries. In 1809, during this period of so-called Franco-Russian solidarity, Mikhail Speransky drew up a plan for a constitution in which the Russian Duma was to be created by successive elections of deputies from the dumas in cantons, districts, and provinces. Its power was to be limited to motions on its views of problems of state, while the Council of State, headed by the emperor, was to draft the laws. The Senate was to retain only judicial power. Of these ideas, only the Council of State was established; ministries, including one for education (the first in Europe), were reorganized in 1810 and 1811. The idea of giving serfs civil rights was abandoned. The work done by Speransky on the code of law served later as a basis for one in the reign of Nicholas I,

Russian national reaction and friction with Napoleon led to the break between Russia and France in June 1812. At the bottom, the defection of Russia from the Continental System and Russian suspicions of Napoleon's objectives with regard to the duchy of Warsaw played their part. The Russian policy of retreat enticed Napoleon ever farther into Russia without being able to fight a last and decisive battle. Alexander, as well as his commander in chief, General Mikhail Kutuzov, became immensely popular as a result of the battle for Smolensk on August 2 and that at Borodino on September 7. Napoleon captured Moscow on September 14, and the city soon went up in flames. Unable to winter in Moscow or to bring Alexander to sue for peace, Napoleon began his long retreat on Oct. 15, 1812. It met disaster on the highway from Moscow to Smolensk, and on November 26-28, at the crossing of the river at Berezina, the French Army barely escaped annihilation. Contrary to Russian opinion, Alexander took an active part in the war to liberate Europe, 1813-1815, and in the Congress of Vienna, at which he sought to secure all of Poland by offering to give it a liberal constitution. In this he was blocked by England and Austria, with France assisting. His mystical character was aroused. His original conception of the Holy Alliance—a confederation of Christian princes giving their states constitutions in line with their political development—was used by Metternich at the congresses of Troppau (1820) and Verona (1822) as a symbol of reaction to justify intervention in countries in revolt.

Revolutionary Movement

Russia received the Congress' kingdom of Poland (with an organic statute giving Poles certain rights), which was larger than its previous

share of that country, but Prussia and Austria retained a large portion of their previous Polish territories. Beginning with the Congress of Troppau, Alexander turned reactionary because of fear of revolution at home. He refused to support the Greek insurrection and, with his reactionary minister, Alexei Arakcheyev, watched the growth of secret political societies until, after much vacillation, he ordered an inquiry. His sudden death at Taganrog, Dec. 1, 1825, was followed by the December uprising, caused by the refusal of Nicholas to accept the throne until his older brother, Constantine, who had refused to leave Warsaw for St. Petersburg, had publicly announced that he had secretly renounced the throne in 1823. It was only on Dec. 26, 1825, that Nicholas I called on the troops to swear allegiance to him and to fire on the mutineers and the public.

Nicholas I

Nicholas I (1796-1855) was trained by a reactionary, but he was a reactionary sui generis. He believed in gradual and just reform under his autocratic control. Hence he had nothing to do with the reactionaries of the last five years of his father's reign, or with radicals who wanted take things into their own hands. The Decembrists, or Dekabristy, were members of the upper classes. They were chiefly army officers who had served in Russian armies which had followed Napoleon into Europe, and who, upon their return, had joined with intellectuals to transform backward Russia. Some of them, especially the Muraviev's in the north, were influenced by German prototypes and favored a federal constitutional monarchy; in the south, the Pestel advocated a centralized republican government. They were dispersed on the streets of St. Petersburg after charging that Nicholas was a usurper, but later the tsar used memoranda written at their trials for an inquiry into possible reforms for Russia. Five of the conspirators were hanged and the others exiled to Siberia.

Believing that ministries should attend only to routine work, Nicholas I developed the Emperor's Personal Chancellery, where he could watch over and apply executive control to government institutions. Under this chancellery, he developed the secret police into an important agency, later known as the Third Section, an ancestor of the G.P.U. The problem of serfdom, made critical by the numerous peasant mutinies, led to the law of 1842, by which landowners were permitted to liberate their serfs, and, in contrast to the law of 1803, with a grant of the land they were using. However, the law was not compulsory. In 1846-1847 regulations calling for compulsory liberation with land were promulgated in areas formerly held by Poland and in Russian Poland proper.

The Polish revolution of 1830, which was put down at the expense of abrogation of the Polish constitution, and the revolutions of 1848 in western and central Europe influenced Nicholas more and more in a reactionary sense and caused him to control educational institutions rigidly in line with Slavophil views. These opposed the introduction of Western ideas

and institutions and held that Russian nationalism, based on the mir (commune), Orthodoxy, and autocracy, as Uvarov maintained, had the potentialities of a true civilization. The influence of the Westerners, however, proved stronger. Led by Belinsky, Aksakov, Bakunin, Samarin, and others, they influenced the next generation in studies at the University of Moscow.

The Crimean War

The Crimean War began as an effort on the part of Russia to retain the dominant position within the Ottoman empire it had established in 1829 against the growing influence of Great Britain and France. The dispute, from 1851 to 1853, between the Orthodox Greeks, backed by Russia, and the Roman Catholics, backed by France under Louis Napoleon, led to the sending of the Menshikov Mission in 1853 by Russia to reassert its claims as protector of the Orthodox faith. These claims were rejected by the Turkish sultan upon the advice of the British and French ambassadors. After the Russians had occupied the Danubian principalities, the French made a threat against Belgium to force the British to move their fleet to the Dardanelles in co-operation with the French squadron. The British did not act in accordance with the agreement of 1844 with the Russians, who were not clear as to what to do about the Turkish Straits. The Turks sent their forces across the Danube in October 1853, when the Russians refused to evacuate the Danubian principalities. After the Russians had destroyed the Turkish fleet at Sinop on November 30, the British and French fleets entered the Black Sea and war was declared upon Russia on Mar. 28, 1854. Threatened by Austria, the Russians withdrew from the Danubian principalities, and the war thus took place in the Crimea, in whose stubborn defense Russia displayed great heroism. Sevastopol, besieged and ruined, surrendered Sept. 11, 1855, and the Peace of Paris was signed Mar. 30, 1856. The Black Sea was neutralized, and Russia was put at the great disadvantage of having no fleet and no naval bases or arsenals in that sea. Kars was restored to Turkey and the southwest corner of Bessarabia was ceded to Moldavia. The Straits Treaty of 1841 was confirmed and Russia lost its claim to protect its coreligionists in Turkish territory. Meanwhile, the disappointed Tsar Nicholas I died on Mar. 2, 1855, and was succeeded by his son, Alexander II.

Alexander II.

Backward, medieval Russia had been defeated by the advanced nations of western Europe. To reach the level of these nations and avoid revolution, Russia needed reforms. Hence the Era of Great Reforms. The medieval, economic, and social structure of society, which had collapsed, if not also the political superstructure of autocracy, had to be modernized. Alexander II (1818-1881) was not a reformer by nature or training. He had no plan. Well-intentioned,

but vacillating, he advanced along the road of reform, wavering when attacked by the opposing extremes. Reform for a decade was followed by a decade and a half of reaction; then just before he was assassinated in 1881, Alexander was again about to start on the road of reform. The most significant reform was that of the emancipation of the serfs, Mar. 3, 1861, whereby the peasant acquired personal freedom without any payment therefor, the landowner received government bonds at 5 per cent, and the peasant agreed to give redemption payments for the land to the government in forty-nine annual installments. The mir, or commune, was held accountable for these payments. Serfdom was the keystone of the medieval arch. Once it was removed, a new system of local government and schools, a new judiciary, a new basis of taxation and finance, and a new way to recruit the army had to be arranged because the landlord had disappeared as the dominating force. These needs led to these changes: in 1864, the reform of local governments by the institution of the zemstvos (county councils); in 1863-1864, a system of courts of three instances and trial by jury, and in the same year, legislation on universities, secondary schools, and elementary education; in 1870, the reform of self-government in municipalities; and, in 1874, modernization of the army.

These basic reforms, at best compromises, were opposed both by reactionaries and radicals. The revolution in Poland in 1863 and the attempt by Karakozov on the life of Alexander II in 1866 caused the tsar to forsake reform under the influence of Pyotr Shuvalov and other reactionary ministers, and to muzzle the press. Some of the reforms were restricted by later legislation. The younger generation, chiefly university students, became inspired with revolutionary zeal preached to them by Alexander Herzen, Mikhail Bakunin, Pyotr Lavrov, Nikolai Tchaikovsky, Pyotr Propotkin, and Sergei Stepnyak, and took part in the To the People movement. Numerous secret societies which could not be called political parties arose, especially that of Land and Liberty. The revolutionary unrest continued, accompanied by terror and attempts at assassination, through the Russo-Turkish War, 1877-1878, the outcome of which only increased such violence.

Alexander III and Nicholas II.

Alexander II was succeeded by his son, Alexander III (1845-1894), who at first fully intended to carry out the last step taken by his father. However, he was influenced to the contrary by his tutor, Konstantin Pobedonostsev, professor of civil law at Moscow University, who later was appointed procurator of the Holy Synod. Thus, by 1882, was inaugurated the most reactionary era in Russian history--an era which continued for a decade into the reign of Alexander's son, Nicholas II (1894-1917), also a pupil of Pobedonostsev, and which resulted in the Duma revolution of 1905.

The attempt of General Nikolai Ignatiev to follow in the footsteps of Loris-Melikov by proposing, in May 1882, to summon a Zemsky Sobor on the day of coronation was blocked by Pobedonostsev and the journalist Mikhail Katkov, editor of the Moscow News, who by this time had become a reactionary. Ignatiev was succeeded by the reactionary Dmitri Tolstoy, and others of the old order became ministers of interior or education at the suggestion of Pobedonostsev. The press was muzzled, and the revolutionary movement was driven underground. More restrictions were placed on universities. The importance of the gentry in the countryside was increased by the creation in 1885 of a bank for the nobility, the appointment in 1889 of land captains to control the countryside, and the reduction in 1890 of peasant representation in the district zemstvos. Religious, racial, and national persecution became rampant, especially against Jews and non-Russians, who were driven into the revolutionary movement. Russian nationalism, Russian Orthodoxy, and Russian autocracy developed into a reactionary ideology, which fed on the tradition of Moscow as the Third Rome, and which saw an expansive future in Europe through Russian Pan-Slavism and in Asia in alliance with Buddhism. It evolved a Eurasian complex.

Although Alexander III was no admirer of the Germans and actually sought to diminish the significant role of Germans in the Russian administration and armed forces, he agreed to the policy initiated in 1880 by Alexander II which had resulted in the Three Emperors' Entente (June 18, 1881). The aim of Russian foreign policy was to have allies in Europe and Asia who could prevent Great Britain from attacking Russia (by way of the Turkish Straits) in the Black Sea, where a fleet was being built, and which would facilitate the advance of Russia in the Far East. The treaty especially provided against the event that Turkey might permit the use of the straits by another power. The alliance was renewed in 1884, and, after 1887 when Austria was dropped at Russian insistence because of developments in Bulgaria, it was continued with Germany until 1890. After the dismissal of Bismarck, and in line with the German emperor William II's desire for an alliance with England, the Russo-German alliance was terminated and was followed the next year by a Franco-Russian rapprochement, and in 1894, by a military alliance (the Triple Entente) which lasted until 1917.

Meanwhile, the course of internal events led to revolution. In the 1880's and 1890's the position of agriculture and of the farming classes considerably worsened, while industry rapidly developed and the working population increased, causing labor organization and strife. In the forty years since the emancipation of the serfs, the amount of land per male had decreased 50 per cent, because of increased population, while land value and rentals had increased. Also, competition of American grains imported to Europe had lowered the price of wheat and barley, taxation had increased, and the cost of

foreign products had risen as a result of the protective tariff for industry; so that the Russian peasant was caught in a dilemma which led to economic misery and uncontrollable land hunger. This situation provoked a demand for expropriation of the remaining lands of the landowners and institutions which the Social Revolutionary Party (1898-1901) proposed to exploit. The uneven development of industry, due to government contracts and other causes, and the need of large returns on foreign capital added further uncertainties, resulting in a low standard of living among workmen and causing them, through the Marxists, to organize into the Social Democratic Party (1898) and other socialist parties. The Liberals formed their Union of Liberation. The famines from 1891 to 1893, in which millions had starved, had already set off the spark of revolutionary fervor; Russians of every political view had joined in relief measures, leading to a desire to organize both inside and outside Russia. At the London Conference of the Social Democratic Party in 1903, Nikolai Lenin, its leader, obtained a majority vote (whence the words Bolshevik and Bolshevism) for political and revolutionary Marxism against the evolutionary wings, the Mensheviks, with purely economic objectives. The mounting internal strife, terroristic acts in the cities, and gloom and decay in the countryside led Count Sergei Witte, as finance minister, to oppose the tendency toward war, and Vyacheslav Pleve, the appointee of Pobedonostsev, to welcome it as a way to avoid revolution.

Russo-Japanese War.

The Russo-Japanese War began, on Feb. 5, 1904, when Japan, without declaring war, attacked Lushun (Port Arthur) and Jinsen (Chemulpo). Japan's victories by land and sea led to the Peace of Portsmouth, Sept. 5, 1905, whereby Japan secured Russia's leases in southern Manchuria and acquired the southern half of Sakhalin Island. This disastrous war hastened revolution.

The First Revolution.

The Revolution of 1905 opened a new period in Russian history. In spite of its failure, it marked another step in the dissolution of the medieval structure of society. The movement for reform, beginning in 1904 as a reaction to the Russian military defeats, was led by the Union of Liberation, consisting of liberals, mostly zemstvo officials and men of the professions. The Social Democrats and the Social Revolutionaries were in a revolutionary mood. Pleve was assassinated on July 28, 1904, and Prince Syatopolk-Mirsky, who favored moderate reform, succeeded him as minister of the interior. From November 19 to 22 a congress of the Union of Liberation passed resolutions demanding full civil rights and a national assembly which would be freely elected but would not have full legislative rights. Demands for radical reforms followed, while the government vacillated. The surrender of Lushun on Jan. 1, 1905, was followed

by Bloody Sunday, on January 22, when workers who had demonstrated peacefully under Father Georgi Gapon were fired on and dispersed with a death toll of about one thousand. Grand Duke Sergius, governor general of Moscow, was murdered in the Kremlin on Feb. 17, 1905, and on March 3 Tsar Nicholas promised an elected assembly "to share in the drafting and discussion of legislative proposals," but this failed to materialize. In May The Union of Unions under Professor Milyukov was formed as a political party of zemstvo liberals and moderates of the professional classes who favored a constituent assembly. The Zemstvo Congress, June 6-8, and one of zemstvo and town workers, July 19-22, forced a manifesto from the tsar on August 19 creating The Imperial Duma with advisory functions. But this was repudiated by the Constitutional Democratic Party (Cadets), formed in October, and by the radical Social Democrats and Social Revolutionaries. The common aim of left wing elements was a constituent assembly, universally elected, as a basis for parliamentary government. A series of strikes in October, in the midst of which Pobedonostsev was dismissed, culminated at the end of the month in the first general strike—a spontaneous demonstration—and the issuance of the Manifesto of October 30 which granted civil rights to all and provided for a duma with full legislative powers. No law was to be passed without its consent. Count Witte became prime minister, but Durnovo, a reactionary, was appointed as minister of the interior on Nov. 1, 1905. A partial political amnesty followed. Land redemption payments were remitted, purchases of land through the Peasants Bank was facilitated, and the press was given greater freedom. Almost immediately, however, reactionary elements formed the Union of True Russian People, who, working through the Black Hundreds, organized pogroms in a program of counter-terrorism. Meanwhile, the October Manifesto had also brought out a political party for its fulfillment and defense: the Octobrist Party.

The first general strike, which had ended on November 1, had been conducted by the Council of Workmen's Delegates, Soviet rabochikh deputatov. The Soviet called a second general strike on November 15, but this did not have the nation behind it and led to the Soviet's arrest, December 12-16. As a result, the general strike was discredited as a weapon to attain revolutionary ends, and a third such strike, called in Moscow from December 20 to Jan. 1, 1905, ended in a bloody fiasco. The government regained its confidence and the Black Hundreds obtained official recognition. Thus the radical element by its violence and lack of political skill and experience lost the sympathy of the public and created a triumphant reaction before a disunited opposition. The government took a strong line in spite of the fact that the First Duma elections went overwhelmingly to the opposition, even with the abstention of the Socialists. The decree of March 5, 1906, reorganized the Council of State and reserved to the autocracy its commanding position in the armed forces, foreign affairs, war and peace, and the dismissal of ministers.

The Dumas.

Before the Duma met in May, Witte yielded to Ivan Goremykin as prime minister, and Pyotr Stolypin became minister of interior. The ministry and the Duma soon found themselves in violent opposition. Their key struggle was over the land question, the Duma standing on the principle of expropriation, which the government resolutely opposed. On July 19, the Duma refused to pass any measures not on its program and was dissolved two days later by the new prime minister, Stolypin. That evening about 200 former deputies appealed to the people from Vyborg, Finland, not to pay taxes or provide recruits until the Duma was restored. Like the Soviet, they had appealed for revolution and were arrested. Stolypin, whose policy was "repression and reforms," proceeded to use a firm hand against the revolutionary opposition, and by the law of November 22 began a series of land reform measures continuing until 1911, the objective of which was to create a class of conservative small farmers at the expense of the poorer peasants.

The Second Duma, after election on the previous electoral basis, convened from March 5 to June 16, 1907. Like the first, it was overwhelmingly in the opposition, but the left center (Cadets) was weaker, the left and the right were stronger, and all elements appeared desirous of wrecking it. No cooperation with the government was possible. On June 14 Stolypin demanded the prompt exclusion of the Social Democrats and a warrant to arrest sixteen of them on the ground that they had plotted to overthrow the government and substitute a republic. The Duma was dissolved two days later.

A new electoral law reducing the role of the non-Russian nationalities and outlying regions (the Caucasus, Siberia, and Central Asia) was the basis of the Third Duma, called on Nov. 14, 1907. It lasted until 1911. The right and the Octobrists (now the center) held the majority. For nearly four years, while Stolypin labored on his gigantic land reform, approved by the Duma, the armed forces were reorganized, an extensive system of secondary and elementary schools was created, social insurance was initiated, and other moderate reforms were planned. Stolypin, however, saw the Duma, especially the Octobrists, take on more and more of a reforming zeal. In March 1911, consequently, he prorogued the Council and Duma and promulgated a measure for the creation of zemstvos in the western provinces, which was hotly opposed by both bodies. He was assassinated by a revolutionary on Sept. 14, 1911, and was succeeded by Kokovtsev, who remained in office until February 1914.

In the Fourth Duma, elected in the fall of 1912, the Octobrists were frequently in opposition to government measures. Finally, in the summer of 1915, after World War I had begun, they joined the majority in the progressive bloc in both the Council and Duma because

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of the disasters on the battlefields, the incompetence of the bureaucracy, and the refusal of the government to co-operate with the extralegal organizations of the people to help win the war. From that time until the revolution broke out in March 1917, the government engaged in conflict on two fronts: against foreign armies and against its own people.

Following the Russian defeat at Gorlice in May 1915, and the subsequent retreat, the morale of the improperly armed and poorly fed army began to break. The monk, Rasputin, who had gained an ascendancy over the tsarina because of his purported influence upon the health of the haemophilic tsarevich, suggested that the tsar assume command of the armies so that he would be separated from the tsarina. Thereafter, minister after minister was replaced at Rasputin's suggestion until his assassination on Dec. 20, 1916. Thus Goremykin, who had succeeded Kokovtsev, made way in February 1916 for Boris Stürmer, suspected of pro-German views. Sergei Saxonov, foreign minister, went in July 1916. Stürmer gave way to Dmitri Trepov in November, while the diseased Alexander Protopopov became minister of the interior. Acting on Rasputin's advice, the tsarina believed the only way to preserve an autocratic Russia for Tsarevich Alexis was to suppress the Duma. It was the proroguing of the Duma on Mar. 11, 1917, that precipitated the Russian Revolution on the next day.

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