

A History of the Soviet Union from the Beginning to Its Legacy

Third Edition

This concise yet comprehensive textbook examines political, social, and cultural developments in the Soviet Union and the post-Soviet period. It begins by identifying the social tensions and political inconsistencies that spurred radical change in Russia's government, from the turn of the century to the revolution of 1917. Peter Kenez presents this revolution as a crisis of authority that the creation of the Soviet Union resolved. The text traces the progress of the Soviet Union through the 1920s, the years of the New Economic Policies, and into the Stalinist order. It illustrates how post-Stalin Soviet leaders struggled to find ways to rule the country without using Stalin's methods – but also without openly repudiating the past – and to negotiate a peaceful but antipathetic coexistence with the capitalist West. This updated third edition includes substantial new material, discussing the challenges Russia currently faces in the era of Putin.

Peter Kenez is Emeritus Professor of History at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He is the author of numerous articles and books, including *The Coming of the Holocaust: From Antisemitism to Genocide* (Cambridge University Press) and *Hungary from the Nazis to the Soviets: The Establishment of the Communist Regime in Hungary, 1944–1948* (Cambridge University Press).

A History of the Soviet Union from the Beginning to Its Legacy

Third Edition

PETER KENEZ

University of California, Santa Cruz



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press & Assessment

978-1-316-50623-3 — A History of the Soviet Union from the Beginning to its Legacy

Peter Kenez

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India

103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment,
a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of
education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781316506233

© Peter Kenez 2017

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions
of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take
place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

First published 2017

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication data

names: Kenez, Peter, author.

TITLE: A history of the Soviet Union from the beginning to its legacy / Peter Kenez
(University of California, Santa Cruz).

DESCRIPTION: Third edition. | New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, [2016] |
Includes bibliographical references and index.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2016020876 | ISBN 9781107141056 (Hardback : alkaline paper) |
ISBN 9781316506233 (Paperback : alkaline paper)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: Soviet Union—History.

CLASSIFICATION: LCC DK266 .K43 2016 | DDC 947.084—dc23 LC record available at
<https://lccn.loc.gov/2016020876>

ISBN 978-1-107-14105-6 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-316-50623-3 Paperback

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence
or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this
publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will
remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press & Assessment

978-1-316-50623-3 — A History of the Soviet Union from the Beginning to its Legacy

Peter Kenéz

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

To P.K., as always

Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>page ix</i>
1 Introduction	1
2 The Revolution, 1917–1921	14
3 New Economic Policies, 1921–1929	41
4 The First Five-Year Plan	80
5 High Stalinism	103
6 A Great and Patriotic War	132
7 The Nadir: 1945–1953	160
8 The Age of Khrushchev	184
9 Real, Existing Socialism	214
10 Failed Reforms	243
11 Leap into the Unknown	278
12 Illiberal Democracy	300
13 Putin Returns	321
<i>Chronology</i>	337
<i>Soviet History: A Bibliography</i>	349
<i>Notes</i>	365
<i>Index</i>	371

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to my friends Professors Norman Pereira, Denise Youngblood, and Hugh Ragsdale, who read the entire manuscript and made helpful comments.