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978-0-521-37100-1 - The Modernisation of Russia, 1676-1825

Simon Dixon

Frontmatter

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## *The Modernisation of Russia 1676–1825*

This important new addition to the *New Approaches to European History* series is the first book to place Russia's 'long' eighteenth century squarely in its European context. The conceptual framework is set out in an opening critique of modernisation theory which, while rejecting its linear implications, maintains its focus on the relationship between government, economy, and society. Following a chronological introduction, a series of thematic chapters emphasise the ways in which Russia's international ambitions as an emerging great power provoked administrative and fiscal reforms with wide-ranging (and often unanticipated) social consequences. Russia's kinship-dominated peasant communities were not the casual detritus of government-inspired reform, but rather its direct consequence: the more the tsars tried to modernise their state, the more backward their empire became. Though social and political history are naturally crucial to such a study, the thematic treatment adopted here also permits an unusually full discussion of the intellectual developments that helped to give educated Russians a sense of cultural autonomy even as their minds were opened to an unprecedented range of Western influences. In order to help the reader further, a chronology and a critical bibliography are also provided to allow students to discover more about this colourful period of Russian history.

SIMON DIXON is Senior Lecturer in Modern History at the University of Glasgow. He has written a number of articles on the Russian Orthodox church and on Russian nationalism, and is editor of *Britain and Russia in the Age of Peter the Great: Historical Documents* (1998).

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## Preface

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With the exception of peasant revolts and aspects of the reign of Peter the Great, the eighteenth century fared poorly in the hands of Soviet historians, to whom it seemed suspect as a time of foreign influence in Russian affairs. Following the fall of the USSR, the prospects have become more encouraging. Though there remains much about which we know nothing – an ignorance I have made no attempt to conceal – multi-national scholarship over the last generation or so, much of it in Russian archives, has allowed us to answer familiar questions in a fresh or better-documented way. In turn, such work has suggested new questions to ask of well-known evidence. This book attempts to draw the threads together in coherent and accessible form.

Though flashes of originality may be detected in my arguments, a book of this kind naturally draws heavily on the researches of others. I should like to have been able to acknowledge each debt individually. But whilst authors experience a frisson of conceit to see their reading recorded in copious footnotes (where its limits may be exposed), many readers merely shudder at the sight of such a cumbersome apparatus. Following the pattern of the series, I have kept references to a minimum: they identify quotations and mention works that might otherwise have escaped the bibliographical notes. To satisfy the book's anticipated readership, these highly selective reading lists are heavily slanted towards work in English, though it would have been impertinent to omit the most important Russian and continental scholarship. There is also a bias towards publications from the last two decades, not because I have confused novelty with excellence, but because recent works in turn refer to older ones, some of which are conveniently listed by P. Clendenning and R. Bartlett, *Eighteenth-Century Russia: A Select Bibliography of Works Published Since 1955* (Newtonville, MA, 1981). Dates are given in the Old Style – ten days behind the Western calendar in the seventeenth century, eleven in the eighteenth, and twelve in the nineteenth – except in the case of the events of the Napoleonic invasion where both Old and New Style dates appear. For the sake of simplicity, place names, subject



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to frequent change and some controversy, are given in their Russian form: so, for example, Belorussia not Belarus. A few common anglicisations are retained: thus, Archangel not Arkhangel'sk.

The Study Group on Eighteenth-Century Russia has offered a model of scholarly friendship to a relatively recent recruit. This book stands as testimony to the contribution its members have made to the field. I must thank, in particular, Tony Cross, Lindsey Hughes, L. R. Lewitter, and above all Roger Bartlett, whose detailed critique of much of the draft manuscript immeasurably improved it. My interest in the subject was awakened by Mr C. H. Eames at Bolton School, where another remarkable master, Mr Roy Waterhouse, taught me Russian and twice took me to Moscow. At Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, I owe most to Derek Beales, my much-missed neighbour on E Staircase, and to Tim Blanning, an eagle-eyed editor, an inspired teacher, and a generous and patient friend. At the University of Glasgow, which granted me leave in order to complete the book, I am grateful to colleagues for their encouragement and company. If I single out Thomas Munck it is because he has read several chapters with particular care. I am conscious of having stretched the tolerance of Richard Fisher at Cambridge University Press beyond all reasonable bounds. His colleague, Vicky Cuthill, has managed the final stages of production with exemplary courtesy and efficiency. Karen Anderson Howes has been a reassuringly meticulous copy-editor. Students at Cambridge, Glasgow, and Keele have allowed me to experiment in lecture form. I am as grateful to them as I am to all those friends and colleagues who have saved me from error. Remaining mistakes are entirely my responsibility.

I cannot adequately express my debt to my wife, Stephanie, who has lived with this book almost as long as she has lived with me. I dedicate this book to her.

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## Chronology

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As in the text, dates are Old Style, according to the Julian calendar, except for the events of the Napoleonic invasion where both Old and New Style (Gregorian) dates are given.

- 1676–82 Fedor Alekseevich**
- 1676 29 January: death of Aleksei Mikhailovich
- 1678 Household census
- 1679 February: tax assessment by land replaced by assessment by household
- 1682 Abolition of *mestnichestvo*  
27 April: death of Tsar Fedor sparks Moscow rebellion
- 1682–1725 Peter I (1682–96 joint ruler with half-brother, Ivan V)**
- 1682–9 Regency of Sophia Alekseevna (Peter's half-sister)**
- 1682 26 May: ritual confirmation of tsars' joint rule
- 1686 'Eternal peace' with Poland
- 1687 V. V. Golitsyn's first Crimean campaign
- 1689 Second Crimean campaign  
September: *strel'tsy* revolt removes Sophia leaving Peter effectively in control
- 1694 25 January: death of Peter's mother
- 1696 29 January: death of Ivan V
- 1696–1725 Sole rule of Peter I**
- 1697–8 Grand Embassy to the West
- 1698 July: *strel'tsy* revolt
- 1700–21 Great Northern War
- 1700 November: Russians defeated at Narva
- 1705 February: introduction of new recruiting system
- 1709 June: Swedes defeated at Poltava
- 1714 July: Russian naval victory at Hangö
- 1721 September: treaty of Nystad
- 1700 Patriarchate suspended on death of Patriarch Adrian
- 1703 Foundation of St Petersburg

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- 1707–8      Bulavin's revolt in Astrakhan'
- 1708–10     Reform of local government
- 1711–13     Russo-Turkish war  
               1711    22 February: foundation of Senate  
                       July: Russians defeated on River Pruth
- 1714         23 March: law of single inheritance
- 1716         Military Regulation
- 1718         First administrative colleges founded  
               Second reform of local government  
               Poll tax decreed  
               Death of Tsarevich Aleksei
- 1720         Maritime Regulation and General Regulation
- 1721         Spiritual Regulation  
               Abolition of patriarchate and creation of Holy Synod
- 1722         14 February: Table of Ranks
- 1722–4      War with Persia
- 1725         Foundation of Academy of Sciences
- 1725–7      **Catherine I**
- 1726         February: creation of Supreme Privy Council  
               Austro-Russian alliance
- 1727         May: death of Catherine I
- 1727–30     **Peter II**
- 1727         September: exile of A. D. Menshikov
- 1729         November: death of Menshikov
- 1730         January: death of Peter II creates succession crisis  
               18–19 January: Supreme Privy Council seizes initiative and  
                       offers throne to Anna
- 1730–40     **Anna**
- 1730         25 February: Anna rejects D. M. Golitsyn's 'conditions'
- 1731         Repeal of law of single inheritance
- 1733–5      War of Polish Succession
- 1735–9      Russo-Turkish war
- 1739         September: peace of Belgrade
- 1740         October: death of Anna creates succession crisis
- 1740–1      **Ivan VI (Anna Leopoldovna as regent)**
- 1741         24–5 November: arrest of infant Ivan VI; accession of Peter  
                       I's daughter, Elizabeth
- 1741–61     **Elizabeth**
- 1741–3      Russo-Swedish war
- 1754         Noble monopoly on alcohol
- 1755         Foundation of University of Moscow
- 1756–62     Seven Years War

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## Chronology

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- 1757 Prussia defeated at Gross-Jägersdorf  
1759 Prussia defeated at Kunersdorf
- 1757 Foundation of Imperial Academy of Fine Arts
- 1761 25 December: death of Elizabeth
- 1761–2 Peter III**
- 1762 18 February: edict freeing nobility from obligatory service  
21 March: confiscation of church peasants  
28 June: Empress Catherine's coup
- 1762–96 Catherine II**
- 1764 February: secularisation of church lands  
April: Russo-Prussian alliance  
October: abolition of Ukrainian hetmanate
- 1765 Foundation of Free Economic Society
- 1767 Publication of *Nakaz*  
Legislative Commission convened
- 1768–74 Russo-Turkish war
- 1768 December: foundation of assignat banks
- 1770 Russian naval victory at Chesme
- 1774 July: treaty of Kutchuk-Kainardzhii
- 1772 August: first partition of Poland
- 1773–5 Pugachev revolt
- 1775 7 November: provincial reform
- 1779 Russian mediation at peace of Teschen
- 1781 Secret Austro-Russian alliance
- 1782 Commission on Public Schools
- 1783 Legislation to permit private publishing  
Russia annexes the Crimea
- 1785 21 April: Charters to the Nobility and the Towns
- 1787 Catherine's journey to the south and the Crimea
- 1787–91 Russo-Turkish war
- 1789 July: Russian victory at Fokshani  
September: Russian victory on River Rymnik
- 1790 November: Russian victory at Ismail
- 1791 March: crisis over Ochakov (captured in 1788)  
December: treaty of Jassy
- 1788–90 Russo-Swedish war
- 1788 July: naval stalemate at Hogland
- 1790 June: Russian naval defeat at Svenskund
- 1790 Radishchev's *Journey from St Petersburg to Moscow*
- 1793 April: second partition of Poland
- 1795 Third partition of Poland
- 1796 6 November: death of Catherine II

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**1796–1801 Paul I**

- 1797      5 April: law of succession  
 1798      Paul elected grand master of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem  
 1801      11–12 March: coup and assassination of Paul I  
**1801–25 Alexander I**  
 1801      24 June: first meeting of Unofficial Committee  
 1802      8 September: decree establishing ministries  
 1803      February: Free Agriculturalists Law  
 1803–4      Reform of elementary education  
 1805–7      War of the Third Coalition against France  
             1807    2/14 June: Russians defeated at Friedland  
                     13/25 June: first Tilsit meeting between tsar and Napoleon  
                     26 June/7 July: Russia allies with France  
 1807–12      Alliance with Napoleon  
             1808    Russia invades Finland, incorporating it into the empire as a grand duchy  
             1809    March: Alexander I promises the Finns constitution at the Diet of Porvoo  
             1810    December: Russia abandons Napoleon's Continental System  
 1808–11      Speranskii's domestic reforms  
 1812      17 March: dismissal of Speranskii  
 1812      Napoleonic invasion of Russia  
             11/23 June: Grande armée enters Russia  
             26 August/7 September: battle of Borodino  
             2/14 September: French troops enter Moscow  
             11/23 October: Russian troops re-enter Moscow  
             12/24 October: battle of Maloiaroslavets  
 1814      March: treaty of Chaumont; Russian troops enter Paris  
 1814–15      Congress of Vienna  
 1815      15 November: constitution of Congress Kingdom of Poland  
 1819–22      Siberian reforms under leadership of Speranskii, partially restored to favour  
 1825      19 November: death of Alexander I  
             14 December: Decembrist revolt

## Abbreviations

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<i>AHR</i>	<i>American Historical Review</i>
<i>CASS</i>	<i>Canadian–American Slavic Studies</i>
<i>CMRS</i>	<i>Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique</i>
<i>CSP</i>	<i>Canadian Slavonic Papers</i>
<i>CSSH</i>	<i>Comparative Studies in Society and History</i>
<i>EHR</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i>
<i>FzOG</i>	<i>Forschungen zur Osteuropäischen Geschichte</i>
<i>HEI</i>	<i>History of European Ideas</i>
<i>HEQ</i>	<i>History of Education Quarterly</i>
<i>HJ</i>	<i>Historical Journal</i>
<i>HUS</i>	<i>Harvard Ukrainian Studies</i>
<i>JEcH</i>	<i>Journal of Economic History</i>
<i>JEurEcH</i>	<i>Journal of European Economic History</i>
<i>JfGO</i>	<i>Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas</i>
<i>JIH</i>	<i>Journal of Interdisciplinary History</i>
<i>JMH</i>	<i>Journal of Modern History</i>
<i>NS</i>	new series
<i>OSP</i>	<i>Oxford Slavonic Papers</i>
<i>P&amp;P</i>	<i>Past and Present</i>
<i>RH</i>	<i>Russian History</i>
<i>RR</i>	<i>Russian Review</i>
<i>SEER</i>	<i>Slavonic and East European Review</i>
<i>SGECRN</i>	<i>Study Group on Eighteenth-Century Russia Newsletter</i>
<i>SIRIO</i>	<i>Sbornik imperatorskago russkago istoricheskago obshchestva</i> , 148 vols. (St Petersburg, 1867–1914)
<i>SR</i>	<i>Slavic Review</i>
<i>SVEC</i>	<i>Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century</i>