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0521805856 - Peter the Great: The Struggle for Power, 1671-1725

Paul Bushkovitch

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This book is a history of Russian politics over the fifty years that saw the transformation of Russia into virtually a European monarchy by Peter the Great. It shows, however, that Peter was not the all-powerful tsar working alone to reform Russia, and that he moved into a system with powerful and contentious aristocrats whom he struggled to control in order to achieve his goals.

Paul Bushkovitch reveals the intense battles within the boyar elite in the 1670s and the ultimate victory of Peter's family and their boyar supporters in the 1690s. But Peter turned against them and tried to rule through his favorites Golovin and Menshikov. This experiment ended in the establishment of a decentralized administration controlled largely by the great aristocrats, followed by the establishment of an equally aristocratic Senate in 1711. As the aristocrats' hegemony came to an end in 1716–18, in the final years of the reign – those of the most long-lasting reforms – Peter ruled through a complex group of favorites, a few aristocrats, and appointees promoted through merit.

Thus Peter managed in his reign to master a contentious and powerful elite through a series of compromises, at first tilted toward the tsar and his favorites, then toward the aristocrats, and finally toward a mix that favored new men but which did not exclude the aristocrats entirely. The outcome was a new balance of power at the center and a new, European, conception of politics.

PAUL BUSHKOVITCH is Professor of History, Yale University. His publications include *The Merchants of Moscow 1580–1650* (Cambridge, 1980) and *Religion and Society in Russia: The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Oxford, 1992).

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Preface

In fifteen years of research I have acquired debts too numerous to repay as they deserve. Without the staff of the Russian State Archive of Ancient Documents, and in particular M. P. Lukichev and S. R. Dolgova, the work could not have been done at all. I owe thanks as well to the staff of the Haus- Hof- und Staatsarchiv in Vienna, and in particular to Dr. Leopold Auer. My thanks are due to the Svenska Riksarkiv in Stockholm, the Danska Rigsarkiv in Copenhagen, the Algemeene Rijksarchieff in the Hague, the Public Record Office in London, and the archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of France in Paris. Many libraries as well have helped enormously, the Historical Library and the Russian State Library in Moscow, the Russian National Library (Publichka) in St. Petersburg, the British Library, and the Slavic Library of the University of Helsinki (and especially Irina Lukka) all made my work easier. My greatest debt among librarians goes to the staff of the Sterling Memorial and Beinecke Libraries at Yale University. Tatjana Lorković and Susanne Roberts were an unfailing source of assistance and provided me with a continuous stream of new and old material. The Interlibrary Loan office, Maureen Jones and Liz Johnson, found arcane and unknown works in the most unlikely places. The Circulation Desk staff, Barbara Gajewski, Pearlene Ford, and their colleagues solved more problems than could ever be imagined. A particular debt goes to Kevin Pacelli and the staff of the Microtext Room of Sterling Library, who kept me and several elderly machines going with unfailing courtesy and good humor through several phases of rebuilding and ultimate reequipping. Of course none of the work could have been done without the support of the International Research and Exchanges Board, the Yale Center for International and Area Studies, the American Philosophical Society, the Scandinavian American Foundation, the Deutsch–Amerikanische

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Austauschdienst, and several provosts of Yale University. None of their valuable support would have been much good if Merete and Nils Bormanis had not been there to get me to where I needed to be.

My colleagues and students gave greater help than most of them realize. Charles Halperin, E. H. Melton, and Samuel Ramer read through the entire manuscript with great attention, improving my style, finding all sorts of errors, and assuring me that I was on the right track. Nikos Chrissidis took an active and welcome interest in Peter and was always ready with references and assistance. In the final and most hectic stages of this work, he was a person to rely upon. David Schimmelpenninck made sure I did not get lost in the many byways of one of his ancestral countries. Maria Arel, Jason Lavery, Cathy Potter, Carla Schmidt, Vera Shevzov, Jennifer Spock, Kathy Stuart, Cherie Woodworth, and other Yale graduate students survived years of professorial preoccupation and kept up a dialogue in Russian and European history that was invaluable. In Russia, S. O. Shmidt provided a forum on Peter where it belonged, while the late D. S. Likhachev solved a small but crucial problem. Vladimir Skopin's help and knowledge were crucial at several points. Sergei Kondrat'ev introduced me to parts of Russia I never expected to see. L. V. Betin and his family remained essential to my experience in Russia, through the years of Peter as before. Outside of Russia my debts are almost as numerous. Wladimir Berelowitsch and the faculty and students of the Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales in Paris heard an early version of my work on Peter and provided invaluable responses and criticism. The American Philosophical Society and Tulane University performed a similar service. Many colleagues and friends around the world are probably unaware of the importance of their encouragement and intellectual stimulation, but it is no less great. Let me mention them: the late Gustave Alef, Aleksei Chagin, Robert Crummey, Ol'ga Dmitrieva, Harvey Goldblatt, Andrea Graziosi, Nancy Kollmann, Alexandra Korros, Eve Levin, Gael Moullec, Marshall Poe, Frank Turner. Christine Restall and Peter Hasler were an oasis in long archival sessions and provided never-failing hospitality and humor. D. C. B. Lieven not only gave me a place to stay and write in London, but also introduced me to a part of the Russian past I would otherwise never have encountered. Hans Torke deserves a particular place in my thanks. His contribution to my understanding of history, to broadening my scholarly contacts, and to the sheer pleasure of the

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profession was immense. I regret that he will not see this book in print, to whose early stages he provided a much needed platform. Finally, Sven-Erik and Tora Johnsson gave me my first sight of one of Peter's battlefields, and the many Mörens introduced me to the farther reaches of Peter's world.

My greatest debt, however, is to Maija Jansson, Director of the Yale Center for Parliamentary History, who was the original inspiration for this work and sustained it over many years. It was she who first showed me that apparently hackneyed themes could be fundamentally rewritten with new material, and that an old and familiar story might simply be wrong. A historian cannot ask for more.

Abbreviations

ADM.	A. D. Menshikov
AME	Archive du Ministère des affaires étrangères
ARSG	Algemeene Rijksarchief, Staaten Generaal
<i>ChOidr</i>	<i>Chteniia v imp. Obshchestve Istorii i Drevnostei Rossiiskikh pri Moskovskom universitete</i>
<i>DR</i>	<i>Dvortsovye razriady</i>
<i>DRV</i>	<i>Drevniaia Rossiiskaia Vifliofka</i>
GPB	Gos. Publichnaia Biblioteka=Rossiiskaia Natsional'naia Biblioteka
GSAPK	Geheime Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz
HHStA	Haus- Hof und Staatsarchiv
PI	Peter the First
<i>PiB</i>	<i>Pis'ma i bumagi imperatora Petra Velikogo</i>
<i>RBS</i>	<i>Russkii biograficheskii slovar'</i>
RGADA	Rossiiskii gos. arkhiv drevnikh aktov
RIB	Ruskaia istoricheskaiia biblioteka
<i>RS</i>	<i>Ruskaia starina</i>
SHSA	Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv
SR	Svenska riksarkivet
<i>SRIO</i>	<i>Sbornik Russkogo istoricheskogo obshchestva</i>
TKUA	Tyske kancelli, udenrigske avdelning
<i>ZA</i>	<i>Zakonodatel'nye akty</i>
<i>ZhMNP</i>	<i>Zhurnal ministerstva narodnogo prosveshcheniia</i>
<i>ZORSA</i>	<i>Zapiski Otdela russkoi i slavianskoi arkheologii Imp. Akademii nauk</i>