Agrarian Reform in Russia
The Road from Serfdom

This book examines the history of reforms and major state interventions affecting Russian agriculture: the abolition of serfdom in 1861, the Stolypin reforms, the New Economic Policy (NEP), the collectivization, the Khrushchev reforms, and finally the farm enterprise privatization in the early 1990s. It shows a pattern emerging from a political imperative in imperial, Soviet, and post-Soviet regimes, and it describes how these reforms were justified in the name of the national interest during severe crises – rapid inflation, military defeat, mass strikes, rural unrest, and/or political turmoil. It looks at the consequences of adversity in the economic environment for rural behavior after reform and at long-run trends. It has chapters on property rights, rural organization, and technological change. It provides a new database for measuring agricultural productivity from 1861 to 1913 and updates these estimates to the present. This book is a study of the policies aimed at reorganizing rural production and of their effectiveness in transforming institutions.

Dr. Carol S. Leonard is a Fellow of St. Antony’s College, Oxford, and university lecturer, University of Oxford. She is the author of Reform and Regicide: The Reign of Peter III (1993) and numerous scholarly articles. She is also the editor of Microeconomic Change in Central and Eastern Europe (2002) and the co-editor of Agrarian Organization during Industrialization: Europe, Russia and America in the Nineteenth Century (1989) (with George Grantham). She has also served as the U.S. Treasury economic and budget advisor for agriculture to the Russian Ministry of Finance and as a consultant for the Harvard Institute for International Development Macroeconomic Unit in Kiev, Ukraine, and the National Bank of Kazakhstan. She has taught public-sector economics at the St. Petersburg School of Management and the economics of science and technology for the graduate program in management and innovation at the Eurasian National University in Astana.
For Nancy, Larry, and Claire
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Preface

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Carol S. Leonard
The University of Oxford
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