

**THE
RISE OF RUSSIA
IN ASIA**

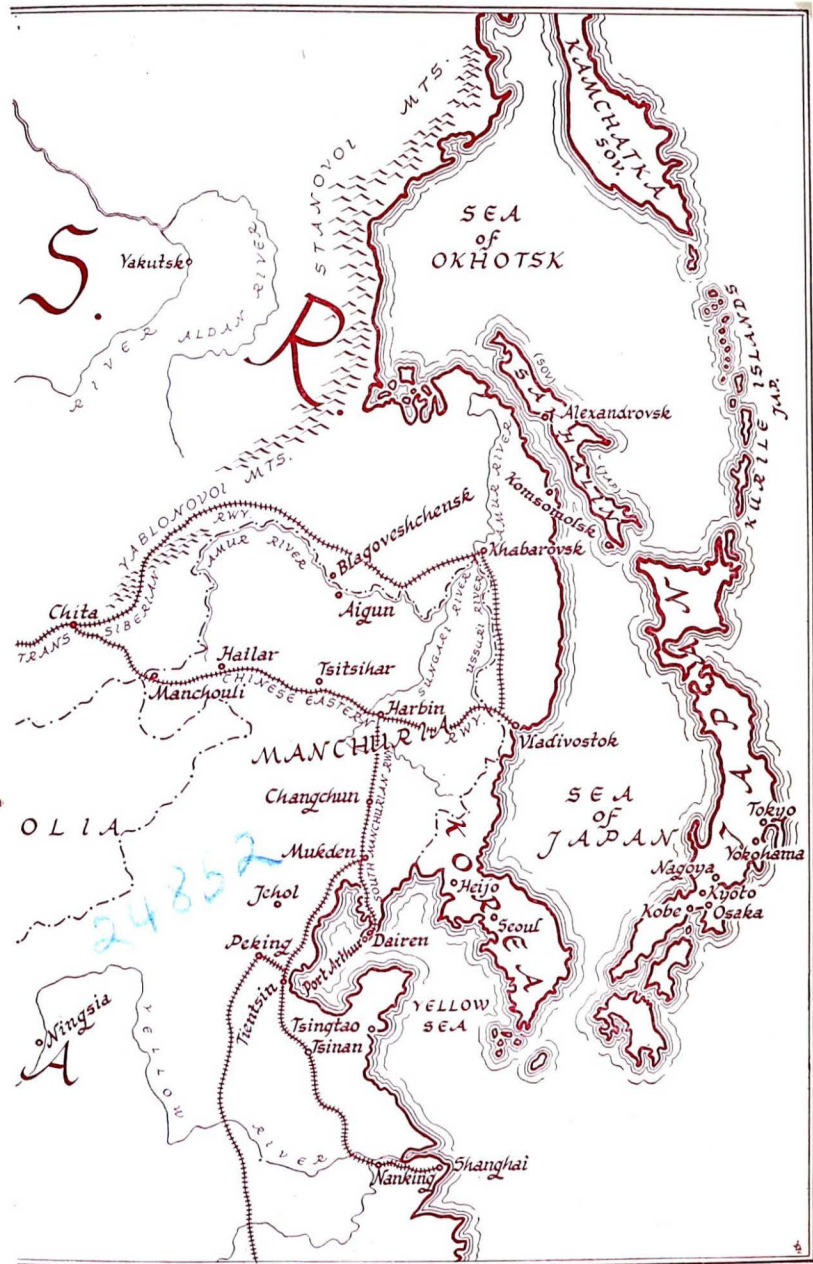
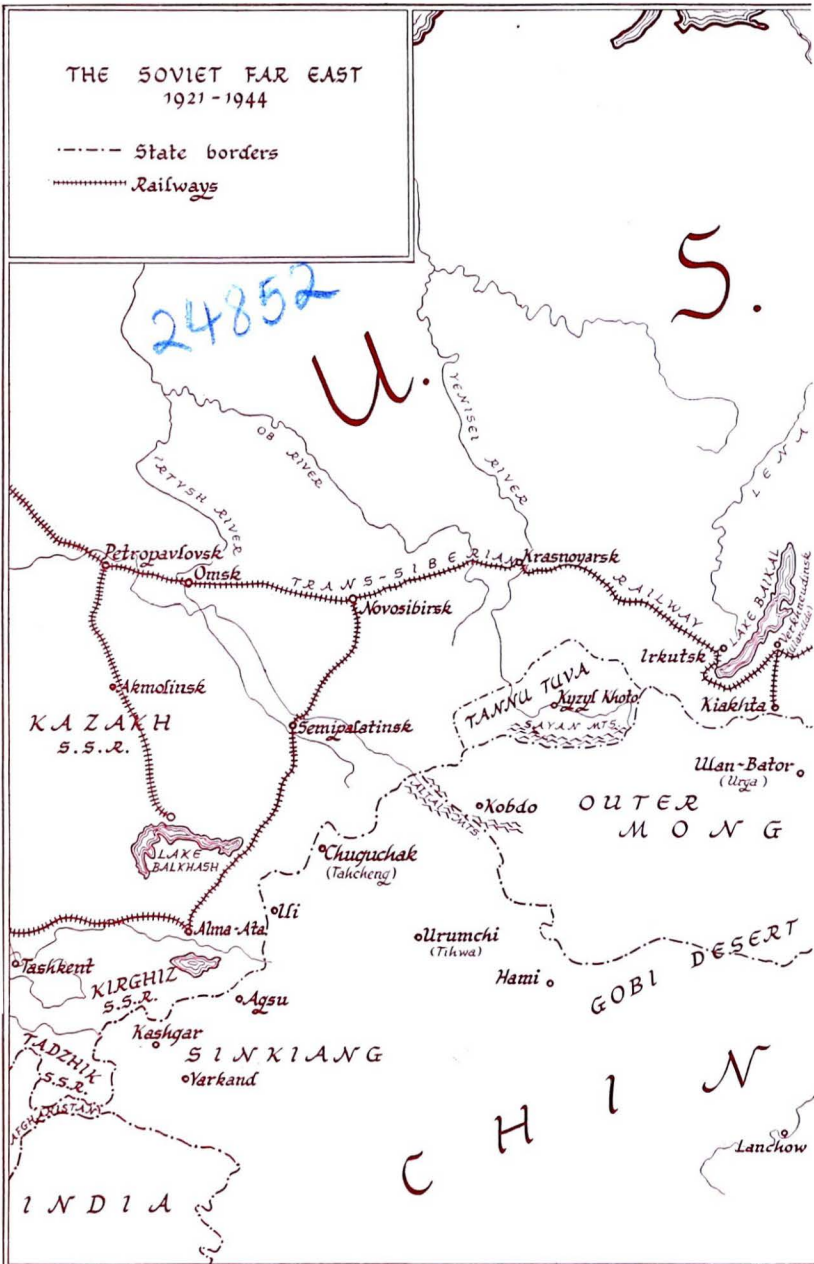
DAVID J. DALLIN

THE SOVIET FAR EAST
1921-1944

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**SOVIET RUSSIA'S FOREIGN POLICY, 1939-1942
THE BIG THREE. THE UNITED STATES, BRITAIN, AND
RUSSIA**

**FORCED LABOR IN SOVIET RUSSIA
THE REAL SOVIET RUSSIA (REVISED EDITION)
RUSSIA AND POSTWAR EUROPE
SOVIET RUSSIA AND THE FAR EAST**

**THE
RISE OF RUSSIA
IN ASIA**

**BY
DAVID J. DALLIN**

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Preface

The founding of Vladivostok, the opening of Korea, the Kaiser inciting the Tsar to fight the "yellow peril," Theodore Roosevelt as Japan's friend and American delight at Russia's defeats in 1905, the first outline of a Russian "sphere" in China—are these not events that have long passed into ancient history, events that bear no relation to the manifold problems and troubles of today? Have not two great wars torn us away from these crises of yesteryear, and have not two great revolutions—in Russia and in China—opened a deep abyss between then and now?

The narrative of even the first phases of the Russian Revolution as it affected the Far East appears today as little more than a sequence of happenings long, long past. The Kuomintang's participation in the Comintern, Comrade Chiang Kai-shek as an admirer of Lenin, and Moscow proclaiming the seizure of Port Arthur by Russia to be "a base imperialist grab"—what relevance has all this to the realities of our days?

Yet there is an inherent, a close relation between that past and the present—a relation so intimate that no real understanding of current events is possible without an acquaintance with these seemingly obsolete theories and political trends. Before our eyes pre-revolutionary patterns are reviving; faded blueprints reacquire color. Often the similarity is so striking as to permit, on the basis of the experience of the past, predictions of imminent developments with a fair degree of accuracy.

What these chapters of history teach us is the basic element of all Russian policies once they become "dynamic," expansionist: opposition to the greatest naval world power—first, Britain and then its successor in international leadership, the United States. The Russian Far East was one venture in this relentless struggle and was developed into an anti-British base; to enlarge her possessions in the Far East Russia concluded alliances with other nations in the Orient whenever they stood ready to oppose Britain—except for those short periods when the greater German menace de-

manded a rapprochement with Britain or the United States (1907-17 and 1941-45), Russian Far Eastern policy, whenever subject to the over-all expansionism, was primarily and consistently directed against these two powers.

We further observe the pattern of a "Russian sphere in Asia"—China and Korea—emerging in the nineteenth century, and in the 60 years since its hesitant beginnings its confines have not substantially changed. The initial program from 1896 to 1904 called for the incorporation of Port Arthur and then the whole of Manchuria into the Russian Empire, just as they constitute the point of departure today. Even the political methods of our days call to mind the developments of the early 1900's: Russia's failure to evacuate Manchuria, contrary to signed agreements; the violation of treaties; the systematic weakening of China, aiming at her disintegration; and the proclamation of the "defense of China" against the West as the central slogan of Russian propaganda after the middle of the nineteenth century. Even the peopling of empty wastes like those of the Amur and Sakhalin with convict settlers is no innovation; it was resorted to as far back as 1860—with the difference, however, that it is now being practiced on a far larger scale.

"Dynamism" in Russia's Far Eastern policy has been the program of the extreme political elements since the 1890's: of extreme reactionaries before the Revolution; of extreme Communists today. Liberal and democratic elements have usually been opposed to Russian expansionism, as they are opposed today. Since the very outset there has been an adventurous element inherent in the Far Eastern extension of Russia. While the ensuing danger of war has always been great, the Russian people have invariably looked with indifference upon the acquisition of these unknown and distant lands and nationalities whose very names sound alien and whose conquest promises no benefit. This has been equally true before and after the Revolution.

In the initial Soviet period Russia's Far Eastern policy contained elements that did not attract general attention until recently. It was in Mongolia, not in Poland, that Moscow established its first "friendly government"—in 1921, not in 1945. There was a genuine prototype of the regimes later established in eastern Europe, with guarantees of "national sovereignty" and full power in the hands of Soviet envoys and representatives. Likewise the short-lived

“sovereign” Far Eastern Republic, provided with a democratic constitution—without soviets—demonstrated how the substance of democracy could be dispensed with while the shell of nomenclature and propaganda slogans was meticulously preserved. If only the signatories of impressive documents guaranteeing democracy everywhere, in our own days, had been a little better informed of the lessons of the past . . . They might also have acquainted themselves with the history of Tannu Tuva, which shows how an independent People’s Republic is but the first stage on the road to incorporation into the Soviet Union.

Yet despite these and a multitude of other similarities, analogies, and parallels between the prerevolutionary past and the present—particularly between the Russian *Drang nach Osten* from 1896 to 1904 and the Soviet drive in 1945–49—there are essential distinctions that belie the comfortable view of Soviet policy as a mere reverting to the patterns of Imperial Russia.

One distinction is ideological, the other is factual. The element of universality in Communist ideology, the product of its peculiar internationalism, serves as a basis for designs in foreign policy so great, so bold, so sweeping as never to have existed before in Russian history. Not even in the most fitful moments of expansionist fever did the old empire seriously consider blueprints encompassing the whole of the world. The other difference, since the end of the war, lies in the unique situation in which there is no other Asiatic power of equal or even comparable stature and might to Soviet Russia. The disappearance of an armed Japan and the utter impotence of China throw the gates to the East ajar for the only surviving power of the Eurasian continent. Thus an ideological inclination combined with the opportunity of the present merges into the most formidable expansionist drive in Russia’s Far Eastern history.

But history also shows a way out of desperate situations. There is the lesson both of Russia’s campaigns early in this century, and of Japan’s bid for power in the thirties. The progressive isolation of each of these powers is the first consequence; the coalition of their adversaries is the second; and, finally, if nothing else is capable of stopping their relentless dynamism, an armed conflict ensues, in which the challenger invariably loses to the converging forces of the world.

This book is essentially a companion volume to my *Soviet Russia and the Far East*, published in 1948. The present book deals with Russia's Far Eastern policies from their genesis in the middle of the last century until 1931, where the previous volume takes up the story and carries it down to the present. The two volumes were initially meant to appear simultaneously; the manuscript of this part was, however, completed later than had been anticipated.

The dates throughout follow the Western calendar, and not the Russian "old style" in use before the Revolution.

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