World Regional Geography
David Sallee
Lesson 3

RUSSIA

MAJOR GEOGRAPHIC QUALITIES
- IMMENSE TERRITORIAL STATE
- NORTHERNMOST LARGE AND POPULOUS COUNTRY IN THE WORLD
- A FORMER WORLD COLONIAL POWER
- A COMPARITIVELY SMALL (<150 MILLION) AND CONCENTRATED POPULATION
- CONCENTRATED DEVELOPMENT
- MULTICULTURAL STATE
- MINIMAL PORTS

RUSSIA’S DIMENSIONS
- SPANS 11 TIME ZONES
- GULF OF FINLAND TO ALASKA (WEST TO EAST), AND WELL ABOVE THE ARCTIC CIRCLE TO SALT LAKE CITY (NORTH TO SOUTH)
- TWICE THE SIZE OF THE US OR CHINA
- SIBERIA: “SLEEPING LAND”

SIZE, LOCATION AND SPACE RELATIONSHIPS
- LATITUDINAL EXTENT
  - Northernmost point: Rudolf Island in Franz Joseph Land (82°)
  - Southernmost point: Grozny in west and Vladivostok in east (44°)
- LONGITUDINAL EXTENT
  - More than twice its maximum north-south extent and extends through 11 time zones
  - Russia makes up 76.6% of the total territory of the former USSR (17,075,400 km—almost twice the size of the US).
LOCATIONAL IMPACT ON RUSSIA’S CLIMATE

CLIMATOLOGY

- CLIMATE: AVERAGE WEATHER CONDITIONS FOR A GIVEN AREA OVER AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME
- WEATHER: REFERS TO THE ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS AT A SPECIFIC PLACE AND TIME
- CLIMATOLOGY: A BRANCH OF PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY
  - CONCERNED WITH:
    - SPATIAL ARRANGEMENT OF CLIMATE OVER THE SURFACE OF THE EARTH
    - PROCESSES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE DISTRIBUTION

FORWARD CAPITAL

Capital city positioned in actually or potentially contested territory, usually near an international border, confirms the state’s determination to maintain its presence in the region.

GROWTH OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

FORWARD CAPITAL

GROWTH OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE
RUSSIAN CLIMATE

- Affected by 3 natural conditions:
  - Latitude
  - Continental Position
  - Location of major mountains

CLIMATE

- Natural elements

VEGETATION

- Arctic Circle

CLIMATE AS A RESTRICTIVE ELEMENT

- Agriculture
  - Short growing seasons
  - Drought prone
  - Erosion (accelerated via snow melt)
- Settlement Patterns & Transportation
- Industry
  - High energy consumption
  - Specialized equipment and facilities
  - Extractive
    - Permafrost
    - Spring and fall mud
    - Special equipment and facilities - $$$

AGRICULTURAL PATTERNS

SETTLEMENT / TRANSPORTATION PATTERNS
RUSSIA'S PHYSIOGRAPHIC REGIONS

- RUSSIAN PLAIN
  - Eastward continuation of North European Lowland
  - Core area (Moscow Basin)

- URAL MOUNTAINS
  - 2,000 miles long (north-south)
  - Yield a variety of minerals

- WEST SIBERIAN PLAIN
  - World's largest unbroken lowlands
  - Permafrost

CENTRAL SIBERIAN PLATEAU
- Sparsely populated, temperature extremes, permafrost

YAKUTSK BASIN
- Mountainous, high relief

EASTERN HIGHLANDS
- Ranges, ridges, precipitous valleys, Volcanic Mountains, Lake Baikal

CENTRAL ASIAN RANGES
- Rise above the snow line, glaciated

CAUCASUS MOUNTAINS
- Extensions of the Alpines

THE URAL MOUNTAINS
- The north-south length covers 2500 kms.
- The highest points are in the Northern Urals-2000 meters in places.
- The Central Urals are the lowest section and include several key crossing places.
- The Southern Urals are wider and consist of a number of parallel north-south ridges and intervening valleys.
- Ural forests and minerals have been the basis for industrialization and boast at least twenty different commercially usable minerals.

WEST SIBERIAN PLAIN
- The world's largest unbroken lowland
- Includes the Ob and Irtysn River Basin
- Permafrost
- Major Cities: Omsk, Novosibirsk
CENTRAL SI BER IAN PLATEAU

- Sparsely settled
- Inaccessible
- Restrictive climate
- Permafrost
- Natural resources

EASTERN HIGHLANDS

CENTRAL ASIAN RANGES

CAUCASUS MOUNTAINS

POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

- SOVIET LEGACY
  - Revolution (1905-1917)
  - Bolsheviks versus Mensheviks
  - V.I. Lenin (Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov)
  - Capital: Petrograd to Moscow (1918)
- FEDERATION/ FEDERAL STRUCTURE
  - USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) - 1924
  - SSRs, ASSRs, Autonomous Regions
- RUSSIFICATION

SOVIET UNION
**COMMAND ECONOMY**
- An economy in which the means of production are owned and controlled by the state and in which central planning of the structure and the output prevails.
- Features of the Soviet economy:
  - Production of particular manufactured goods to particular places.
  - Economic interdependence of the republics.

**ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK**
- CENTRALLY PLANNED (early 1920s)
- MAJOR OBJECTIVES
  - Speed industrialization
  - Collectivize agriculture

**SOVIET LEADERS**
- Czarism (<1917)
- Lenin
- Stalin
- Kruschev
- Breshnev
- Gorbachev

**SOVIET LEADERS**
- Lenin (1918 - 1927)
  - Introduced Marxist philosophy
  - Replaced private with public ownership
  - Developed national economic plans
  - Established Soviet political structure based on ethnic identities

**SOVIET LEADERS**
- Stalin (1927 - 1953)
  - All assets nationalized
  - Creation of huge centralized state machine over all aspects of Soviet life
  - Purges of dissidents (30-60 million)
  - Collectivized farming (1930-1932)
  - Concentration on heavy industry at expense of agriculture

**SOVIET LEADERS**
- Kruschev (1953 - 1964)
  - Greater emphasis on agriculture
  - Virgin Lands Program - pastures into irrigated wheat fields
  - Ultimately led to Aral Sea environmental disaster

- Breshnev (1964 - 1982)
  - Height of the Cold War
  - Military/industrial economy
  - Economic stagnation (agriculture)
**Soviet Leaders**

Gorbachev (1985 - 1991)
- Initiated economic and political reform

**Perestroika**
- Restructuring
  - Intended to produce major changes to both the economic and political system
- **Economic aim**: to catch up with western economies
- **Political aim**: reform of the Communist Party

**Glasnost**
- Policy of encouraging greater openness in both internal and external affairs

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**Collapse of the Soviet Union**

(Conditions in 1990 & 1991)

- A sharp decline in agricultural & industrial production
  - Economic output down by 4% in 1990 & 10-15% in first half of 1991
- Intensification of ethno-cultural nationalism & separatism
  - Unity of the Soviet Union (macro) & unity of republics (micro) threatened
- Pluralization of Soviet politics & steady erosion of Communist Party monopoly or power

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**Current Organization**

- RUSSIAN FEDERATION (1992)
- 89 POLITICAL UNITS
  - 21 REPUBLICS
  - 11 AUTONOMOUS REGIONS (OKRUGS)
  - 49 PROVINCES (OBLASTS)
  - 6 TERRITORIES (KRAYS)
  - 2 AUTONOMOUS FEDERAL CITIES

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**Russia's Administrative Divisions**

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