

Russia

Gregory Carleton



RUSSIA

THE STORY OF WAR

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著者:Hingley, Ronald

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The recent tremendous changes in Russia have only enhanced the special fascination which this powerful, enigmatic country has so long held for the world at large. Russia's history, from her beginnings as an illiterate pagan Slav community centered on Kiev to her twentieth-century superpower status, has its own unique rhythm, Appalling calamities have shaped Russia: the Tatar Yoke; the Time of Troubles; the Napoleonic invasion, two world wars separated by a great civil war; a multitude of famines and epidemics. Not least among these scourges have been leaders such as Ivan the Terrible and Joseph Stalin. A succession of governments - Muscovite, Imperial and Soviet - have, with the help of powerful political police organizations, dragooned a common people fatalistic, courageous, resillient and patient in suffering, yet liable to sudden explosions of collective rage. In this revised and updated edition, Ronald Hingley considers the recent astonishing developments: the first steps towards liberalization, the collapse of communist rule throughout Russia's former satellite states, and above all the demise of Soviet communism and the disintegration of the USSR in the wake of Boris Yeltsin's rise to power. Russia's present troubles can be better comprehended as the latest chapter in a long and enthralling history; a history - evoked here with the aid of over 200 illustrations - which is now being energetically reassessed by the Russians themselves.

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