land in the territories seized by Russia from 1772 to 1795, members of the Polish elite showed a real mastery in the art of survival. Some land was lost (144 estates were confiscated, and some owners were forced to sell part of their land). However, the Polish landed nobles succeeded in retaining most of it, thus preserving their enormous economic power.

While criticizing members of the Polish elite for their greed and inhumanity, Beauvois admires their ability not only to survive, but prosper as well. Thanks to railway construction, the southwest region received a chance, which most members of the Polish elite grasped. They abandoned their traditional outlook and interethnic solidarity and adopted a purely capitalist approach to land. Gone were the old ways. There was a revolution in farming. One could see in western Russia the beginnings of what today is defined as agrobusiness.

As the author points out, in their cold pursuit of economic efficiency, the Polish elite acted pitilessly toward not only the Ukrainian peasantry, but their less fortunate ethnic brothers as well. Out of over 300,000 such unfortunate individuals, only some 70,000 were able to validate their claims to the land they used. Others were forcefully removed and left without any means of subsistence. Each time economic interests were at stake, any interethnic solidarity disappeared. To the author, this strict striving for economic efficiency was morally wrong and socially harmful. As he concludes, this world of extremes (islands of unusual prosperity and extravagant luxury in a surrounding sea of misery and hardship) lasted until 1914. The subsequent upheavals definitively put an end to it.

An admiration for this gifted intellectual and educator does not mean agreement with all his interpretations and opinions. There is, for example, too much moralizing in the work under review. One must also strongly object to Beauvois’s thesis of two imperialisms (Polish and Russian). The same is true with regard to his comparing the pre-1914 situation in western Russia to colonialism. Such interpretations are too simplistic. The whole issue was much more complex than the author implies. One should explain that it was the Mongol invasion that created numerous problems in the Ukraine. Poland never conquered the region but received it because of its merger with Lithuania.

In spite of some reservations, Beauvois’s contribution to a better understanding of the former Polish eastern borderlands should be recognized, and his pioneering efforts are truly praiseworthy.

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The turbulence unleashed by perestroika led Paul Gregory to assess the contemporary relevance of previous Russian economic systems: the tsarist model of capitalist development and the mixed economy of the New Economic Policy in the 1920s. The brevity of this monograph precludes a thorough discussion of all aspects of Russian economic history in the seven decades between the emancipation of the serfs and Stalin’s regimentation of industry and agriculture. Instead, the author brilliantly summarizes his pioneering research in Russian economic history and compares the performances of the tsarist, NEP, and Stalinist systems.
The three chapters devoted to the tsarist period argue that the Russian economy performed reasonably well in the half-century before World War I; that the tsarist and Soviet economic literature exaggerated the plight of the peasantry; and that the gold standard succeeded in attracting foreign capital and in integrating Russia into the world economy. The two chapters on NEP demonstrate the primacy of politics, especially the Bolsheviks' distrust of the market as a means of allocating resources and their tendency to perceive an economic crisis in the late 1920s when deliveries of grain to the state declined, even as agricultural production for the market increased. Stalin's collectivization of agriculture pursued an essentially political purpose, to regiment the peasantry, but it rested on a weak economic rationale. "If collectivization was instituted to achieve political ends, this point should be admitted. Economic arguments should not be applied to justify an action carried out for political reasons." (p. 122)

After an insightful discussion of the difficulties inherent in any statistical comparison of tsarist and Soviet economic performance, the final chapter delivers a negative verdict on the economy in the 1970s and 1980s: "The Soviet Union sacrificed growth by adopting the administrative-command system. With this scenario, the administrative-command system incurred only costs; it yielded no tangible benefits." (p. 135) The implications of Gregory's findings go far beyond the clear message that market reforms are necessary to sweep away the irrationalities of the Soviet system. His critique of the command economy logically implies a relatively favorable assessment of the viability of the two other economic systems that existed in Russia in the past century.

It must be remembered, however, that the economy under both tsarism and NEP remained in the grip of autocratic government. Russian capitalist institutions - corporations, stock and commodity exchanges, and trade associations - remained weakly developed, largely because bureaucrats feared the spontaneous social changes that would accompany a freely functioning economy. At the same time, foreign capitalists tended to regard Russia primarily as a source of raw materials: petroleum, timber, wood pulp, manganese, copper, and grain. Without protective tariffs and other administrative controls, market forces from the outside world might well have crippled nascent Russian industries and reduced the resource-rich country to the status of an economic colony of the industrialized West.

Such is the economic nightmare that Russian nationalists fear once again, now that the discredited command economy has collapsed. No one, not even the energetic finance minister Sergei Iu. Witte, succeeded in devising a strategy of industrial development capable of meeting the foreign challenge. Economists who regard as axiomatic the principles of comparative advantage and market allocation of resources show little sympathy for the notion that Russia somehow deserves a better economic fate.

The future need not appear so bleak, however. Free from autocratic rule for the first time since the fifteenth century, Russia faces the prospect of unfettered access to modern technology without the burden of excessive military expenditures. Also, entrepreneurship in Russia now encounters fewer politically inspired obstacles than ever before.

The notion that the tsarist autocracy bore much responsibility for the sluggishness of the pre-1917 economy derives empirical support from Gregory's time series of national income statistics in various sectors of the economy from 1885 to 1913. (These data, first published by Gregory in 1982, appear in the appendices.) A computation of five-year moving averages, in 1913 prices, reveals that per-capita net investment tended generally upward, to 13.7 rubles in 1910, with declines in 1886-90 and 1903-05, but total expenditures of the imperial government, devoted to administration, defense, and health and education, also rose steadily,