

# Natural Regions of the U. S. S. R.

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of the U.S.S.R.

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# Foreword

**T**HE Russian Translation Project of the American Council of Learned Societies was organized in 1944 with the aid of a subsidy from the Humanities Division of the Rockefeller Foundation. The aim of the Project is the translation into English of significant Russian works in the fields of the humanities and the social sciences which provide an insight into Russian life and thought.

In the difficult problem of the selection of books for translation, the Administrative Committee has had the counsel and cooperation of Slavic scholars throughout the United States and Great Britain. It is thought that the books chosen will be useful to general readers interested in world affairs, and will also serve as collateral reading material for the large number of courses on Russia in our colleges and universities.

Since Russian history is a continuum, the volumes translated are of various dates and have been drawn from both the prerevolutionary and postrevolutionary periods, from writings published inside and outside of Russia, the choice depending solely on their value to the fundamental aim of the Project. Translations are presented in authentic and unabridged English versions of the original text. Only in this way, it is believed, can American readers be made aware of the traditions, concepts, and ideologies by which the thinking and attitudes of the people of Russia are molded.

It should, of course, be clearly understood that the views expressed in the works translated are not to be identified in any way with those of the Administrative Committee or of the Council.

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**F**EW WORKS dealing solely with the geographical description of the U.S.S.R. — as distinguished from books which include the human or economic aspects of its geography — exist in English. Here is not only a rare book of its kind, but a doubly valuable one, inasmuch as it was written by one of Russia's greatest experts on the subject, and now appears in English for the first time anywhere.

This remarkable book describes all of the natural regions and zones of the vast U.S.S.R. First it discusses the lowland regions — the tundra, the temperate forest, the forest steppe, the steppe, the semi-desert, the desert, and the subtropical forest. Under these subdivisions are included the boundaries of the regions, their general characteristics, climate, relief, soils, vegetation, and fauna. Then it proceeds to describe the mountainous areas—the mountains of the Caucasus and Crimea, the Urals, the Altay and Sayan mountains, and so on.

The strength of the book is founded on Professor Berg's intimate knowledge gained from field work in every part of the far-flung Soviet Union. Translated by a graduate in geography and edited by specialists in the field, this American edition will prove in-

*(Continued on back flap)*

*Jacket design by Ronald Gaschke*

## *Outstanding Books of Modern Russia*

THIS BOOK is one of a series of important Russian works in translation, published by The Macmillan Company cooperating with the American Council of Learned Societies. The purpose of the project is to make available to the American public the best and most representative volumes of contemporary Russian literature and scholarship. For it is only from books written by Russians and for Russian readers that Americans can obtain an adequate understanding of the Russian's conception of citizenship, of the Soviet Constitution, of the role of the State, of Russian life and culture.

The titles to be translated were chosen in consultation with leading Slavic scholars and have been carefully edited by a board of experts under the direction of W. Chapin Huntington, Editor of the Russian Translation Project of the American Council of Learned Societies.

Because these books were originally designed, not for propaganda purposes, but for present-day use by the Russians themselves, these translations serve to show us an important section of modern Russian thought.