

HIGHER  
EDUCATION

IN  
RUSSIA

Yaroslav Kuzminov

AND

Maria Yudkevich

Foreword by  
Philip G. Altbach

**Russian Universities in  
turbulent times: What we  
can learn from the history  
of their  
internationalization?**

**Maria Yudkevich**

**Center for Global Higher Education Webinar**

**July 18, 2023**

# **WHY one more book on Russian Higher Ed?**

- What is there beyond data?
- How institutions of HE system emerge, evolve and work
- Unpacking black box for international audience



**Extra challenge:**

Constant changes

# Higher Education in Russia

Yaroslav Kuzminov and Maria Yudkevich

Foreword by Philip G. Altbach



JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY PRESS BALTIMORE

## Contents

Foreword, by Philip G. Altbach ix

Preface xi

Acknowledgments xxvii

Data Sources xxxi

List of Abbreviations xxxv

- 1 Historical Background 1
- 2 The Soviet Era and the First Post-Soviet Decade 41
- 3 The Contemporary Landscape 69
- 4 Governance and Resources 104
- 5 Through School to University 144
- 6 The Academic Profession 189
- 7 Research at Russian Universities: The Story of Separation and Reunion 223
- 8 Organizational Logic: From Processes to Projects 260
- 9 Internationalization 288

# Why internationalization

A bit of personal perspective and institutional perspective

Comment from reviewers:  
Why not a separate chapter?



Erasmus  
University  
Rotterdam



Internationalization of Russian higher education in most of the periods was and remains the matter of the state in all aspects:

- Ideological
- Financial
- Instrumental

# Internationalization – early periods

XIX<sup>th</sup> century

- Key role of International faculty
  - German as a language of instruction
  - International training of domestic faculty
- 
- International connections: fluctuations with the changes in political context
  - University faculty in early XX<sup>th</sup> century: identification with research community (often international)

# First decade of Bolshevik rule

After the Civil War – mid-1920-s: short period of internationalization

Considered by Bolsheviks to be a political matter

- international scientific contacts as an important tool for eliminating the country's political blockade
- 1925: 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Russian Academy of Science
- Delegation of about 100 scientists from 25 countries

International connections and training

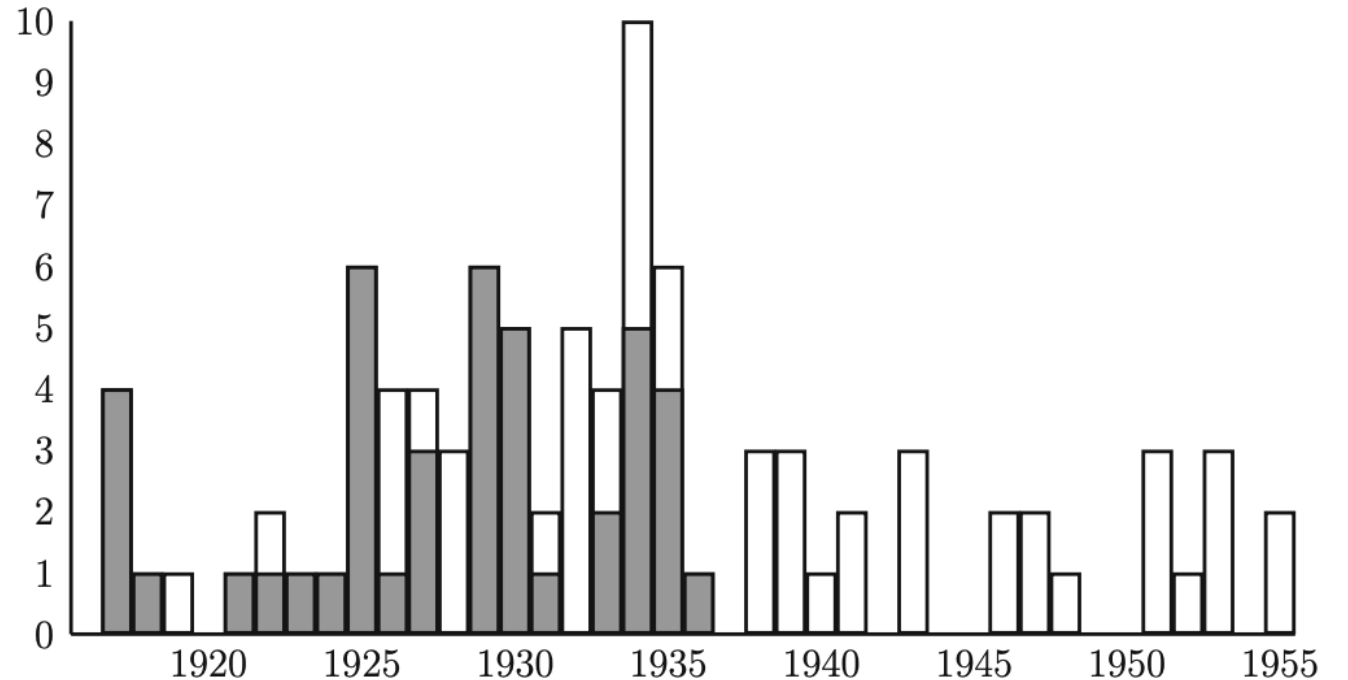
- Important role of international organizations: Rockefeller Foundation, the Carnegie Foundation, and the Royal Society of the UK



# International policy in times of Great Terror

Source: Hollings, 2016

- Cutting off travel abroad, correspondence, and meeting international colleagues
- Risks of possible accusations of spying, anti-Soviet activity, or harmful activity.
- Summer 1936: case of mathematician Nikolay Luzin



**Fig. 2.1** Number of publications of N.N. Luzin per year, as listed in the volume Kurosh et al. (1959), showing both those items published domestically (*clear*) and abroad (*shaded*)

# Internationalization behind Iron Curtain

- From 1947: all journals of the Soviet Academy of Sciences stopped running the contents and abstracts in foreign languages
- 1947: many journals published in foreign languages were closed down
- All scientific literature coming from abroad was now monitored and censored, following the adoption of the law “On responsibility for the disclosure of state secrets”
- Raise of “socialist” science: war of ideas

# Sovietization

“Sovietization”— applying ideological, social, and political pressure to other countries accompanied by the restructuring of science and education governance systems: Eastern Europe and Asia

- Transplantation of national academic model
- Direct support, management and control
- Enrollment of international students

# International students in Soviet universities

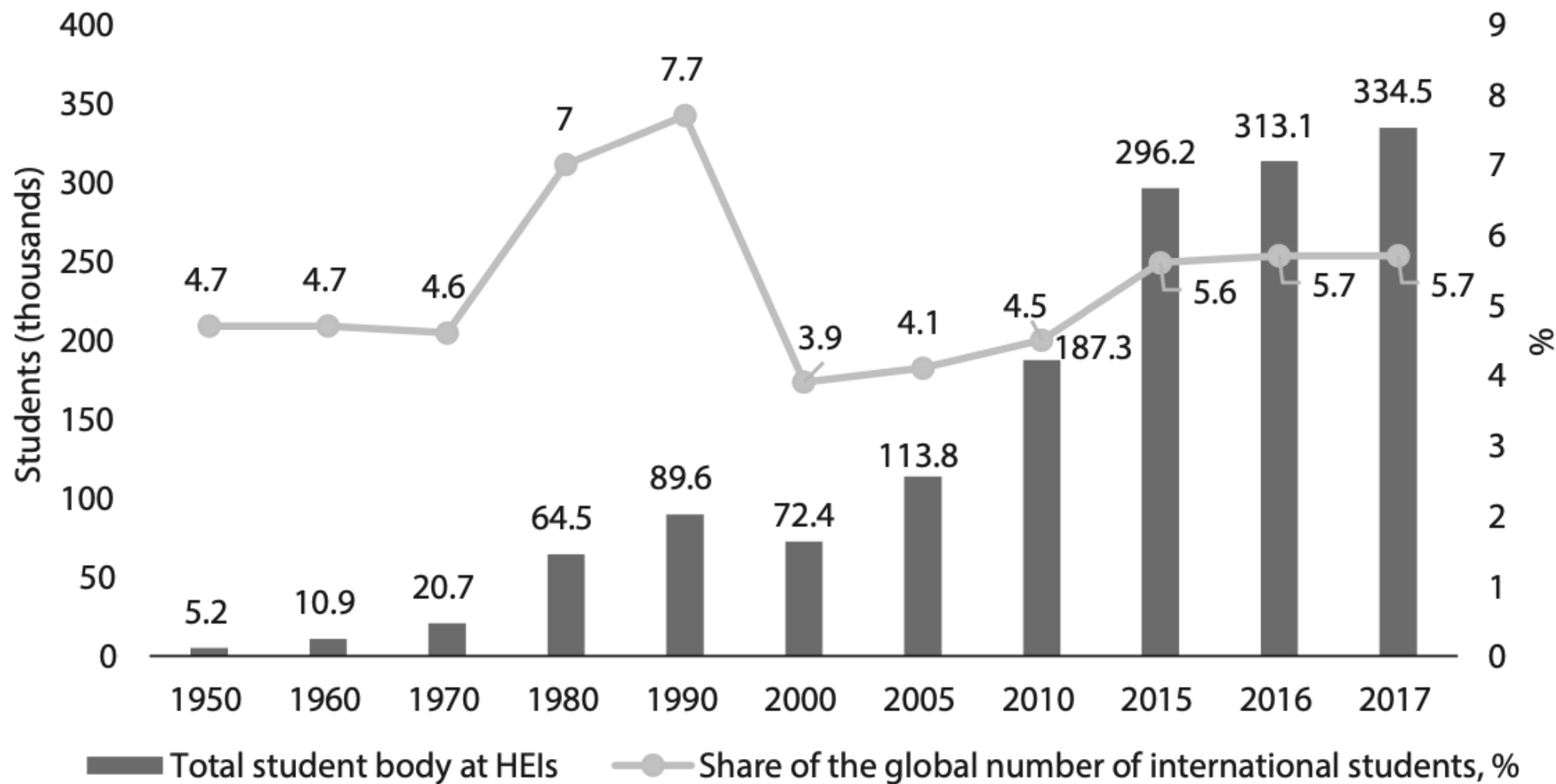
Mostly political motives / as the expense of Soviet Union

1950-s: focus on Eastern Europe

1960: University named after Patrice Lumumba

- Political project (focus on Africa, Asia and Latin America)

Late 1980-s: Soviet Union ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in terms of international students



**Figure 9.1. International students in the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and Russian Federation (in thousands). After the data of Aref'yev, 2019, p. 523.**

# Early post-soviet period (1990-s)

- Substantial role of international support
  - Soros program
  - MacArthur Foundation
  - TEMPUS, TESIS
- Direct financial support for faculty and students
- Faculty training / Internationalization of curriculum
- Translation/publishing projects

Universities in most cases did not have their own internationalization strategies

# State policy of university internationalization

- Internationalization of faculty and research staff
  - International labs
  - Academic Excellence Initiative (2013-2020)
    - % International faculty as a target indicator
- International students
  - International students as target indicator
  - Government quotas / financing // direct recruitment
  - University named after Patrice Lumumba – (1992) University of Peoples' Friendship University of Russia

# Research output

## Internationalization as QA-mechanism

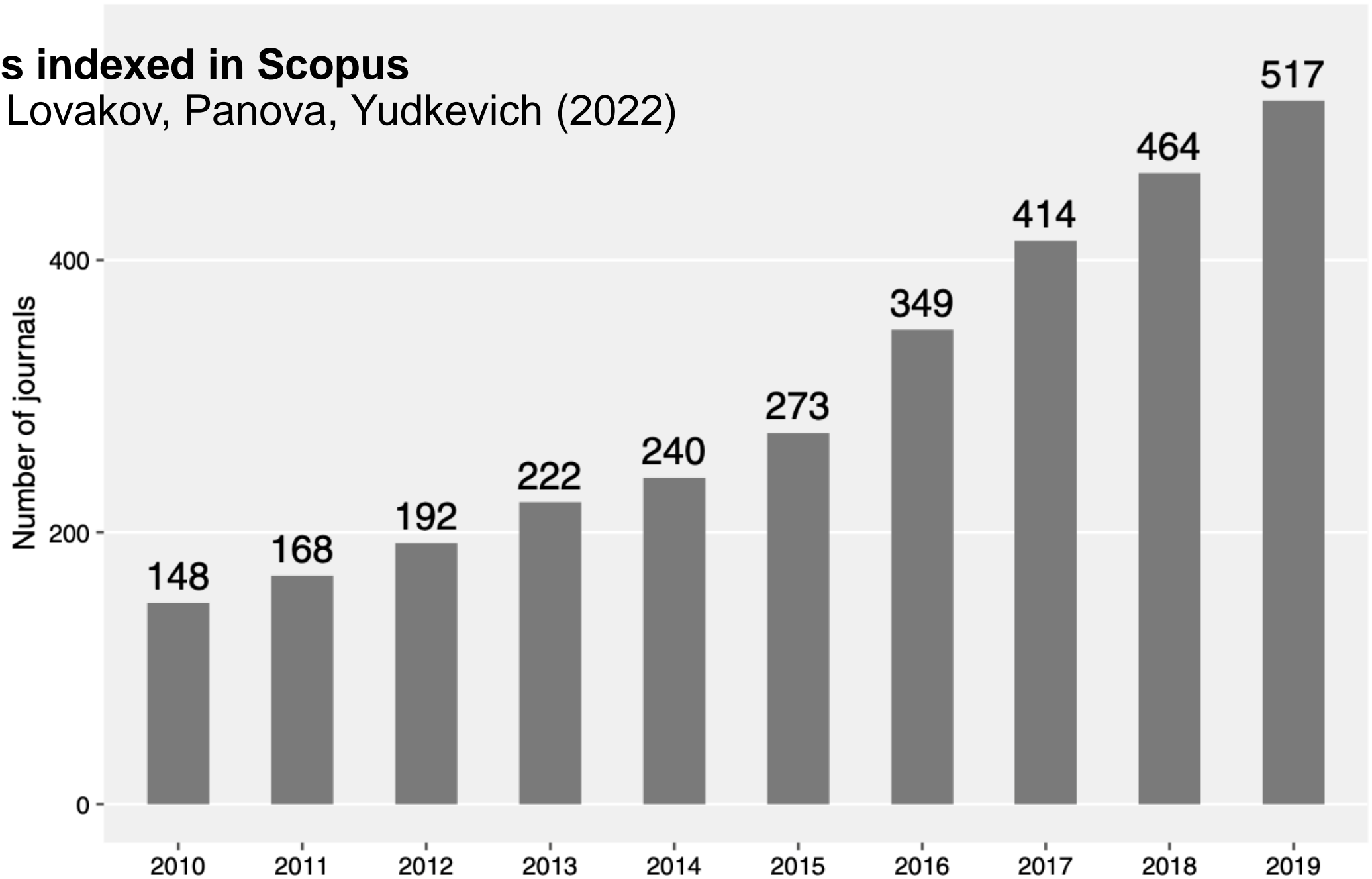
Publications in international journals as target indicator

- at individual level (salaries, grants)
- At institutional level (university performance (ex: AEI, various institutional grants/ programs)
- Visibility of Russian journals (Russian Science Citation Index)
- Inclusion of Russian journals in Scopus



# Journals indexed in Scopus

Source: Lovakov, Panova, Yudkevich (2022)



# Universities under war time

Tremendous shift in  
state priorities:  
including isolation  
trends

Zero autonomy of  
public universities

Move toward “**Sovereign** science”

Leaving international  
educational/research space

Loosing transparency and visibility

# Faculty brain drain

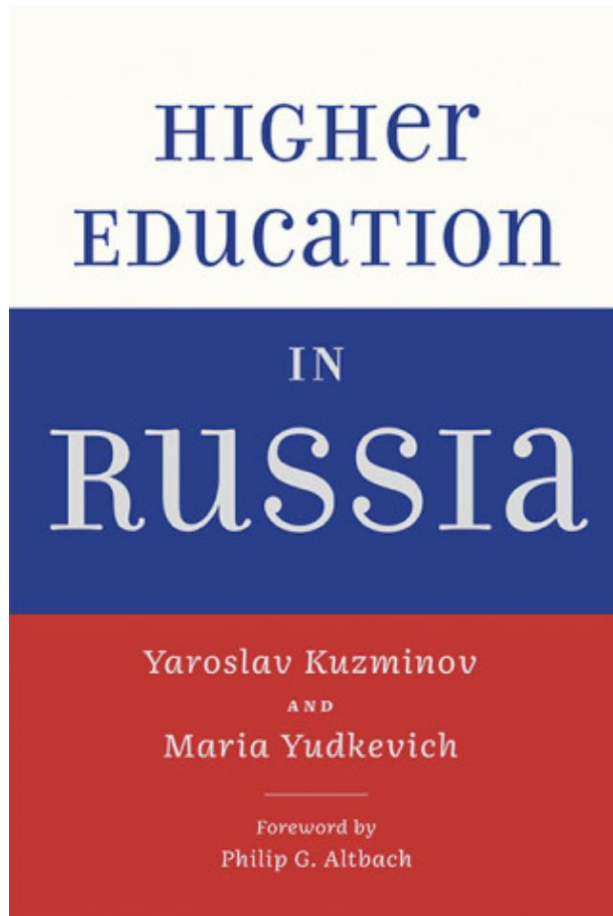
- Including international faculty
  - Part-time contracting / Double affiliations
- Transformation of communication and publication patterns
  - Cases against Russian scientists for “revealing national secrets”
  - Agents of foreign influence – are not allowed to work at public HE institutions
- Social Sciences VS STEM: different consequences for various disciplines

# Return to the Soviet model?

- **Awakening dormant institutions: increasing role of planning and state control**
- **Back to zero-agency: strict control over international communications**
  - Reporting on international contacts
  - Getting permissions for publishing in international journals
- **New regions as priority for international connections**
  - Shift to the East?
- **International student recruitments as a source of political power**
  - March 2023: returning the name of Patrice Lumumba to Peoples' Friendship University of Russia

## Key Facts

- Internationalization in education and research was Russian government policy during most historical periods. Beginning in the early 1990s it trickled down to the institutional level of universities and research institutes.
- International research connections had been very important for the Russian academic community from its birth and throughout its history. Periods of isolation, in spite of generally accepted ideas about the influence of the Iron Curtain during the Soviet period, were relatively short-lived.
- The Soviet Union ranked third among all countries in terms of the number of international students it accommodated. Most international students were citizens of the socialist countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Technical and engineering programs were among the most popular.



<https://www.press.jhu.edu/>

Code HRUSSIA30 for a 30% discount for US paperback sales

Code HNAF for 30% discount code for UK/EU sales via JHUP European Distributor, Wiley:

T: +44 (0) 1243 843291

E: [cs-books@wiley.co.uk](mailto:cs-books@wiley.co.uk)