

Medieval Eastern Europe

Christian Raffensperger

History 201

Hollenbeck Hall 331

MWF 10:20-11:20 A.M.

Spring Semester 2009

This class will deal with a different medieval Europe than is traditionally covered – the medieval Slavic world. The East, West, and South Slavs were involved to differing degrees in Western European affairs, but they had their own kingdoms, empires, wars, marriages, cities, etc. It is this Slavic world that will be examined in this class, particularly in the period from the ninth through the fifteenth centuries. During that time we will see pan-European interaction, transition to regionalism, and eventually into an early East-West divide based in three factors: religious division, Mongol occupation or control, and internal cohesion (or lack thereof). The history of medieval Eastern Europe, is a key part of wider European history that sets up the divisions into the more familiar Eastern and Western European worlds.

Due to the breadth of territory and time, this class will address themes throughout medieval Eastern Europe, including state formation; Christianization; interaction; and separation. Through examination of those themes and others, we will see the growth of the various political entities of Eastern Europe, their interaction with each other and Western Europe, and finally what makes them “eastern,” or “other.”

Writing Intensive – No Prerequisites

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Assignments and Deadlines

The format for this class is largely lecture, and thus attendance is a main requirement of the course (see Attendance Policy below), as is participation when we have discussion. There will be three exams which will divide up the material of the course. In addition to these exams, there will be multiple quizzes which are designed to keep you abreast of the reading and lecture.

We will also have one group presentation which will be part of the second paper and discuss Christianization. There are extensive guidelines for the groups presentation project which will be handed out separately.

Finally, there will also be three writing assignments:

The first paper is a discussion of the foundation stories of the various kingdoms that we are studying. Using the two primary sources on the Russian and Polish foundations, write a paper discussing their similarities and differences. You may also bring in material from the other foundation stories we have discussed, and the associated readings. This should be 3-4 pages in length, and will require only the sources provided in class. For all of your papers, please use Chicago Manual of Style footnotes.

The second paper will be an analysis of the conversion stories presented in class for the Eastern European kingdoms. Using the Russian conversion as your base example, compare it with

another of the conversions (just one) that we discussed in class. Use your experiences from the group presentation, as well as the resources provided for class. It will be 4-5 pages and should follow all guidelines from paper 1 as well.

The third paper will be on image of Eastern Europe, particularly the Slavic world presented in Henry of Livonia. Using Henry's writings, the other materials from class, and class lecture, discuss Henry's view of the Slavic world, why he holds that view, if you think that view is representative of a broader culture (if so, which?), and how that might impact historical developments. This paper will be 5-6 pages and should follow all of the guidelines from the first two papers.

If you need assistance for any of these assignments, please come and meet with me. I am happy to discuss study strategies, note taking, paper topics or outlines, or similar with you. If you would like writing help, the Writing Center is an excellent resource for paper-writing assistance.

The grades will be weighted as follows:

- Attendance: 5%
- Participation: 5%
- Exam 1: 10%
- Paper 1: 8%
- Group Presentation: 8%
- Exam 2: 15%
- Quizzes: 10%
- Paper 2: 10%
- Paper 3: 12%
- Final Exam: 17%

Readings

All readings will be posted on Moodle. You will be expected to have them read by the end of the week they are posted under *at the latest*. The primary sources that are posted on Moodle, or specifically designated texts must be printed and brought to class on the days we will be discussing them.

Schedule of Meetings and Assignments

Week 1 (January 12, 14, 16): Introduction and Perception of the Middle Ages
(*The Early Middle Ages 1; History of Byzantium 1*)

Introduction; What is Eastern Europe?; Why do we need to study medieval Eastern Europe?; The Middle Ages in the West; Byzantium

Week 2 (January 21, 23, No Class 1/19): Formation of Medieval Eastern European Kingdoms
(*Early Medieval Balkans 1; Realm of St. Stephen 1*)

The entry of the Slavs into European history; Serbs and Croats; Magyars invade the Carolingian Empire; Bulgars in Byzantium

Week 3 (January 26, 28, 30): Foundation of Rus' and Poland

(*Deeds of the Princes of the Poles 1; Russian Primary Chronicle 1; Beginnings of the Polish State*)

The creation of Poland; Scandinavian expansion in Eastern Europe; Foundation of Rus'; Byzantine connections

Week 4 (February 2, 4, 6): Idea of Christianization in Europe (Paper 1 Due Wednesday 2/4)

(East Central and Eastern Europe in the Early Middle Ages; Early Medieval Balkans 2)

Discussion of Eastern European Foundation stories; Discussion of conversion; Medieval conversion and its discontents; Moravian conversion; Bulgarian conversion as exemplar for medieval Eastern European conversion

Week 5 (February 9, 11, 13): Christianization of Eastern Europe

(“The Making of the Christian Kingdom in Hungary”; Cambridge History of Poland 1)

Polish conversion; Hungarian Conversion and the creation of St. Stephen

Week 6 (February 16, 18, 20): The Perils of Conversion (Exam 1 on 2/20)

(Medieval Russia 1; Early Slavs 1; Russian Primary Chronicle 2; Deeds of the Princes of the Poles 2)

Rusian conversion; Imperial entanglements

Week 7 (February 23, 25, 27): Attempted Conversion (Group Presentations)

Group presentations of conversions and discussion of problems and possibilities of conversion

Week 8 (March 2, 4, 6): Medieval Interaction (Paper 2 Due Monday 3/2)

(Russian Primary Chronicle 3; Deeds of the Princes of the Poles 3; “Reexamining Rus” 1; Cambridge History of Poland 2; Thietmar of Merseburg)

Medieval kings and kingdoms; Interaction of the entirety of medieval Europe; The problem with Poland; Internal struggles externalized

Week 9 (March 16, 18, 20): Imperial or not?

(“Reexamining Rus” 2; Realm of St. Stephen 2; Feudal Germany; Hastening Toward Prague; “Medieval German Expansion”)

Bohemia and Poland as contrasts; Hungarian succession crises; What is an empire, and who is a part of it?

Week 10 (March 23, 25, 27): Investiture Contest and a broader Europe

(Power and the Holy; “Evpraksia Vsevolodovna Between East and West”; TBD)

Iziaslav’s travels in Europe; Europe-wide struggles with investiture; Evpraksia Vsevolodovna

Week 11 (March 30, April 1, 3): Crusades (Exam 2 on 3/30)

(Bernard of Clairvaux; Crusades 1; Northern Crusades 1; Henry of Livonia 1)

Idea of Crusade; Expansion of power of papacy and “orthodoxy”; Wendish Crusades

Week 12 (April 6, 8, No Class 4/10): Orthodox v. “orthodox”

(Crusades 2; Northern Crusades 2; Europe in the High Middle Ages)

Fourth Crusade; Split in Eastern Europe; “Othering” of the Orthodox

Week 13 (April 13, 15, 17): Crusades against Slavs

(Henry of Livonia 2; *Northern Crusades* 3)
Baltic Crusades; Crusades against Rus'

Week 14 (April 20, 22, No Class 4/24): Invasion! (Paper 3 Due 4/20)
(*Medieval Russia* 2; *Cambridge History of Poland* 3)
Rise of the Mongols; Mongol Invasions of Rus'; Mongols in Central Europe

Week 15 (April 27, 29, May 1): Mongol World Order
(*Realm of St. Stephen* 3; *Medieval Russia* 3)
Creation of "the gate of Christendom"; Relations between Mongols and conquered peoples;
Golden Horde

Week 16 (May 4, 6) Europe Divided
(*Making of Europe*)
Creation of the idea of Eastern Europe; The usefulness of Eastern Europe as a tool for discussion
in the Middle Ages

Final Exam – Monday May, 11 12:00-3:00 P.M.

Missed Examinations, Papers, and Class Sessions

A good rule of thumb is do not miss anything. However, if you are ill or have a conflict and cannot make a class, notify me in advance or as soon after the class as is possible. *Do not miss examinations!* If you have a conflict, notify me a minimum of one week in advance and we can schedule an exam as close to the normal time as possible. If you miss an examination for reasons that are not discussed with me ahead of time or are not catastrophic you will receive a zero, which is much worse than an F in your overall grade. Late papers are accepted, but the grade will drop one full grade when turned in after class the day it is due. For each additional day thereafter (weekend day or weekday) that it is late, it will drop a fraction of a grade, for example—an A paper handed in after class will be a B paper, handed in the next day will be a B- paper, the next day a C+ paper.

Attendance Policy

As part of your grade for this class, and to get the most out of the class, you are required to attend on a regular basis. Attendance in this class is worth 5% of your grade, and attendance will be taken on a regular basis. If you are going to miss class, let me know in advance. If you accumulate 5 absences over the course of the semester, you will receive a grade of F for your attendance. If you miss 10 or more classes over the course of the semester you will receive a grade of zero for your attendance, much worse than an F when calculating your final grade.

Special Needs

Wittenberg University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for eligible students with disabilities. In keeping with this policy, if you are eligible for course accommodation due to a disability, please provide me with your self-identification letter from the academic services office, 208 Recitation Hall, during the first few weeks of the semester so that we may discuss appropriate arrangements.

If you have significant responsibilities outside of class that will impact your performance, e.g., an infant or young child, care for an aging parent, or a job that requires you to be on-call, please speak to the instructor as soon as possible, and we can discuss arrangements to make your classroom experience the same as everyone else's.

Weather-Related Concerns

Whenever weather becomes a problem, I shall do my best to adhere to the university guidelines. If the university cancels classes, there will be no class. If there is an exam scheduled or a deadline for a written assignment on a day when class is cancelled, you may assume that the exam or assignment will be due on the following class session.

Academic Honesty

Students in this course are expected to uphold the standards of Wittenberg's Code of Academic Integrity. At its most basic level, this means that you will not turn in someone else's writing as your own, quote from a source without proper acknowledgment, or provide a classmate with inappropriate help. You will be asked to submit papers and exams with the following statement followed by your signature: "I affirm that my work upholds the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity at Wittenberg, and that I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance." Sanctions for violating these rules range from receiving no credit for a particular assignment to failing the course for a significant act of academic dishonesty. If you are in doubt about any of these rules, please talk to me before submitting your work.