

Medieval Russia

Christian Raffensperger
History 251H/C - 1W
Fall Semester - 2012
MWF 11:30-12:30
Hollenbeck 318

Russia occupies a unique position between Europe and Asia. This class will explore the creation of the Russian state, and the foundation of the question of is Russia European or Asian? We will begin with the exploration and settlement of the Vikings in Eastern Europe, which began the genesis of the state known as "Rus'." That state was integrated into the larger medieval world through a variety of means, from Christianization, to dynastic marriage, and economic ties. However, over the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the creation of the crusading ideal and the arrival of the Mongols began the process of separating Rus' (becoming Russia) from the rest of Europe. This continued with the creation of power centers in NE Russia, and the transition of the idea of empire from Byzantium at its fall to Muscovy. This story of medieval Russia is a unique one that impacts both the traditional history of medieval Europe, as well as the birth of the first Eurasian empire.

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Assignments and Deadlines

The format for this class is lecture and discussion, and thus attendance is a main requirement of the course, as is participation.

As a way to track your progress on the readings, there will be a series of quizzes during class. All quizzes will be unannounced. However, common themes for the quizzes will be maps and identifications of main people and concepts discussed in the class. The best way to prepare for these quizzes is to keep up with reading and lecture. If you have questions, please ask!

Over the course of the semester, you will be required to write three papers. All of which will be roughly 5 pages in length. The papers must use Chicago Manual of Style footnotes to document your evidence. If you have questions about this, or any other aspect of the papers, please ask.

The first of these will be a primary source analysis paper in which you will compare multiple primary sources, discuss who wrote them, why they wrote them, when they wrote them and what they say. The goal is to understand how historians use primary sources and you should include examples of how those sources were used in class or in the secondary source readings in your paper. You must write one primary source analysis paper, but there will be two choices to choose from. The first of which will be based on the Ol'ga readings in Week 3 and the second on the Iaroslav's succession readings in Week 4.

The second paper everyone must write and that is an analysis of the points of view articulated in the Ostrowski and Halperin readings, which we will discuss in class during Week 10. The paper assignment will follow on the class discussion where we will break into groups to analyze different perceptions of the Mongol occupation. Your paper will be tailored to your group to contain an analysis of their position, backed up by what you have learned in class and from the readings, and then a broader overview of the way that Ostrowski and Halperin have characterized the Mongols in Rus'. Though the class discussion will be group based, I expect these papers to be written entirely individually.

The third paper will be a different type of analysis, comparing a primary source reading (or readings), with what we have learned in class and the secondary sources with a modern movie that we will watch. The first choice is "Alexander Nevsky" during Week 8 and the second will be "Ivan the Terrible" during Week 13. For the latter, you can obtain extra credit if you watch the second "Ivan the Terrible" movie (part 2, available in the library) on your own and incorporate it into your paper. These papers should address some of the following questions. How does this movie portray the title character? Does that portrayal conform to the historical portrait in the readings or in class, and how does it relate to the portrait from the primary sources? What factors might influence that portrayal, one way or another?

Finally, there will be three exams which will divide up the material in the course. The exams will not be cumulative, with the exception of one over-arching essay question on the final exam.

The grades will be weighted as follows:

Attendance: 5%

Participation: 5%

Exam 1: 15%

Exam 2: 15%

Quizzes: 10%

Primary Source Analysis Paper: 10%

Influence of the Mongols Paper: 10%

Secondary Source (Movie) Analysis Paper: 10%

Final Exam: 20%

Required Books

Janet Martin. *Medieval Russia 980-1584* (hereafter Martin)

Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings 860-1860s. ed. Daniel Kaiser and Gary Marker (hereafter Readings)

Portraits of Old Russia: Imagined Lives of Ordinary People, 1300-1725. Ed. Donald Ostrowski and Marshall T. Poe (hereafter Portraits)

Additional readings will be on Moodle

Schedule of Meetings and Assignments

Week 1 (August 20, 22, 24): The Early East Slavic World

(David Goldfrank et al, *A History of Russia* [Moodle]; Ibn Fadlan readings 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 15-18, 20, 21)

Introduction to the course; The early East Slavs and their neighbors in Eastern Europe

Week 2 (August 27, 29, 31): Early Rus'

(Martin ch. 1; *Russian Primary Chronicle 1* [Moodle]; Ibn Fadlan Readings 22, 23, 30, 32)

The calling of Riurik; Oleg and the unification of Rus'; Raids on Constantinople and the Caspian; Igor' and Ol'ga; Sviatoslav's raid on the Khazars and relocation of Rus'

Week 3 (September 3, 5, 7): Vladimir and the Christianization of Rus'

(Martin ch. 1; *Russian Primary Chronicle 2* [Moodle]; *De Cerimoniis* on Ol'ga; *PVL* on Ol'ga)

Vladimir and the establishment of Rus'; Ol'ga's Christianization; European orientation and integration; Vladimir's conversion of Rus'

Week 4 (September 10, 12, 14): Iaroslav the Wise and the Golden Age of Rus' (Primary Source Paper 1 Due 9/10)

(Martin chs. 2-3; *Russian Primary Chronicle 3*; *Deeds of the Princes of the Poles 3*; "Reexamining Rus'" 1; Thietmar of Merseburg)

Iaroslav Mudryi; Byzantine Appropriation; Primary Source exercise

Week 5 (September 17, 19, 21): The Riurikid State and Medieval Europe (Primary Source Paper 2 Due 9/17)

(Martin chs. 2-3; "Evpraksia Vsevolodovna Between East and West"; "Power and the Holy"; Readings, 25-37, 72-78)

Interconnectivity throughout Europe; Dynastic marriages; How Rus' is governed; Russian governmental infighting

Week 6 (September 24, 26, 28): Rus' Falls Apart (Exam 1 – Friday 9/28)

(Martin ch. 4; Tale of Igor's Campaign)

Role of the steppe peoples in Rus'; Dissolution of central control; Beginnings of Rus' as an "other" to the West

Week 7 (October, 1, 3, 5): Invasions from West and East

(Martin ch. 5; *Northern Crusades 3*; Henry of Livonia 2 [Recommended]; "Tale of the Destruction of Riazan" [Moodle]; Readings 83-87, 99-101, 104-107)

Creation of crusading ideal; Baltic Crusades and Crusades against Rus'; Mongols and Mongol Invasion

Week 8 (October 8, 10, 12): Alexander Nevsky and the Beginnings of the Rise of Moscow (Alexander Nevsky Movie Night – 10/8; Alexander Nevsky Paper due 10/12)

("Tale of the Life and Courage of the Pious and Great Prince Alexander" [Moodle]; Martin, ch. 6; Portraits # 2)

Discussion of role of Alexander Nevsky; Impact of the Mongols in Rus'; Moscow v. Tver; Use of the iarlyk; Attempts at independence and domination

Week 9 (October 17, 19, No Class October 15): Rise of Moscow, cont.

(Martin ch. 7, 261-74; Portraits #3, 22)

The role of the church; Transfer of ideological power to Moscow; Interactions with Poland-Lithuania; First civil war

Week 10 (October 22, 24, 26): Role of the Mongols in Russia

(Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde* [Moodle]; Ostrowski, *Muscovy and the Mongols* [Moodle]; Cherniavsky, “Khan or Basileus” [Moodle])

Discussion/Debate over role of Mongols in Russia – Halperin v. Ostrowski

Week 11 (October 29, 31, November 2): The Republic of Novgorod (Mongol Debate Paper Due 10/29; Exam 2 – Friday 11/2)

(Martin 275-97, ch. 9; Portraits #11, 15; Readings, 54–59, 71–72, 90–101, 108–14, 122–24, 128–30; “Novgorod” [Moodle])

Hansa ties; Proto-democracy; Conquest by Moscow

Week 12 (November 5, 7, 9): Ivan IV and the Creation of Empire

(Martin ch. 11; “Ivan IV” [Moodle]; Portraits #3; Readings, 147–63)

Ivan’s youth; Ivan as Tsar; Oprichnina; East meets West; Kazan and Astrakhan

Week 13 (November 12, 14, 16, 19): Ivan the Terrible in History

(Halperin, “The Minority of Ivan IV” [Moodle]; Ivan IV’s Correspondence with Andrei Kurbsky [Moodle]; Halperin, “Ivan’s IV’s Insanity” [Moodle] (Optional))

Discussion of the image of Ivan the Terrible in history using his own documents as well as modern commentary; “Ivan the Terrible” Movie (in class 11/16 and 11/19)

Week 14 (November 26, 28, 30): The End of the Romanovs and the Time of Troubles (Ivan the Terrible Paper Due 11/26)

(“Fedor Ivanovich and Boris Godunov” [Moodle])

Fjodor Ivanich “the Bell Ringer”; Boris Godunov and the difficult succession

Week 15 (December 3, 5, 7): The Time of Troubles, cont.

(“The Time of Troubles” [Moodle])

Foreign Invasion; Internal Dissent; Rise of the Romanovs

Final Exam – Friday, December 14, 8:00-11:00 A.M.

Missed Examinations 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.

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 3 unexcused absences over the course of the semester, you will receive a grade of F for your attendance. If you miss 7 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. You are solely responsible for signing the attendance sheet, or notifying me of your absence, as proof of your presence in class.

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 the university has not cancelled class, but I am unable or unwilling to risk traveling, I will do my best to post a notice to this effect on as early as possible. I will do my best not to cancel class if at all possible.

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.