History 296  
Russia Before Peter the Great

This course examines the history of Russia from the 9th until the late 17th century, with particular attention to several major historiographical debates concerning medieval and early modern Russia. We will explore the nature of the Rus’ lands as a cultural crossroads and attempt to assess the varying impacts of steppe peoples, Byzantine Christianity, and contacts with Europeans on the social and political life of this vast region. We will study the charged debate concerning the Mongol Empire and its influence on the Rus’ lands. We will examine the nature of political authority in early modern Russian history asking if it is most useful to see the Muscovite tsardom as an unlimited autocracy, as governed by a particular sort of consensual rule, or analyzed in some other way. Historians have long debated the role of Ivan the Terrible and we will look at a variety of interpretations of his era. We will also study in some detail questions of continuity and change in the 17th c. with particular attention to issues of the ‘modernization’ and ‘secularization’ of the polity and popular responses to it.

Course Requirements

1) Students are expected to attend all lectures, discussions, and films and stay current with the reading.

2) Papers, Examinations, Class Participation, Grades

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage of Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>Document Analysis due on February 19</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Review of Halperin due on March 9</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Historiographical essay due May 4</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam due no later than 11am May 16</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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Late paper policy:
· For an extension to be considered, the student must consult with the instructor in advance of the due date.
· If the student presents a valid excuse, an extension of up to one week will be granted.
· No more than one extension will be granted, that is, the other two papers must be turned in on time.
· Unexcused late papers will be penalized a grade step for each day (24 hours) late, that is, A goes to A-, A- goes to B+, etc.
· Credit for the course will not be given if all written work is not turned in.

3) Reading Assignments: All books and articles assigned in this course are available on Regular Reserve or ERes. The following books have been ordered at the bookstore:
Christian, *A History of Russia, Central Asia and Mongolia*

Dmytryshyn, *Medieval Russia; a source book* [please order through Amazon or HalfPriceBooks.com]

Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde*

Pavlov and Perrie, *Ivan the Terrible, Profiles in Power*

4) For those wishing to consult a "standard" textbook, the following are on reserve for History 108:

Freeze, *Russia, A History*

Evtuhov, et.al. eds, *A history of Russia : peoples, legends, events, forces*

Riasanovsky, *A History of Russia*

**A final note:** Please turn off cell phones, pagers, beeping watches and the like for the entire class period; once class has begun, please refrain from taking breaks and leaving the room.

**Lectures and Readings (Approximate Schedule)**

**Mon., Feb. 5: Introduction**

**Feb 7-16: Kievan Rus**

- Wed., Feb 7: Physical setting; Islamic civilizations of Eurasia
  Christian, pp. 3-20; 304-326

- Fri., Feb 9: Origins of Rus’
  Christian, pp. 327-346
  Dmytryshyn, *Medieval Russia; a source book*, pp. 2-19, 22-25

**Mon., Feb. 12: Structures of the Kievan’ State**

Christian, pp. 353-367

Dmytryshyn, *Medieval Russia; a source book*, pp. 47-64


- Wed., Feb. 14: Adoption of Christianity; Culture and Society
  Christian, pp. 346-48


Fri., Feb 16: Discussion: Assessing the Kievan period

**Document Analysis due on February 19**

**Feb. 19-March 5: The Appanage Era and The Mongols**

- Mon., Feb. 19: Diversity and Dissolution of Rus’
  Christian, pp. 367-69

- Wed., Feb. 21: Chingis Khan and the Building of an Empire
Begin reading Christian, pp.385-429

Fri., Feb 23: Storm from the East [in class video]
Finish reading Christian, pp.385-429

Mon., Feb 26: Rus’ and the Golden Horde
Dmytryshyn, *Medieval Russia; a source book*, pp. 146-152; 171-179
Begin reading Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde*

****Please reserve the evening the Wednesday Feb 28 for the viewing of Andrei Rublev. Morning class cancelled.

Fri, March 2: Rus’ and the Golden Horde
Finish reading Halperin, *Russia and the Golden Horde*

Mon., March 5: Discussion: The Mongols and Rus’

March 7-March 23: Rise and Consolidation of the Muscovite Tsardom
Wed., March 7: Moscow and Its Rivals
Dmytryshyn, *Medieval Russia; a source book*, pp. 190-209

**Book Review of Halperin due on March 9**

March 9 &12: The Dynastic Wars of the mid-15th c.

Crummey, *The Formation of Muscovy, 1304-1613*, pp. 56-82
Kollmann, “Muscovite Patrimonialism” [eres]

March 14-19: Building the Muscovite State

Crummey, *The Formation of Muscovy, 1304-1613*, pp. 84-115
Dmytryshyn, *Medieval Russia; a source book*, pp. 221-236
Kollmann, “Ritual and Social Drama at the Muscovite Court”


Wed., March 21 Discussion
Fri., March 23: Church, State and society by the early 16th c.

March 24-April 1: Break Week

April 2-April 11: Muscovy in the Era of Ivan IV (The Terrible, the Awesome)

Mon, April 2: Early Ivan
Please reserve the evening the Wednesday, April 4 for the viewing of Eisenstein, Ivan the Terrible, Part I. Morning class cancelled.

Fri., April 6.: Reform and Empire
   Pavlov and Perrie, pp. 41-106

Mon., April 9: Crazy Ivan? The Oprichnina
   Pavlov and Perrie, pp 107-207
   Dmytryshyn, Medieval Russia; a source book, pp.305-308

Wed., April 11: Discussion

April 13-18: The Time of Troubles
   April 13-16: Godunov and the beginnings of the Troubles
   Crummey, The Formation of Muscovy, 1304-1613, pp. 205-233


   Dmytryshyn, Medieval Russia; a source book, pp. 355-78

Wed., April 18: Discussion

April 20- May 11: 17th c. Muscovy

April 20-25: Evolution of the state: politics in the center and the provinces
   Kivelson, “The Devil Stole His Mind” American Historical Review, vol. 98, no. 3 (June 1993)

Rowland, “Did Muscovite Literary Ideology Place Limits on the Power of the Tsar (1540s-1662)?” Russian Review, April 1990


Begin reading and thinking about the following three essays:
   Marshall Poe, “The Truth about Muscovy”
April 27: Discussion: Politics and the Ulozhenie of 1649

Muscovite society


May 2 : Alexei, Nikon and the Schism

May 4 : Varieties of protest


**Historiographical essay due May 4**

May 7: Discussion

May 9: Wrapping up: Alexei Mikhailovich and his son Peter

May 11: Last Class

**Final Exam due no later than 11am May 16**