

## RUSSIAN HISTORY – Early Modern Period

**Overview** This was the period when Russia's centuries-long disunity and the submission to the Mongols came to an end, and Russia became independent of the Golden Horde. However, the princes of Kievan Rus failed to unite and strengthen their territories against the nomadic invasions bringing an end to the Kievan state. The collapse of Kievan Rus was followed by the rise of Muscovy. The importance of Muscovy was increased after the fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Empire in 1453. With the death of the last tsar of the Rurik Dynasty, there was a political crisis which resulted in political turmoil, bringing Russia into a period known as the Time of Troubles that would last till the Romanov Dynasty. The troubles eased off during the reformist rulers Peter I the Great and Catherine II the Great. These two rulers created a modern Russian state, and they introduced significant changes in building a civilized Russian society, building modern army, and institutions.

### EVENTS

#### 16<sup>th</sup> Century

##### Muscovite Period

**Disunity Comes to an End:** During the era of Ivan III Russia's centuries-long disunity came to an end, as Ivan III annexed most of the other principalities to Muscovy. Likewise, the centuries of submission to the Mongols came to end when, in 1480, Ivan III officially declared Russia independent of the Golden Horde.

Before he could gather Rus' lands beyond Muscovy's borders, Ivan III had to secure the domains of his father, Vasily II, who had followed the custom then current of dividing his realm among his five sons into appanages.

Ivan III believed that one principality with five princes, each with local authority, was a formula for instability and weakness. He used a combination of force and diplomacy to push his brothers aside and consolidate control over Muscovy. When Ivan III's brothers died and did not leave heirs, their territories reverted to Ivan III. Ivan III continued this process of gathering the Rus' lands together, expanding and centralizing the Muscovite state.

He also incorporated Novgorod under Muscovy's control in 1470. Then in 1478 Ivan III once again invaded and seized the city. That acquisition alone almost doubled Muscovy's size.

When Tver, Muscovy's main rival, made an alliance with Lithuania in 1485, Ivan III invaded the principality and also incorporated it into Muscovy.

Ivan III also expanded Russia's borders westward at the expense of Lithuania. He used both diplomacy and military force against the Lithuanians, and in 1503 won considerable territory that had once belonged to Kievan Rus' from them.

Governing and defending an expanded Russia required the creation of a small bureaucracy and more professional armed forces. Ivan III appointed governors and district chiefs to administer Russia's new territories. He arranged for the new territories to provide Moscow with revenue, most of which went to support the army, through a system of providing rations (kormlenie).

The ration system both enhanced the independent authority of regional governors, and encouraged corruption, since they were allowed to keep the surplus of what they collected.

In order to stop administrative abuses, a national law code *Sudebnik* was passed in 1497. This code standardized judicial authority and limited peasant mobility.

Ivan III relentlessly increased his powers as Grand Prince and called himself *Tsar* of all Russia. His claims were publicly supported by the Russian Orthodox Church, which strongly supported the evolution of absolutism in Moscow.

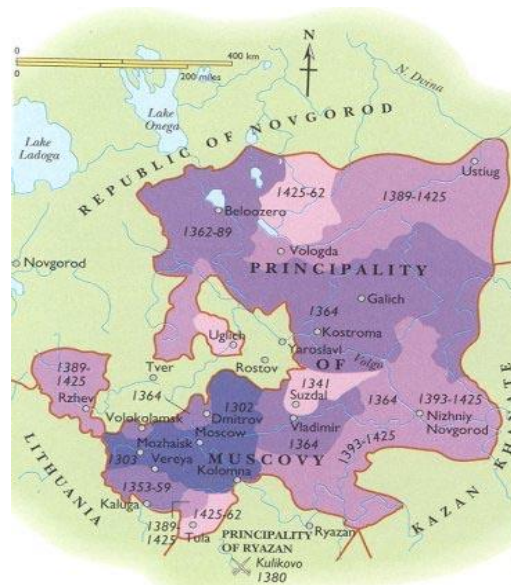
**Theory of the Third Rome:** It was under Ivan III that Russian beliefs in an imperial mission took on a new shape. Ivan's marriage to the niece of the last Byzantine emperor prompted him to proclaim himself the protector of all Orthodox churches and also to insist that Russia had succeeded Byzantium as the *Third Rome*. Accordingly, Ivan III entitled himself *Grand Prince of all the Rus'* (Velikiy kniaz vseja Rusi). His claims were publicly supported by the Russian Orthodox Church, which strongly supported the evolution of absolutism in Muscovy.

The concept of Muscovy being the *Third Rome* gained importance after the fall of Constantinople to Sultan Mehmet II of the Ottoman Empire in 1453.

This idea blossomed during the reign of Ivan III, who married Sophia Paleologue, niece of the last Byzantine Emperor, Constantine XI, allowing Ivan to claim he was the heir to the fallen Byzantine Empire.

The theory of Muscovy as the *Third Rome* evolved as a result of the prior development of political thought in Russia, the growth of national consciousness during the years of reunification of the Russian lands, final liberation from Mongol rule, and the consolidation of the independent Russian state.

The temporary loss of legitimate royal authority following the demise of the Rurikid dynasty in 1598, when Tsar Fedor Ivanovich died without an heir and Boris Godunov, a boyar, defeated rival boyars to become tsar, led to a political crisis period known as *the Time of Troubles*, which was characterized by dynastic struggle, devastating famine, widespread uprisings, and invasion by Polish and Swedish armies. It nearly resulted in the shattering of the Muscovite state, but finally ended in 1613 with the establishment of the Romanovs as the ruling dynasty.



Pic. 10 Map shows how Muscovy grew, 1300-1462'

## 17th Century

**Time of Recovery:** When the Romanov dynasty came to power, Russia gradually recovered from the Time of Troubles. This occurred under the first three tsars, Michael, Alexis and Fyodor III. In comparison to the decades that preceded it, the early Romanov era was relatively stable, but difficult nonetheless. The government was forced to spend beyond its limits and attempted to extract more revenue from the common people by imposing additional taxes.

When Michael Romanov took the throne the situation in Moscow was unpromising. Large areas of the state were still occupied by the Poles and Swedes; the treasury was empty and the economy was severely disrupted.

The situation was so bad that he was soon forced to approach the wealthy families for a loan. Russian merchants were able to maintain contacts with the outside world which was of considerable help in the treasury's recovery. Peasants, merchants, wealthy families and foreign traders all contributed to the growth of the Russian economy.

Church and State were closer in Russia during the reign of Michael Romanov than at any time previously. Michael's father, the Metropolitan Filaret, was both the real power behind the throne, as well as head of the Orthodox Church until his death in 1633.

Russia was at peace during Michael Romanov's reign. A treaty with Sweden in 1617 left Russia in control of Novgorod, but denied it access to the Baltic coast. A 1618 truce with Poland lasted until 1632; two years of fighting were followed by a peace treaty signed in 1634.

Alexis Romanov's reign in the 17th century was a period of change for Russia. A group at the tsar's court became the first 'Westernizers' and Alexis chose Morozov, Nashchokin and Matveyev as his advisors. Alexis was dependent on advisors in the early part of his reign and Morozov directed the affairs of state at the beginning of his rule.

During his reign Alexis often followed the advice of his boyar advisors, whose greed and corruption provoked rebellions by peasants and Cossacks in 1648, 1662 and 1670-1671. The oppressive conditions of the peasants' lives were the main reason for this rebellion in 1670-1671 led by Cossack Stenka Razin.

Another significant event in his reign was the schism in the Russian Orthodox Church. This was the result of reforms in the church liturgy to correct errors that had been made over time in translating Greek texts into Russian. These reforms, included a modification of the sign of the cross to conform to Greek usage, and some restrictions were placed on the church's acquisition of additional lands.

These ritual changes met with strong disapproval from many, particularly traditional followers of the Orthodox faith, who became known as Old Believers (Starovery or Staroobriadtsy) and led by Avvakum. They separated from the official Russian Orthodox Church after 1666, and remain a small but significant sect within the Orthodox tradition to this day.

## 18<sup>th</sup> Century

**Westernization, Age of Reforms - Promoting Enlightenment Ideas:** At the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Russia was still considered by Europeans as distant, backward, partially Asiatic and few viewed the country positively. By the end of the century Russia was recognized as a major European power. The growth of European influence on Russia, a process known as Westernization, continued throughout the century. Two rulers, Peter I the Great and Catherine II the Great, played important roles in this process. Each of their reigns was an era of both internal reform-based on European models, and expansion abroad.

However, there was at least one major difference between their reigns. The reign of Peter involved serious changes in important institutions. Peter created the modern Russian state, and expanded the government's

activities into most areas of national life. In addition, Peter founded the modern Russian army, built Russia's first major industrial base, and forced the country's elite to adopt certain Western customs and habits.

Peter I's most important administrative reforms were financial, which were designed to gain more revenue from the Russian people to feed his war machine. He collected more revenue he collected in 1701 was nearly triple that collected in 1681. He taxed everything from beards, beehives, and Old Believers to chimney stacks, ice blocks, watermelons, and non-Orthodox marriages.

He even introduced a head tax, which was a capitation tax paid by every male peasant and by urban artisans and burghers in 1723.

Peter I had great influence on education in the 18th century. A modernized Russian alphabet replaced Church Slavonic. The School of Mathematics and Navigation was founded in Moscow in 1699 and was soon followed by schools of engineering, artillery and surgery. The Naval Academy in St. Petersburg was opened in 1715 and the Academy of Sciences was founded in 1725.

Despite his reforms, he was a product of the Russian political tradition. He believed that autocracy alone could establish and guarantee the power and greatness of Russia. Thus, he insisted that the nobility serve the state and that the people as a whole accept without question the state's demands and restrictions.

During Catherine's reign, St. Petersburg was beautified with the construction of new buildings. Catherine was also a patron of the arts, corresponding with leading thinkers of Europe's Enlightenment such as the French philosophers Montesquieu, Voltaire and Diderot. She issued her *Nakaz (Instruction)*, in the hope that it would be a major Enlightenment achievement. Catherine, firmly believed that Russia required autocratic rule, and left serfdom, an institution condemned by the Enlightenment, untouched.

Under Catherine the Great, the gap between the increasingly Europeanized educated elite, and the people in poverty was wider and deeper than ever.

### **Discussion/Questions**

1. Why did Ivan III centralize principalities under Moscow?
2. Why did the theory of the Third Rome not gain wide acceptance?
3. What factors led to the Time of Troubles?
4. How did Russia recover from the *Time of Troubles*? Why did Russia find itself in the middle of two wars during the time of recovery? What was the reason for the uprising, known as the 'copper rebellion' in Moscow in 1662.
5. What was the relationship between the church and the state?
6. What led to a split in the Orthodox Church?
7. What were the outcomes of Peter the Great's reforms? How did the Russian people react to his reforms? Why did Slavophiles denounce them?
8. How was Russian society affected by Enlightenment ideas?
9. Why was Catherine the Great unsuccessful in applying Enlightenment ideas in Russian culture?

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## POLITICAL HISTORY

### GOVERNMENT

**Oprichnina and Zemshchina:** In 1564, Ivan the Terrible, to reduce the boyars (nobles) power, took his followers with him and he left Moscow and settled in Alexanderovskaya Sloboda, and announced his intension to abdicate. The boyars begged him to return to Moscow and continue his duty. Ivan IV agreed on the condition that he be given complete authonomy. Ivan IV returned to Moscow and divided his realm into two separate states. The first state, the *Oprichnina* was completely controlled by Ivan IV and his loyal militia, the *Oprichniki*. The rest of Russia would be ruled by the *Zemshchina*, the Boyars.

**Time of Troubles Period (Smutnoe vremya):** During the *Time of Troubles* which followed the death of Boris Godunov in 1603, pretenders appeared, and rival boyars created a weak government and autocracy. The Rurikid dynasty had come to an end, leaving the Empire without leadership. Russia faced dynastic struggles, famine, uprisings, and invasion by Polish and Swedish armies. This chaotic period ended in 1613 with the appearance of a new dynasty, the Romanovs.

### Early Romanovs Period:

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Russia's autocratic form of government, while cruel and oppressive by European standards, enabled Moscow to control its vast domains. The royal family, the court, and the administrative bodies preserved their essential nature in that they provided central coordination to mobilize people and distribute resources in the provinces. *Mestnichestvo*, an elite lineage hierarchy, determined entry into the administrative bodies, but afterwards promotion was based on merit. The Boyar Duma and *Zemskii Sobor* (Town Council) were not that powerful, and uninstitutionalized, but they sometimes played a very important role in the formation of state policy.

One of the institutions that was neglected for centuries was serfdom. By the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Russian serfdom, which had developed gradually over a period of about 150 years beginning in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, developed into an increasingly harsh system.

**Westernization:** When Peter the Great ascended to the throne, he began his reign with the modernization of the Russian government based on techniques used in Europe. By creating the modern Russian state, he introduced significant changes in important institutions, founded the modern Russian army, built Russia's first major industrial base, and forced the country's elite to adopt certain Western customs and habits.

Peter I's most important administrative reforms were financial, which were designed to collect more revenue from the Russians to finance his wars. He taxed everything, and even introduced a head tax (soul tax) from every male peasant. Anyone who resisted his orders were punished by a political police known as the *Preobrazhensky Prikaz*.

Those who suffered the most from the Peter's policies were the peasants. Peter paid for his expensive projects by raising their taxes drastically, and serfdom was strengthened and made even more oppressive.

Despite his reforms, he came from an autocratic political tradition, believing that autocracy alone could establish and guarantee the power and greatness of Russia. Thus, he believed that the nobility should serve the state and that his subjects should accept without question the state's demands and restrictions. He wanted to create what he called a 'regular state', adopting European patterns of government, with Sweden and England as his preferred models.

Peter replaced founded colleges to replace the old chanceries, with responsibilities for specific areas such as foreign affairs, the army, the navy, and state revenue, and wanted to ensure that professional, qualified officials ran the colleges and the government. Nobles were required to have training and skill to work for the state, and promotions were based on merit and experience. His *Table of Ranks* was created for military, civilian, and court service in 1722, and introduced a promotion system based on personal ability and performance instead of birth and genealogy. However, none of these measures worked as planned, since Russia lacked trained officials to run the bureaucracy.

Peter also instituted church reform by abolishing the Patriarchate and replacing it with an administrative board called the *Holy Synod*, where senior bishops were appointed by the Emperor. As a result, the church became a constituent component of the state.

**Enlightenment:** Catherine attempted to change the social and cultural structure of the monarchy to give it a legal foundation similar to the 18<sup>th</sup> century European legal monarchy. She corresponded with leading thinkers of Europe's Enlightenment such as the French philosophers Montesquieu, Voltaire and Diderot, and issued her *Nakaz (Instruction)* in the hope that it would be a major Enlightenment achievement. Her *Nakaz* was compiled to be used as a guide for an elected Legislative Commission she created to write a new law code, but she never gave the Commission the right to limit her power. Although Catherine the Great was a proponent of Enlightenment principles, she firmly believed that Russia required autocratic rule, and left serfdom, an institution condemned by the Enlightenment, untouched. Instead, she extended and strengthened serfdom, and left serfs with no legal protection against abuse.

In order to prevent rebellions and recognizing the danger at the provincial level, Catherine II decided to create new local government institutions, provinces and districts, in which the nobility would play a major role. This decision was promulgated in the Statute on Provincial Administration in 1775 and the Law on Provincial Police in 1782. The reforms abolished the huge provinces and divided Russia into 41 (later 50) smaller provinces, each headed by an appointed governor. Each province was further sub-divided into 10 districts.

She also issued the Charter to the Nobility (1785) in provinces, districts and cities which granted them the rights to keep their property, exempted them from corporal punishment, and allowed them to set up their own assemblies and appoint local officials. This form of local government in the provinces, districts and cities lasted until 1917.

Her son Paul reintroduced government centralization by restoring some of the central departments abolished by Catherine the Great. The Senate remained the supreme judicial authority. He reversed the policy for nobles enshrined in the *Charter of the Nobility* that was introduced by his mother by abolishing most of their privileges. He also increased taxes on noble estates, insisted on much tighter discipline in the army and included the section that made nobles immune from corporal punishment. By issuing a decree

that restored the serfs' right to petition the Tsar, reducing their work load during weekdays, and prohibiting the sale of serfs without land he made powerful enemies. In 1797, he introduced a decree affecting the territories belonging to the state, and the village.

### Discussion/Questions

1. Why did Ivan the Terrible divide his realm into two separate states?
2. How did Russia recover from the *Time of Troubles*? Why did Russia find itself in the middle of two wars during the time of recovery?
3. What were the outcomes of Peter the Great's reforms? How did the state structure change under his Westernization process? What was the relationship between the church and the state?
4. How was Russian society affected by Enlightenment ideas?
5. Why was Catherine the Great unsuccessful in applying Enlightenment principles to the Russian administration?

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### MILITARY

It was the Mongols who contributed to the collapse of the Kievan state in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, and the subsequent development of the new Russian state, known as the Muscovite state. When the Mongols conquered Kievan Rus', they introduced many new ideas, customs, and most importantly the idea of complete and absolute power, and militarism. At the military level, the Russians not only adopted Mongol tactics, but also began to organize their own armies according to Mongol models to the point that almost all Russian military institutions in the 14<sup>th</sup> century could be traced back to the Mongols.

**Muscovite state:** At the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, after the demise of the Kievan state, the rulers of the Muscovite state saw the need to expand their army that consisted of a cavalry of seasonal landholding élite, infantry, artillery, engineers, and a logistics corps. Russian princes also used friendly Mongols and Cossacks on different occasions. The landholding élite was required to provide all the training and military supplies. It was during the reign of Ivan III that the military transformation was realized with the inclusion of servitor-landlords, *pomeshchiki*, who were compensated with land in conditional tenure, *pomest'e*, in return for their service in the military. To expand the army, the state also recruited infantry militias from the peasants, but they needed to be trained.

**Streltsy:** To improve the Russian army's capacity and to catch up with the developments of the European militaries, Russia began to create special regiments of artillery and musketeers (*streltsy*) in 1550. By the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century there were about 30,000 cavalry, and around 20,000 musketeers, and the number of artillery pieces reached 3,500; in addition to the growing artillery numbers, fortifications became progressively stronger with the replacement of wood with stone.

**Oprichniki:** Ivan the Terrible, to protect himself and his new territory the *oprichnina* against the boyars' attacks also created a private army of enforcers and executioners called *oprichniki* to hunt down his opponents.

**Mestnichestvo (Precedence):** Muscovy did not have a standing army. Instead, its military forces were built around gentry cavalymen who did part-time service for life, mustering for service when called to campaigns or to defend the realm. In order to stop the abuse of the system of *Mestnichestvo*, a seniority system based on ancestry, Ivan the Terrible issued a decree that the precedence of the gentry did not apply during military campaigns.

**European Style Regiments and Foreign Mercenaries:** It was during the time of the Romanovs that Moscow's army was upgraded and to bring the Russian military up to Western standards new-style regiments were created along European lines. They adopted Western norms of organization and equipment, and brought thousands of foreign mercenaries and officers from western and central Europe, and as an alternative to the noble levies and musketeers, created new-style regiments. These units were permanently established only in the 1640s, at the end of the *Thirteen Years' War*. Under Aleksei Romanov, the new-style regiments reached nearly 100,000 soldiers, and Russia's first Western-style warships were constructed. New infantry units were armed with more modern weapons, such as flintlock muskets and handguns.

Peter the Great consolidated the military reforms of his predecessors, but did not follow the old order completely. His military reforms had a devastating impact on the Russian population through the creation of a set of institutions to recruit, train, equip, finance and administer the military.

He carried out a complete modernization of the Russian army, and founded the Russian navy to wage war against the Ottomans in the south and the Swedes in the north. With Peter the Great, Russia had a professional army, like the Preobrazhenskii and Semenovskii Regiments, and navy that could compete with any European power. He used military technology and organization based on European norms, creating a hybrid military system with predominantly Russian characteristics.

**New system of Conscription:** When Peter the Great decided to expand his army promises of increased pay were initially used to attract more recruits. However, in 1705 Peter the Great introduced a new system of conscription by dividing the country into blocks of twenty peasant households, every year demanding each household to supply a man who would be drafted for life into the army's ranks. The selection was made by the serf owner, but sometimes peasant communities were allowed to make the decision. However, sometimes Peter the Great arbitrarily raised the numbers of draftees in response to the progress of a war. This system resulted in creating an army of 300,000 that was much heavier on cavalry than the Europeans. Compared with previous eras, there had been dramatic improvements in the equipping, organizing and training of the army. With the new recruitment system, the Russian army did not include part-time soldiers, they were all conscripts, unlike many European armies that included large proportion of foreign mercenaries. The Russian army was homogenous by having the great majority of the soldiers of Great Russian and Orthodox background, and divisions based on class had been reduced - at least a third of the officer corps was of non-aristocratic background by 1720.

As he had done with the land forces, Peter the Great also expanded Russia's naval capability. In particular, he established a Baltic fleet that was comprised of nearly 800 support vessels and 50 warships, and ordered the construction of Kronstadt, a naval base on Kotlin Island.

Peter the Great melted church bells for artillery pieces. To finance his army, Peter the Great raised taxes, added new ones, he even taxed beards, and introduced a soul (poll or head) tax that required every male peasant and the male residents living in cities and towns to pay an annual tax to the state. The Russian military required weapons, therefore he actively promoted Russian industry by opening metal factories.

**Table of Ranks:** He set up the *Table of Ranks* in 1722 which lasted until the Bolshevik Revolution, copying Danish, Prussian, and Swedish models. This rank system was based on civil and military service, that rewarded people according to their ability and merit within the Table of Ranks, and not their privilege or



birth. He enforced his order that nobles serve in the military and ensured that this obligation was lifelong and universal. But, the Russian nobility lacked a sufficient number of educated and trained men to handle modern warfare, therefore he had to rely on foreign expertise in command of regiments and other subunits during campaigns. The *Table of Ranks* allowed any military officer to be raised to the status of a noble, a privilege that was not obtained in civilian ranks until rank 8.

In 1775 Catherine the Great changed the conscription policy and introduced a new system that recruited one male from a block of 500 peasants per year during peace, but as many as five in wartime. The basic concept of the Petrine draft remained in place. This system worked well enough to provide the Russian army with more than 2 million soldiers toward the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Discussion/Questions**

1. Why did Ivan the Terrible create the Oprichniki, and why did he eliminate it?
2. How did Peter the Great modernize the Russian army?
3. How did Peter's Europeanization transform Russian military forces?

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## **SOCIAL HISTORY**

### **CLASSES**

In the Muscovite state, the inhabitants were officially organized into nine estates: princes, boyars, servitors, *streltsy*, clergy, merchants, artisans, peasants, and slaves. Muscovite society was not a flexible society, and more closely resembled a society of castes.

**Prince:** At the top of the class structure of the Muscovite state, were the princes and their families. After Moscow established control over other principalities, some princes fell into the noble class.

**Boyars:** In 1649, the 59 members of the Boyar Duma (council) and their families were at the top of society based chiefly on hereditary rights. Below them were a few thousand boyar families from the upper service class who helped run the government and the tsar's court in Moscow. A third group of nobles belonged to the provincial nobility. Their primary duty was to serve in the tsar's cavalry forces.

**Servitors:** Muscovite princes took on servitors who were sometimes impoverished or landless boyars who received a grant of land for their service, called a *pomestie*. The *pomestie* was at first allotted to the servitor only for the duration of his service, but later became hereditary.

**Streltsy:** Beneath the nobles stood a lower service class, the *streltsy*. They included the Cossacks, and other non-noble military men. The elites and the middle service class from the provincial towns and countryside performed formed the backbone of the army in wartime.

**Artisans (*Meshchane*):** Artisans, peddlers and servants were poor urban dwellers, who developed into a near equivalent petit-bourgeois in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**Clergy:** Hereditary caste as well as other grievances resulted in church reforms that began in the 1860's. Alexander II transformed the hereditary estate of the church into a professional service class.

**Merchants:** This estate was hereditary if the business was successful and passed on. However, it was necessary to declare the capital the person owned.

**Peasants:** In the early 1500s the peasants' right to move to other land or to the service of a different lord had been restricted to a two-week period in the fall, after the harvest was in.

**Slaves:** During the reign of Ivan the Terrible, the number of slaves in the military increased after the Service decree issued in 1556. Slaves were the largest class after the peasants, comprising 10 percent of the population. In the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, because of the consolidation of serfdom, the number of slaves in the military declined. With the establishment of serfdom in 1649, landlords became less dependent on slaves, and household serfs replaced slaves. Another reason for the decline of the slavery was the changing nature of military requirements, which had less need for slaves. Slavery also declined because the government wanted to maintain as many tax-payers as possible, and slaves did not pay any taxes.

### Discussion/Questions

1. What made stratification important during the Russian Empire?
2. The boyars were the most powerful class during Ivan the Terrible. Why did Ivan the Terrible lose his trust in the boyars and divide his realm into two separate state as the oprichnina and the zemschina and began to exercise his power in oprichnina?

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## GENDER RELATIONS

**High illiteracy:** Illiteracy was very high among both men and women. Even the majority of noble women in the empire remained illiterate, and education was not considered important. In the *Domostroy* (house manual) written in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the rules on education had no reference to women. "The Wife was always and in all things to take Counsel with her Husband". There were a few private schools for girls, but they never learned how to read and write there, they only studied household management techniques.

**Life out of Terem:** It was Peter the Great who abolished the *Terem*, and encouraged the social mixing of the sexes and the wearing of Western clothing. During the first decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the petrine reforms made the education of women an increasingly important issue. In order to create a Western nation, Peter ordered the wives of his nobility to join in weekly assemblies or parties at noble homes, to participate in public ceremonies, and to dance, drink, and play cards at court parties.

**Law of Succession:** Another reform that Peter the Great introduced was a change in the law of succession, which allowed women to rule for most of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In 1722 Peter issued a decree stating that each emperor should choose his own heir. After his death, empresses ruled Russia for the next seventy years.

**Schools for Girls:** Catherine the Great established girls' schools, including a teacher's college and a school for noble girls called the Smolny Institute in St. Petersburg, and more noble women received finishing-school education at these female institutions. She also authorized the creation of a school for maidens, the Novodevichy Institute which was situated in a Moscow convent.

As a proponent of the Enlightenment, Catherine II believed that noble women should be educated and take an active role in the development of Russian culture, and among Russian intellectuals. Everywhere in the Empire, noble girls were educated, primarily by tutors hired by their parents, took an interest in the arts, played musical instruments, attended plays, and drew sketches of the countryside. Like Peter the Great, Catherine also encouraged women to join in weekly salon assemblies in their homes to debate political questions or talk about the arts.

**Property rights:** The property rights of Russian noble women were protected in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by the law of 1753. This law allowed married women to control their own property, and the dowry property they had brought into the marriage. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, women also participated in court sessions, could sell their own property, and sign their own names on sales contracts.

### **Discussion/Questions**

1. Why was Muscovite women's life confined and their public life so limited? Why did the state exercise such strict control over them?
2. Why were the majority of women in the empire remained illiterate?

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## **ECONOMIC HISTORY**

### **INNOVATIONS**

#### **Government:**

**Table of Ranks:** In 1722 Peter cancelled the old precedence that had been determined by birth, and introduced a new order of precedence known as the *Table of Ranks* in which rank was determined by merit and service to the ruler; it remained in use until the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917.

**Nakaz:** Catherine II (the Great) was a patron of the arts, corresponding with leading thinkers of Europe's Enlightenment such as the French philosophers Montesquieu, Voltaire and Diderot. She issued her *Nakaz (Instruction)*, a statement of legal principles, in the hope that it would be a major Enlightenment achievement. Catherine firmly believed that Russia required autocratic rule, and left serfdom, an institution condemned by the Enlightenment, untouched. This new legal code was compiled in 1767.

#### **Economy:**

**Early Industrialization:** During the reign of Peter the Great new industrial enterprises specializing in wood work, gunpowder, leather, glass, paper, porcelain and other areas were established. In addition, there were great successes in the mining industry. New factories were opened; one of them was a silver melting factory. Ship building was also the most important achievement of Peter the Great's reform program in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **Culture:**

**Civil script (Grazhdanskiy shrift):** During the modernization and secularization period, Peter the Great introduced the simplified *civil script (grazhdanskiy shrift)* in 1708; This modernized Cyrillic alphabet distanced writing from the Church which continued to use the ancient script. All textbooks and works on mathematics, geography, artillery, and military science were produced using this civil script, but the Russian Orthodox Church continued to use the Church-Slavonic alphabet. During Peter the Great's reign, translations from European languages into Russian increased the capacity of the printing industry and the number of secular literary publications. In addition, the literary language was freed from religious influence and opened up to western borrowings.

**Three styles of writing:** Various writers such as A. Kantemir, A. P. Sumarokov and V. Trediakovsky made serious attempts to modernize the Russian language. Nonetheless, it was M.V. Lomonosov's proposal of three styles of writing for Russian in his Russian grammar published in 1755 that contributed significantly to the development of the Russian language. According to this theory, in the high style, Old Church Slavonic should be used for the composition of epics, odes, and poems. The middle style should be used in dramatic works and literary prose; and the low style, the language of townsmen and peasants, should be used for comedy and personal correspondence.

**New Calendar:** Peter the Great revised the calendar, by ordering the New Year to be celebrated on January 1 based on the Julian calendar. Before that in Russia, the New Year was celebrated on September 1 after the adaptation of Christian Era in 1700.

### **Architecture:**

**Russian Wooden Structures:** From the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century Muscovite architecture liberated itself from the Byzantine style and modified it by using the traditional Russian style of architecture. Two of the finest examples of wooden structures are located at the Kizhi Pogost site on Kizhi Island which includes the 18<sup>th</sup> century Transfiguration Church with 22 domes and the Intercession Church with 9 domes.

**Tent-type (shatër):** This style was developed to prevent snow from piling up on the roofs of wooden churches. This type of architecture resembles the Gothic architecture of Western Europe. The Church of St. John the Baptist in Kolomenskoye and St. Basil's Cathedral on Red Square are two prime examples of this type.

**Kokoshniks:** In Russian church architecture the tent-type structure was replaced with successive rows of curved corbel arches known as *kokoshniks*, a traditional Russian architectural feature. An outstanding example of this style is the Kazan Cathedral on Red Square.

**Bochka roof:** The *Bochka* roof is the type of roof in traditional Russian architecture that has a form of a half-cylinder with an elevated and sharpened upper part, resembling the sharpened *kokoshnik*. Typically made of wood, the *bochka* roof was extensively used both in church and civilian architecture in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Later it was sometimes used in Russian Revival style buildings.

### **Science:**

**The Academy of Science:** The Russian Academy of Sciences was founded by a decree of Peter the Great in 1724. The Academy mostly concentrated on the study of mathematics and natural sciences. The first geographical Atlas of Russia compiled by the Academy of Science was published in 1745; and included 19 maps of Russia's provinces and one general map.

**The First Russian Scientist - Mikhail Lomonosov:** Lomonosov's scientific interest was wide-ranging, including physics, metallurgy, mineralogy, chemistry, optics and mining, as well as history. His major contributions were in the field of mechanical philosophy, popular in the 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries and based on the previous research of Descartes, Gassendi and Boyle. Lomonosov applied this approach to a number of various phenomena, and came to be regarded as the first prominent Russian scientist.

### **Military:**

**First Navy:** The foundation of Russian access to the western seas and the creation of the first the Russian Navy belong to the reformist Peter I (the Great). Peter I borrowed shipbuilding techniques from Holland to create the navy; and the first navy corps of marines was established on Nov. 27, 1705. The construction of the navy made Russia a great naval power and a major actor in European and world affairs. The Naval Academy in St. Petersburg was opened in 1715.

### **Discussion/Questions**

1. How did the introduction of the civil script effect the development of Russian language?
2. How did construction of a navy make Russia a major actor in the world?
3. *Nakaz (Instruction)* was introduced by Catherine the Great and it was a statement of legal principles based on the ideas of Enlightenment. Why was Catherine the Great unable to adhere to the principles of Enlightenment?

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### **TRADE**

During the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, Russia lacked ports on the Baltic Sea, therefore Russian had to export, for example, flax, linseed, hemp, hides, furs, and sometimes rye through three major routes linking the Russian markets with Western Europe: an overland route through Poland and Germany; through the towns of the Baltic seaboard and the Baltic Sea; and another sea route across the White Sea from the port of Archangel. In return, Russia imported through the Baltic ports broadcloth, salt, herrings, wine, and groceries.

**Trade in Muscovite State:** While in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century Moscow's trade with foreign merchants increased, in 1646, due to growing resentment against foreign merchants' trading privileges, the government had stop duty-free trade for all foreign merchants, and in 1667, through the *New Trade Regulation*, the Tsar curtailed all other foreign traders and increased foreign duties.

In addition to Novgorod, Astrakhan, Pskov, Archangel also gained importance and became a major port for importing weapons. The Tsar monopolized some trade, but market conditions determined most prices. Most of the trade was done by Russian merchants and traders for their own benefit. In 1725, most Russian foreign trade passed through St. Petersburg and Riga, and Archangel began to lose its importance. Astrakhan became a center for the less important trade with Persia and Central Asia. Peter the Great fostered trade by building canals going from the Baltic to the Caspian, roads, and bridges.

In the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century Russian merchants had a stronger position than foreign traders. Water transport was vital for foreign and internal trade, and many Russians made their living on or near the water.

By the last decade of 18<sup>th</sup> century, Russian exports greatly outnumbered imports, with Great Britain being the chief trading partner. Protective tariffs of up to 75% on the value of imported goods were introduced during the reign of Peter the Great.

### **Discussion/Questions**

1. Why did Kievan Rus' enjoy its greatest commerce during the 11<sup>th</sup> century?
2. What made the Muscovite state a favorable location for trade?
3. Why was the Trans-Siberian Railroad important for Russia?

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- 3- *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Russian Culture*, edited by Nicholas Rzhevsky, Cambridge University Press, 1998.

### **CULTURAL HISTORY**

### **SCIENCE**

Although Old Russian culture before the reign of Peter the Great had produced brilliant works of art, music and architecture, until the early 18<sup>th</sup> century science in the form it had developed in Western Europe was virtually unknown in Russia. Both the Renaissance of the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries and the Scientific Revolution of the 17<sup>th</sup> century bypassed Russia, and it was only during the reign of Alexei Mikhailovich in the latter half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century that a party of Westernizers close to the monarch were able to introduce some Western customs via Poland and the Ukraine, but nothing even close to an introduction of Western science. It was not until the 18<sup>th</sup> century that Copernicus' astronomical discoveries and Arabic numerals made their way to Russia. It was Peter I who, in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, opened the door to Western science and technology and established the first Russian institutions for independent scientific research.

Peter I was inspired to establish such institutions after travelling abroad and meeting the leading scientists of the time, among them Sir Isaac Newton. In Prussia, France and England Peter I visited academies of science, and upon his return to Russia established the Academy of Science in Russia. This academy sponsored the translation of scientific works from Europe, provided technical advice to the government, and promoted education in the sciences. Despite the work of the Academy of Science, even after 1755 Moscow University still offered little instruction in science and the vast majority of Russia's population remained illiterate.

The first major branches of Russian science that emerged in the 18<sup>th</sup> century were mathematics and the study of natural resources. The latter field was inspired by field expeditions such as the first and second expeditions to Kamchatka.

In addition, foreign academicians were brought to St. Petersburg, particularly those who specialized in mathematics and the physical sciences. Among these early scientists were the mathematicians Daniel and Nicolaus Bernoulli, and Leonhard Euler.

**Mikhail Lomonosov:** Lomonosov's scientific interest was wide-ranging, including physics, metallurgy, mineralogy, chemistry, optics and mining, as well as history. His major contributions were in the field of mechanical philosophy, popular in the 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> centuries and based on the previous research of Descartes, Gassendi and Boyle. Lomonosov applied this approach to a number of various phenomena, and came to be regarded as the first prominent Russian scientist.

#### **Discussion/Questions:**

1. Why did the scientific studies start during Peter the Great?
2. How did Peter the Great's Westernization policy effect the study of science in Russia?

#### **Reading**

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ART

#### **Painting:**

**Moscow School (16<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup>c):** Influenced by the evolving political and religious atmosphere of the period of Mongol rule, the style of painting developed by the Moscow school became the foundation for a national art. From this school the works created by four artists are particularly famous. The works of Theophanes the Greek were known for their skillful, rapid execution, use of monochromatic colors in frescoes, and creation of contour and depth through bright highlights. Andrei Rublev's works were characterized by the use of luminous color, delicate lines, reduction of details to create greater impact, and complex, subtle relationships between forms. Dionysius (Dionisy) created a distinctive style of painting that softer and gentler than that of previous artists, one that downplayed sharp outlines and concentrated on the blend of warm colors. The zenith of baroque icon painting is commonly regarded to have been reached in the works of Simon Ushakov who also head of the icon painters in the tsar's employ. He is credited with bringing icon

painting into the real world by depicting sacred figures with faces rendered in style more like that current in the West.

**Stroganov School (16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>c):** Named for the boyar family that established it, the Stroganov School was established in the late 16<sup>th</sup> – early 17<sup>th</sup> century and created a new style of painting known as *parsuna*. *Parsuna* depicted contemporary secular figures rather than religious ones in a style that blended traditions of icon painting with features from secular portraiture. Two of the main representative of this school were Fedor Zubov and Simon Ushakov.

**Neoclassicism:** 18<sup>th</sup> century neoclassicism incorporates a variety of styles whose ideas are most clearly visible in historical landscape, painting and portraiture. Neoclassicism is characterized by clarity, order, logic and a degree of realism and was, in part, a reaction to the over-refinement of the baroque and rococo styles. In Russia, neoclassicism was associated with the efforts by artists to adopt Enlightenment techniques and styles. Appreciation of Western art was particularly encouraged by four monarchs - Peter the Great, Anne, Elizabeth and Catherine the Great. This appreciation was cultivated by sending students to Europe to study, importing the works European masters, and employing foreign artists in their courts. Initially, some artists produced works that were merely copies of Western models. However, artists such as Dmitry Grigorevich Levitsky, Vladimir Lukich Borovikovsky, Ivan Petrovich Argunov, Aleksei Petrovich Antropov, Fedor Stepanovich Rokotov, Ivan Firsov, Ivan Nikitin, and Andrei Matveev created original works that moved beyond simple mimicry.

**Parsunas (Portraits):** Non-religious portraits painted in the style of icons were known as *parsunas*. Although unintentional, by issuing a ruling in the *Stoglav* on the question of whether portraits of living people were sacrilegious Ivan the Terrible had opened the door for the development of nonreligious art, although it would not be until the reign of Peter the Great that Russia would begin to produce secular art akin to that of the West. In the portraits by Ivan Nikitin, Andrei Matveyev, Ivan Vishnyakov, Alexei Antropov, Dmitri Levitsky and Vladimir Borovikovsky the focus is clearly on the hands and face of the subject with its serious expression. However, it is clear that the artists were attempting to accurately depict the face and clothes (with their all their folds and textures) of a specific individual.

**Sculpture:** Sculpture in Russia revived during the reign of Peter the Great who brought sculptors and casters from Western Europe to teach Russian artists their methods. Despite Peter's efforts, sculpture remained an art dominated by foreigners during his reign and that of his successors. Sculpture was taught at the Academy of Sciences during the reign of Catherine I, but royal court's demand for statuary was still being met by foreign artists, such as the Rococo artist Count Carlo Bartolomeo Rastrelli. Sculptors in Catherine's reign were employed primarily to produce mannerist busts and monuments in marble.

**Architecture:**

**Muscovite Architecture:**

**Kremlin Structures:** In the 15<sup>th</sup> century Italian architects were put in charge of designing the Kremlin structures. Instead of Renaissance, they had to use a traditional Russian style of architecture due to the demands of the ruling class. Such cathedrals as the Cathedral of Annunciation, Cathedral of Assumption, Cathedral of the Archangel Michael and the others are grouped around Cathedral Square. Also, the Palace of the Facets in the Kremlin was built by the Italian architect Marco Ruffo as a throne and audience chamber. Near the Kremlin, St. Basil's Cathedral, built in the 16<sup>th</sup> century to commemorate the conquest of Kazan and the Astrakhan Khanate, combined earlier church architecture with styles from the Tatar east.

**Wooden Architecture:** From the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century Muscovite architecture liberated itself from the Byzantine style and modified it by using the traditional Russian style of architecture. Two of the finest examples of wooden structures are located at the Kizhi Pogost site on Kizhi Island which includes the 18<sup>th</sup> century Transfiguration Church with 22 domes and the Intercession Church with 9 domes.

**Tent-type (shatër-Russian Gothic):** This style was developed to prevent snow from piling up on the roofs of wooden churches. This type of architecture resembles the Gothic architecture of Western Europe. The Church of St. John the Baptist in Kolomenskoye and St. Basil's Cathedral on Red Square are two prime examples of this type.

**Kokoshniks:** In Russian church architecture the tent-type structure was replaced with successive rows of curved corbel arches known as *kokoshniks*. An outstanding example of this style is the Kazan Cathedral on Red Square.

**Cube-type structures:** Exemplified by the Church of the Intercession and the Winter Church on Kizhi Island, these buildings consist of a square main structure of pine logs supporting an octagonal prizma tower.

**Masonry (Stone) Structures:** Russian architects used the indigenous forms of wooden church architecture and adapted it to masonry architecture in Novgorod and Pskov. The churches of Kolomenskoye (Church of the Ascension), Ostrovo (Church of the Transfiguration) and Dyakovo (Church of St. John the Precursor) serve as prototypes for these structures.

**Muscovite (Naryshkin) Baroque:** Muscovite Baroque was the last original current in Russian architecture, combining traditional Russian architecture with elements of European Baroque architecture. The Novodevichy Convent and Donskoy Monastery are the best examples of structures built in this style.

**Petrine Baroque:** Petrine Baroque reflects a sharp departure from the influence of Byzantium, which lasted almost a millennium. It was a mixture of Italian Baroque, early French Rococo and Neo-classicism, Dutch civil architecture, and Danish and Swedish styles and movements. The Peter and Paul Fortresses, Kikin Hall and Menshikov Palace are well-known examples of this style. Its chief practitioners were Domenico Trezzini, Andreas Schlüter, Gottfried Schadel, Jean-Baptiste Leblond, Niccolò Michetti and Georg Johann Mattarnovi.

**Secular Architecture (Western Influence):** Russian secular architecture appeared simultaneously with the adoption of Western European styles, such as the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg, designed by Bartolomeo Rastrelli in the Baroque style.

#### **Dance:**

**Kadril (Rigodon):** Generally danced by four couples arranged in a square this folk dance of French origin was often danced competitively.

**Lancier:** Danced by four couples, this variant of the Quadrille is a form of square dance of French origin.

**Ballet:** Ballet came to Russia with Peter the Great who made assemblies and balls important social functions in his court. The introduction of classical ballet into Russia was simply one element of Peter's diverse methods to make Russia European. Ballet was prestigious because it was foreign, and Parisian in particular, and was regarded as a form of etiquette rather than an art form. The first imperial ballet school, directed by Jean-Baptiste Landé was established in 1738, and by the 1740s there were three ballet masters. Catherine II's establishment of an imperial theater system in 1756, a directorate of imperial theaters in 1766, the construction of the Bolshoi Theater in 1773, and the establishment of the imperial theater school in 1779 all secured a firm place for ballet in Russia. As the 18<sup>th</sup> century drew to a close, the ballet school was an element of the imperial theater bureaucracy, and some of the most important European ballet masters and choreographers of this period had worked to create the Russian imperial ballet.

#### **Music:**

#### **Secular Music and Western Influence**



The Russian tsars saw their position as rulers as having not only a secular aspect, but a spiritual one as well, an attitude that would not change until the late 17<sup>th</sup> century when Peter I became tsar. The tsars believed that they were the spiritual leaders of an Orthodox state and servants of God as well. For example, Tsar Ivan IV composed a number of church chants and was said to be a talented church musician. As a result of this view of their religious role, the tsars were against secular music, both foreign and domestic. Anyone giving public performances of secular music, like the *skomorokhi*, were treated as criminals.

The hostile attitude towards secular music changed dramatically when Peter the Great ascended the throne. He set in motion a number of reforms to transform Russia from what he saw as a backward society into a modern, Western-style country. In his new capital, St. Petersburg, he held court balls in the manner of Western Europe where his aristocrats attempted to perform unfamiliar European dances. Copying the Germans, he formed "staff orchestras" that played at court ceremonies, and even travelled with his army in the field. Hoping to marry Peter's daughter, the Duke of Schleswig-Holstein, Carl Friedrich brought a German chamber orchestra with him to St. Petersburg in 1721. The orchestra played works by a number of contemporary composers, and chamber orchestras soon became a requisite element of aristocratic society. In the years after Peter the Great's reign musicians and composers continued to be brought from Europe and paid well for their talents. Private orchestras and choirs, as well as opera and ballet theaters had become feature of the estates of a number of Russian aristocrats by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. This trend provided a new opportunity for some former serfs; trained by teachers from Europe they went on to become some of the most famous performers of the day.

### **Discussion/Questions**

1. In the early history of Russia the Orthodox Church banned statuary. Why did the Church accept icons as acceptable devotional objects, but not sculpture, unlike Roman Catholic Church which recognized sculpture's iconographic role?
2. How did the period of Europeanization effect ballet?
3. Discuss the early developments in Russian music. Why would the Skomorokhi be treated as criminals?
4. Discuss Westernization and its effects on Russian music.
- 5-How is Christianity reflected in Russian culture?

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## RELIGION

**15<sup>th</sup> century:** In the initial years of Christianity the Russian church was under the control of the Greek Patriarch in Constantinople. Following the fall of Constantinople in 1453 the Russian church established itself as an archbishopric and declared its independence. While the state removed the Metropolitan of Moscow, Isidore, who had signed the declaration of the Council of Ferrara-Florence to reunite the eastern and western churches, they appointed a new Metropolitan, Iona, the Metropolitan of Moscow as the head of the independent Orthodox Church. After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Russia began to see herself as the successor to the Roman and Byzantine empires and destined to protect the Orthodox people. The *Third Rome* doctrine appeared in the writings of the Russian monk Filofei of Pskov in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century which resulted in Moscow's status as a patriarchate being accepted.

**16<sup>th</sup> century:** In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Church came completely under the control of the state, and the Metropolitan Philipp was ousted from his post by Ivan IV, who later had him murdered.

**Possessors and Nonpossessors:** Both Ivan IV and the Orthodox Church were terrified by the beginning of the free-thinking German Reformation (Protestant Reformation), with its apparent emphasis on the individual conscience in religious belief and practice. Therefore he closed his borders to western influence, and imprisoned any clerics who propagated the tenets of the Reformation. Nevertheless, the Reformation had a decisive influence on the development of the Russian Orthodox Church. The 16<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the struggle between the *Possessors (stiazhatel'i)* and *Non-possessors (nestiazhatel'i)*. The non-possessors, led by Nil Sorsky, insisted that the Church should renounce worldly wealth, that monks should adhere to vows of poverty, and that church and state should be separate. On the other hand, the leader of the possessors, Joseph of Volotsk who advocated a powerful, wealthy church, and emphasized the importance of a harmonious relationship between the Church and the Tsar, was supported by a Church council in 1503. The Non-Possessors were condemned of being opponents of the church. Although they were driven out of the monasteries by Ivan IV and his successors, their influence continued, and a century later, the movement known as the Old Believers appeared.

**17<sup>th</sup> century:** Known as the Time of Troubles, the 17<sup>th</sup> century was a period in which the Russian church turned its back on Catholic politics. The Patriarch Filaret, who had assumed his position after the death of the Patriarch Germogen, gained fame with his anti-Catholic policies. As he was also the father of Tsar Mikhail Romanov, he was given the title *Great Lord*.

**Old Believers and Schism (Raskol):** During the reign of Alexis Romanov, patriarch Nikon introduced reforms in church liturgy to correct mistakes made in the translation of Greek texts into Russian, to modify the sign of the cross to follow Greek usage, and to introduce some restrictions on the church's acquiring additional lands. This movement met with strong disapproval from traditional followers of the Orthodox faith and led to a schism between the believers of Nikon and the traditionalists. The opponents of reforms introduced by the Patriarch between 1652–1666, became known as Old Believers (*Starovery* or *Starobriadtsy*) who were led by Avvakum. They have remained a small sect within the Orthodox tradition to this day, and were separated after 1666 from the official Russian Orthodox Church. Old Believers continued to practice the old liturgical practices, causing a split in the Orthodox church known as the *Schism (Raskol)*.

**18<sup>th</sup> century:**

**Holy Synod:** In this period the Russian church experienced major reforms, particularly in the time of Peter the Great. Peter closed the office of the Patriarch of Moscow and its place was taken by the Holy Synod. In 1700, after the death of the patriarch Adrian, he did not allow a new patriarch to be elected. Instead, a committee appointed by the Emperor was established. Peter turned the Church into a department of state headed in practice by an *Over-Procurator (Ober-Prokuror)*, a bureaucrat appointed by the tsar to control the Holy Synod, and Church Slavic was retained for the Church by Peter's order. Thus, by putting an end to the church's independence he was able to transform it into an institution bound to the state. Peter's most important actions were the measures he took to attempt to achieve unity through religion. Peter ordered priests to determine those who had left the Orthodox church and to find ways to bring them back into the church. He even permitted priests to use force to achieve this, if necessary. Those who had left the church paid higher taxes and were forbidden from working in the civil service. However, Peter's efforts to achieve national unity through religion came to naught as Russia's borders expanded and peoples of other religions began to live within the boundaries of the Russian Empire. Nevertheless, the efforts to convert members of other religions to Orthodoxy continued; Muslims who refused to convert were driven from their villages. The efforts to convert Muslims to Orthodoxy only came to an end in the time of Catherine II. The Russian state permitted Muslims to practice their religion provided they lived in the remote corners of the Empire and were obedient.

With Catherine II's annexation of a large territory that had been under Polish rule, came a large number of Jews who were now within the boundaries of the Russian Empire. Anti-Jewish measures which began in the period of Ivan the Terrible had, by the start of the 1700s, reached the degree that Catherine I ordered

all Jews who refused to convert to Orthodoxy to be driven out of Russia. Attacks against the Jews gradually increased, and by the 19<sup>th</sup> century they were even held responsible for Alexander II's death at the hands of an assassin. In Catherine II's time Catholics living within the borders of the empire were left with no choice but to be associated with the Russian church. At the same time in this century a small Protestant group became active. In the 1860s, a group known as Baptists, active in the Caucasus and the Ukraine, began to expand rapidly within the borders of the empire. Worried by this development, the Holy Synod banned all sects and denominations. Members of the Baptists were kept under surveillance and those who were caught were persecuted. Orthodox missionaries were sent to all villages and efforts began to convert to Orthodoxy anyone who belonged to another denomination. The church's attitude became so strict that it eventually alienated its own people.

### **Discussion/Questions**

1. Is it possible to see traces of pagan culture in Orthodox Russia?
2. What led to a schism in Russian Orthodox Church and what were the results?

### **Reading**

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- 2-Mandelstam, M.B., Russian Traditional Culture, Religion, Gender and Customary Law, The Introduction of Christianity in Russia and the Pagan Traditions, ME Sharp, 1992.
- 3-Meyendorff, J., Rome, Constantinople, Moscow, Historical and Theological Studies, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, New York, 2003, Ch.7, 8.
- 4-Orthodox Russia, Belief and Practice Under the Tsars, Edited by Valerie A. Kivelson and Robert H. Greene, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003, Ch. 1.
- 5-Steeves, P.D., "Religious Tradition. From Kievan Rus to a Tsarist Empire", [www.stetson.edu/artsci/russian/keepingthefait01.html](http://www.stetson.edu/artsci/russian/keepingthefait01.html)

## PHILOSOPHY

**Filofey (Philotheus) Prokopovich:** Regarded as the first Russian philosopher, Filofey of Pskov proposed that Russia was the third Rome, since both the first Rome and second Rome (i.e. Byzantium) were in the hands of heretics. In a work dedicated to Grand Prince Basil II in 1510 he stated: "Two Romes have fallen, the third stands, there shall be no fourth".

### **Europeanization:**

While Russia was cut off from developments in Western European philosophy during the period of Mongol rule, this situation began to be reversed during the reign of Peter the Great. Russian intellectuals began to examine their society through the lens of science and the perspectives of contemporary European thinkers such as Voltaire.

**Peter Mogila:** Taking his knowledge of Renaissance philosophy and Western scholasticism gained from study in Paris, Mogila established a school for young monks at the Lavra whose curriculum included rhetoric, theology, classical authors and philosophy. In addition, Mogila, converted the Fraternity School into the Kiev-Mogila College where theology was taught under the heading of philosophy.

**Feofan Prokopovich:** A bishop and theologian who had an important role in reorganizing the Russian Church, Feofan argued for an independent science of man that was in harmony with theology. Feofan, on the basis of the concept of natural law, called for unhindered scientific investigation, religious tolerance, and a secular curriculum.

**Gregory Savvich Skovoroda:** Although a layman, Skovoroda was a moralist and religious thinker who studied briefly at the Kiev Academy. He refused an offer of a position at the Moscow Theological Academy, instead living as religious mendicant and creating his own doctrine from studies of the Bible, Pythagoras,

Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Diogenes, Philo, neo-Platonists, the Church Fathers and German mystics until his death in 1794.

**Enlightenment:** In the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Catherine the Great presented herself as a supporter of the principles of the Enlightenment, maintaining correspondence with Voltaire and other leading figures of the European Enlightenment. Although in her *"Instruction"* she advocated rational government, equality before the law, and the pursuit of reason, in practice she opposed the French Revolution and bolstered the autocracy.

**Nikolay Novikov:** During the period of Catherine II's support for free speech and journalism, Novikov was able to use his publishing company, journal, writings and philanthropy to promote Enlightenment principles in Russia. In 1791 the government put an end to Novikov's publishing activities following the publication of *"The Drone"* which criticized the government. Novikov was arrested the following year, imprisoned and held for fifteen years, only gaining his freedom after Catherine II's death.

**Alexander Radishchev:** During his studies in Leipzig Radishchev became acquainted with the social theories and philosophies of Leibniz, Herder, Helvetius, Locke, Rousseau and Montesquieu. In his work *"Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow"* Radishchev, in line with his Enlightenment ideals, expressed his opposition to serfdom, autocracy and corruption. Despite having originally sent Radishchev to Leipzig to study, in the context of the radicalism unleashed by the French Revolution Catherine the Great began to regard him as a threat to the state. Tried as rebel, Radishchev was convicted and given a death sentence that was later reduced to a 10-year exile in Siberia. Freed in 1801, Radishchev took his own life the following year.

#### **Discussion/Questions:**

1. Discuss what philosophical ideas flowed into Russia during the Westernization period and the impact of Westernization

#### **Reading**

- 1-Lossky, N.O., *History of Russian Philosophy*, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1952, pp.9-64.
- 2-Pipes, R., *Russia Under the Old Regime*, New York, 1974, Ch. 9.
- 3-Lewit, The Obviousness of the Truth in Eighteenth Century Russian Thought, <http://www-bcf.usc.edu/~levitt/publications/documents/obviousness.pdf>

#### LITERATURE

#### **The 17<sup>th</sup> Century:**

**Early Western Influence:** The continuing social conflicts, foreign interventions, changes in the socio-economic life of the country, and the unavoidable influence of western European culture all played a major role in the development of 17<sup>th</sup> century Russian culture. In this century we see that the attempts of Russian culture, which was beginning to become more universal, to free itself from the influences of church become more important. In this period, called by contemporaries as the *Time of Troubles (Smutnoe vremya)*, works whose subjects were the period's stormy event were written by both churchmen and lay authors. The most important works written in this period were *The Life of Avvakum (Zhitie protopopa Avvakuma)*, *The Tale of Ersh Ershovich (Povest' o Ershe Ershoviche)*, *The Tale of Woe and Misfortune (Povest' o Gore-Zlochastii)*, and *The Tale of Savva Grudtsyn (Povest' o Savve Grudtsyne)*.

After *the Time of Troubles* and the founding of the Romanov dynasty in 1613, however, the country was relatively peaceful, wealthier and more open than it had been previously. A great variety of books from Western Europe began to enter the Russian land from Western Europe, and by the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century many foreigners, Germans in particular, were in Russia.

#### **18<sup>th</sup> Century:**

**Westernization and the Development of Distinctive Russian Literature:** When Peter the Great came to the throne at the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was his intent to bring Russia up to the level of the other European powers. However, he realized that this was possible through a process of Europeanizing his country. Although not very interested personally in literary culture, his overall policy allowed western models of literature to come into Russia and encouraged their adaptation to the conditions in Russia.

The authors who appeared in 18<sup>th</sup> century Russia were responsible to a large degree for the creation of a written language and literature. During Peter the Great's reign the written Russian language was greatly modified, with the result of facilitating translations from western European languages. In addition, education and the development of the printing industry in Russia were promoted by Peter the. The final result of all these efforts was the emergence of secular Russian literature.

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While writers of this period imitated French patterns they were also searching for their own themes, language and style. Throughout the entire period writers attempted to give their literature a unique national character; for example, the satirist A.D. Kantemir combined European neoclassicism with depictions of Russian life. In addition to his panegyrics of Peter's reforms, he also initiated a long-running debate on proper syllabic versification in the Russian language. Only later would V.K. Trediakovsky and M.V. Lomonosov create the accepted theory of the proper patterns of Russian versification. Finally, the founder of Russian drama, A.V. Sumarokov, combined European forms and Russian themes in both his fables and in his plays.

**Enlightenment:** In the literature produced during the reign of Catherine II the influence of the European Enlightenment is evident. In her own dramas Catherine combined both classical style and a satirical tone, as is seen in the journals of N. I. Novikov and G. R. Derzhavin's odes. Satire was combined with realistic motifs in Likewise, the plays of D. I. Fonvizin, and in the fables of I. I. Khemnitser combined classicism and satire. Towards the end of the century A. N. Radishchev merged political radicalism with Rousseauian sentimentalism. The development of sentimentality is also seen in the dramas of V.A. Ozerov, as well as in the prose of N. M. Karamzin, the pioneer of the Russian short story.

The reign of Catherine the Great is also noteworthy for the expansion and support given to secular literature. The debates over the function and form of literature in relation to the Russian language in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, influenced by Peter I's reforms, established the precedent for writers in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century during Catherine the Great's reign. In the second half of the century, however, the themes and scopes of the works produced by the writers of this period were often more poignant, political and controversial than those of earlier writers.

The import of Western European culture was accompanied by the influx of western ideas, such as liberal democracy and freedom, which the Russian government found itself unable to halt. Such ideas were clearly contrary to the authoritarian tsarist system in place in Russia, and the results of this clash were entirely predictable: when the concepts of freedom and self-rule became associated with first the American, and then the French Revolution, the Russian government responded by attempting to stop the flow of foreign ideas into Russia.

As an example, the depictions of socio-economic conditions, the condition and treatment of the serfs, and local governmental corruption in —A Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow by A. N. Radishchev, shocked the Russian public. Catherine the Great was displeased by his depictions of the situation in her realm and had Radishchev arrested. He was originally sentenced to death, but his sentence was later commuted to exile in Siberia.

**Sentimentalism:** The beginnings of the literary movement of Sentimentalism appeared only in the last years of Catherine's reign. In drama, V.A. Ozerov employed Sentimentality, and was best seen in *Poor Liza* (Bednaya Liza) by N. M. Karamzin. Reform of the literary Russian language was a continuation of Peter the Great and Lomonosov's reforms. However, the gap between the written and the spoken language, between the educated classes and the ordinary people, between the new and the old Russia was increased by Karamzin's language reform. On the other hand, his language reforms would also help to usher in an age of classical poetry.

### **Discussion/Questions:**

1. Discuss the period of Peter the Great and Western influence in Russian Literature. How was the Russian language affected?
2. Discuss the effects of the European literary movement 'sentimentalism' on 18<sup>th</sup> century Russian literature.

### **Reading**

- 1- *The Cambridge History of Russian Literature*, Edited by Charles A. Moser, 1992.
- 2- *The Routledge Companion to Russian Literature*, Edited by Neil Cornwell, 2001.
- 3-- Mirsky, D.S., *A History of Russian Literature, From Its Beginnings to 1900*, Vintage Books Edition, 1958.

<sup>1</sup> <http://xenohistorian.faithweb.com/russia/ru02.html>