

History of Russia, 860-1917

- Week 1: Introduction to the course,
- Contents, requirements,
- Major sources and reading materials,
- Earliest history of Russia.

Main purposes of this course-1

- Introduction to Russian history in the period between 862 and 1917, including main historical events, figures, and processes in Russian history.
- Main attention will be given to the period of growth and development of the Moscow state (15th-17th cent.), the establishment of Romanov dynasty (17th cent.), and the period of Russian empire (1712-1917).

Main purposes of this course-2

- We will pay close attention to the development of society, economics, institutions, religion, culture and arts in Russia.
- Another important topic are foreign policies and international connections of the Russian state during different periods of its history.
- The special topic will be relations of the Russian Empire with the Qing dynasty in the 17th-19th centuries.

Why is it necessary for Chinese students to learn Russian history?

- China and Russia are neighbor countries. They have a long border.
- Several events in the history of two countries were inter-related. Even before the establishment of the direct relations of the two countries, there was a connection between them: both suffered from the Mongol invasion in the 13th century.
- Direct connections between the two countries were established quite early. In 1618 a Russian envoy arrived to Beijing for the first time. Since the beginning of the 18th century two countries had regular diplomatic and trade contacts.

Russia and China

- In the modern period there was very important exchange between the two countries in political and cultural spheres.
- Culture: such important figures in Chinese literature and thought studied and valued Russian literature: Lu Xun 魯迅, Mao Dun 茅盾, Zheng Zhenduo 鄭振鐸, Li Dazhao 李大釗, Cao Yu 曹禺, and others. However, in order to understand this cultural exchange, it is important to look into the past of Russia. Though major masterpieces of Russian literature were created in the 19th century, they are influenced by the older culture.
- If you are interested in the history and culture of Western / Eastern Europe, you should also have an idea about the historical development of Russia. Many events and things were different in Europe and Russia, though still related. (Feudalism, church culture, democracy, absolutism, enlightenment, empire building and so on).

The history of Russia in figures and images:
Ilia Glazunov (b. 1930) "Eternal Russia"



Requirements and grading principles:

- Class attendance and participation – 50%
- Written assignments (mid-term quiz and final paper) – 50%:
 - mid-term quiz – 10%, final paper—40%
 - Final paper (both Chinese and English are acceptable)

Final paper

The proposed topics of the paper:

- Which time period in Russian history I find the most interesting? Why?
- Which cultural achievements did Russia have in the past? How they were related to historical events? (the list of topics with bibliography will be provided by October 1).
- The contents of paper may be related to the student's own research.
- Volume: around 5000 characters (in Chinese), up to 5 pages in English.
- Students will have oral presentations in class for the final paper (see schedule).
- My office: Guanghua West, 2803. Office hours: Tuesday, 13.00-15.00

Main textbook

- Nicolas V. Riasanovsky, Mark D. Steinberg, *A History of Russia, 7th edition*. New-York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Chin. translation: 俄罗斯史 / (美) 尼古拉·梁赞诺夫斯基, (美) 马克·斯坦伯格著. 上海: 上海人民出版社, 2013; 上海: 上海人民出版社, 2007.

Other books

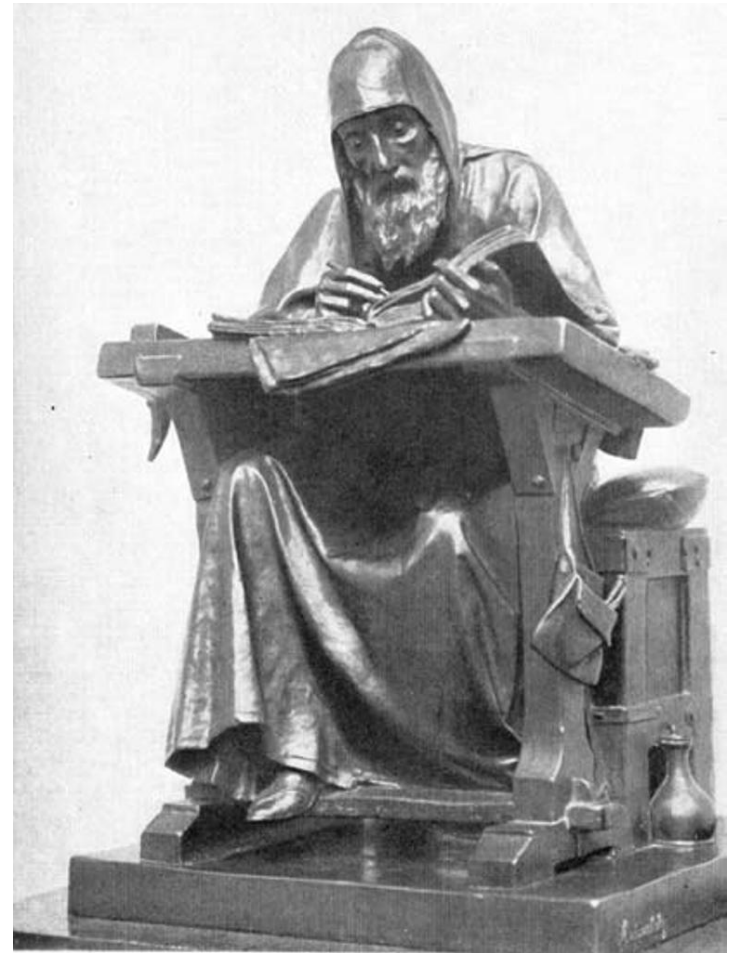
- 俄罗斯史 / (英) 杰弗里·霍斯金著 (Geoffrey Hosking)。广州：南方日报出版社, 2013。
1至9章。
- 李明滨。俄罗斯文化史。北京：北京大学出版社, 2013。1至5章。
- 姚海。俄罗斯文化。上海：上海社会科学院出版社, 2013。
- 文化与信仰：俄罗斯文化与东正教 / (俄) T.C. 格奥尔吉耶娃著。北京：华夏出版社, 2012。

Note about the language: how to

- Multi-syllable words with the clusters of consonants.
- Particular sounds:
- Ts- · ia
- Sh- iu
- Ch- e (pronounced as “ie”)
- Shch- (or sch-) io (usually spelled as “e”)
- Zh-
- “Soft consonants”: usually marked with ‘: *e/* and *e/’* are two different words.
- R (can be pronounced as English “r”)
- H (or kh) (can be pronounced as English “h”)

History writing in Russia

- The earliest historical chronicles of the Russian lands were created by the monks of the Kievan period (9-11th centuries).
- The Primary Chronicle (Povest' Vremennyh Let, 《往年纪事》), compiled by the Kievan monk Nestor at the beg. of the 12th cent., is our primary source of the early Russian history (Kievan period).
- It opened the whole genre of “letopisi” (编年史)



The Primary Chronicle (Povest' Vremennyh Let)



- The earliest manuscript is dated to 1377.
- On the left is the illustrated manuscript of the 15th century.
- 王松亭注释, 《古史纪年(古俄语-汉语对照)》, 北京: 商务印书馆, 2010.
- [俄] 朱寰等译, 《往年纪事: 古罗斯第一部编年史》, 北京: 商务印书馆, 2011

Letopisi (编年史)

- The early historical chronicles (medieval period) are praised for their historical sense, realism, and richness of detail.
- Regional chronicles, such as those of Novgorod and Vladimir, a number of which survive, also flourished in the Kievan period and later. For example, we learn about the Mongol invasion from these sources.

18th century: the new period of development of history writing



- After the reforms of Peter the Great (reigned in 1682-1725), the new history writing started.
- It was created under the Western influence, but also reflected patriotic tendencies of that time.
- The most important historians of that time were M.V. Lomonosov (1711-1766), V.N. Tatischev (1686-1750), and M.M. Scherbatov (1733-1790).

Nikolai M. Karamzin (卡拉姆津) and his History of the Russian State.



- 《俄罗斯国家史》
- The 12-volume history, written with the Imperial sanction between 1803 and 1826.
- Karamzin wrote openly as the panegyrist of the autocracy; indeed, his work has been styled the *Epic of Despotism* and considered Ivan III as the architect of Russian greatness.
- The work was noted by the brilliant style of the Russian language.
- Russian sinologist Leontievskii (1799-1874) translated into Chinese in 1828: 《羅西亞國史》

Later developments in the 19th-early 20th century

- Vasilii O. Kliuchevskii (1841-1911).

Russian history: the course of lectures

俄国史教程. 第一卷 / (俄) 瓦·奥·克柳切夫斯基著.
北京 : 商务印书馆, 2013.

Sergei F. Platonov (1860-1933)

Russian History

俄罗斯史 / 蒲律托诺夫著. 上海 : 华通书局, 民国
24 [1935]

Soviet period of Russian historiography

- Marxist historical concepts: class struggle.
- One of the first Marxist historians was N.M. Pokrovsky (1868-1932).
- B.A. Rybakov (1908-2001) was the main authority in ancient history, archeology of the East Slavs in the Soviet period and post-Soviet period. He represents the Moscow school of history.
- Igor Ya. Froyanov (born in 1936) represents the Saint-Petersburg school of history. He was the head of the Department of History at Saint Petersburg State University. He had many views of ancient society different from B.A. Rybakov, he is considered to be non-Marxist.

“Russia before the Russians”

- Which peoples lived on Russian lands before the formation of the Russian ethnos (nation)?
- Russian plain constituted the area of constant migrations and conquests of different groups from Asia. “The Great Migration of Peoples” (2nd –6th centuries CE).
- Read the textbook.

Russian Federation in 2015



Geographic position and climate: woods in the North, steppe in the South



Combination of wood and steppe



An old Russian village



A field of rye



East Slavs: the ancestors of the Russians

- East Slavs: tribes speaking the Eastern variety of Slavic languages (according to the linguistic classification)
- With time three distinct East Slavic languages developed: Great Russian, often called simply Russian, Ukrainian, and White Russian (or Belorussian). All of them are languages of three independent states now. Ukraine and Belorussia got independence in 1991.
- Other branches of the Slavic Languages are the West Slavic, including Polish and Czech, and the South Slavic, such as Serbo-Croatian, Bulgarian, Slovenian and Makedonian.
- The Slavic Languages, in turn, form a subdivision of the Indo-European language family which includes most of the languages spoken today in Europe. This family contains the Teutonic, Romance, Hellenic, Baltic, Celtic, Iranian, Indic, and Armenian subfamilies (groups) of languages.

The Slavs and their languages (modern period)



The homeland of the Slavs?

- To explain the relatedness of the languages within a family and the much closer relationship of the languages within the same subfamily, in the 19th century scholars have postulated an original language and homeland for each family.
- Where is the homeland of all Indo-European peoples? (3rd-2nd millennia BCE)
- Where is the homeland of the East Slavs?

Slavic migrations and settlement of future Russian lands

- The Slavs have usually been assigned a common homeland in the general area of the valley of the Vistula (Wisła) and the northern slopes of the Carpathians (Karpats). In the 19th-early 20th centuries their split was dated in the 6th century CE.
- In the 7th-8th centuries East Slavs settled the great plain of European Russia (Slavic migrations).
- Recent scholarship has criticized the theory of original languages and homelands. The theory of the “Slavic homeland” has been questioned.
- The archeological discoveries in Russia have demonstrated that the Slavs lived in the earlier time (since the middle of the 1st millennium BCE, before the 7th century) in a larger part of present Russia, than originally supposed. Some scholars have redefined the original Slavic homeland to include parts of Russia. Others have suggested the migrations of the Slavs in several waves. Others have given up “The Slavic homeland” concept altogether.

The first written references to the Slavs

- The first written references to the Slavs belong to the classical writers early in our era, including Pliny the Elder and Tacitus.
- Later accounts: Byzantine historian Procopius and the Gothic Jordanes (6th century).
- The terms most frequently used to designate the Slavs were “Venedi” and “Antes”.
- The Slavs composed a significant part of the population of southern and central Russia from the time of the Scythians (end of the 1st millennium BCE), the tribes of the Iranian origin.

A battle between Slavs and Scythians: is this possible?



The East Slavs and their surrounding

- The Slavs fought against the Goths (3rd-early 4th centuries), were conquered by the Huns (late 4th – early 5th centuries) and then by the Avars (6th century). Several East Slavic tribes were paying tribute to the Khazars in the 8th-9th centuries.
- At that time, according to our main written source, the *Kievan Primary Chronicle* (early 12th century), the East Slavs were divided into 12 tribes located on the broad expanses of the Russian plain, from the Black Sea, the Danube, and the Carpathian mountains, across Ukraine, and beyond, northward to the Novgorod territory and eastward toward the Volga.
- Their neighbors included the Turkic tribes in the south and east (the Khazars and Bulgars), the Baltic tribes in the west, and the Finno-Ugrian peoples (ancestors of Finns and Hungarians) in the north (north-east).

Main occupations:

- Main occupations: agriculture (most cereal types used in Russia today), fishing, hunting, cattle-raising, weaving, and pottery-making.
- Arts and crafts were already developed (for example, carpentry – most buildings made of wood).
- The East Slavs knew the use of iron since the very beginning of their history.
- They built many towns, Kiev, Novgorod and Smolensk were the largest among them.
- The trade with neighboring peoples developed, especially Greece (Byzantine) and the Arabs.

Main occupations of ancient Slavs



Towns of ancient Slavs



Society and culture

- Very little is known about political organization. Apparently, the earliest form of society organization was the “military democracy”: the most important decisions were undertaken by the majority of men-warriors.
- The institute of rulers (*Knyaz'*) , usually translated as “Prince”, developed as early as the 5th-6th centuries.
- The prince was the major military power, who had his own military unit (*druzhina*). Princes were engaged in foreign trade since the early times.

Prince and his warriors



Prince and his boats



Religion: polytheism.

- The Slavs worshipped many gods, who represented nature powers (the sun, wind, earth, rivers, etc.)
- Each tribe possessed its own deities (including spirits of the dead, especially powerful rulers--ancestors).
- There were special priests serving the gods: in control of sacrifices.

Idols of gods (modern reconstructions)



The only surviving figure of pagan god
(idol), found in modern Ukraine



Idols of gods (modern reconstructions)



Prince and a pagan priest

