

History 445
CULTURAL HISTORY OF MODERN RUSSIA
Religion in Modern Russian History

Dr. Paul W. Werth
M&W 10.00 – 11.15 AM, WRI C-301

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Course Description and Objectives

This course examines the central role of religion in modern Russian history, from the late Muscovite period until the present. It examines the pervasive presence of religion in Russian politics, culture, law, philosophy, architecture, and social organization since the late seventeenth century. We shall explore the development of churches and hierarchies as institutions, their relation to the state and ruling ideologies, but also the spiritual experience of ordinary believers. We shall furthermore examine the effects of the brutal anti-religious campaigns of the first two Soviet decades, the elaboration of a new ideology of official atheism, and the reappearance of religious institutions and belief in the post-Soviet period. The course takes as a particular theme the spiritual diversity of Russia and the USSR, and we accordingly will consider developments not only in Orthodox Christianity, but also the numerous other religions present in Russian and Soviet Eurasia: Islam, Judaism, Roman and Greek Catholicism, Lutheranism, Buddhism, and numerous other smaller groups and sects. In this regard, the course will involve an inquiry into methods of imperial rule under the old regime and their displacement by modern secular conceptions of nationality in the Soviet period.

In diligently fulfilling all the requirements for this course, students will gain a basic and fundamental understanding of the religious diversity of Muscovy, the Russian Empire, and the USSR; explore the ways in which the Muscovite, Imperial, and Soviet state managed this religious diversity over some five centuries; contemplate the role of violence and religious conflict in shaping the history of Eurasia; consider how different believers subjectively experienced religion and spirituality in their lives; examine the nature and consequences of the stridently atheistic ideological outlook of the Soviet state; evaluate the nature of the religious resurgence in Russia and Central Asia since Perestroika and Glasnost'; improve their writing and analytical skills; develop new capacities for summarizing and making historical connections; attain basic geographical knowledge of Russia and Eurasia; learn how to access scholarly articles in electronic form through the on-line library catalog; and in general have a grand old time.

Readings

The readings for this course take three principal forms. First are the books listed below, available for purchase at the bookstore(s) and also on various web sites. These are self-explanatory. Second are texts that I have scanned into a PDF format and have placed, for reasons of copyright protection, on the Web Campus site for this course (look under the rubric "course content"); these will also be placed on reserve at the library, if students so request. Finally, some readings will require you to access journals articles in

their electronic form through the library catalog. This takes just a few minutes, and I can more than happy to show how this is done. All of these readings are critical to the course, and none may be ignored. If you have trouble accessing the readings, I will in most cases be able to provide you with a pdf copy, though I ask that you request this from me only if you are absolutely unable to acquire the readings through the channels described above. At points the reading may seem daunting, but two points should be kept in mind. First, the main thing is to try to get the general idea of the reading, which suggests that skimming in some cases may be perfectly acceptable. Second, in some cases the numbers of pages may look daunting, but those pages frequently include notes, which in most cases need not be given too much attention. The reading may thus be less than it appears initially. The books for the course are listed below.

Timothy Ware, The Orthodox Church (Penguin, 1993). ISBN 0140146563.

Robert P. Geraci & Michael Khodarkovsky, eds., Of Religion and Empire: Missions, Conversion, and Tolerance in Tsarist Russia (Cornell University Press, 2001). ISBN 0-8014-8703-X.

William Husband, "Godless Communists:" Atheism and Society in Soviet Russia (Northern Illinois University Press, 2003). ISBN 0875805957.

Adeeb Khalid, Islam After Communism: Religion and Politics in Central Asia (University of California Press, 2007). ISBN 0520249275.

Requirements & Grades

Flawless attendance and vigorous, animated participation (15%): Excessive absences will be detrimental if not fatal to your final grade. You should be animated in discussions and prepared to demonstrate your serious engagement with the material. Note that all readings listed on the syllabus are obligatory. Participation also requires that each student, at least once in the semester, introduce the readings for the given day either by posing a question to which the readings provide the response, or by responding to a triad provided by the instructor. Details will follow.

Geography quizzes (10%): These quizzes are designed to ensure that students have a grasp of the geographic features essential to understanding the developments of the war. I allow students to take each quiz a second time, counting the original score and the new improved score as 1/2 of the total. But in order to take a quiz a second time, *you must do so within one week of its first offering* (and on your own time). If you miss a quiz and have not made arrangements with me, *you will receive a zero, and you forfeit the opportunity to retake it.* Details on the geography quizzes may be found on the web-site.

Three short reaction papers (30%): Over the course of the semester I will ask you to write three relatively short papers (5-6 pp.) addressing the issues that we are discussing in the course. Each paper should be based on the required readings for this course and on two other sources (e.g., two articles and/or book chapters) that you will identify in consultation with me. The idea is to allow you to explore the issues of the course in somewhat greater depth. Details on these exercises may be found on the web site.

Mid-Term Examination (20%). The mid-term will test all knowledge accumulated by the date of the exam.

Final Exam (25%): This will be an in-class exercise that comprehensively reviews the material for the entire course. Details on the final will be available later in the semester.

Written assignments are due at class time on the day indicated in the syllabus. Students are encouraged (but are not required) to submit written work to the instructor electronically, using Microsoft Word or a compatible program (saved as ".doc" rather than "docx"). Late submissions will be downgraded seven points (on a 100-point scale) for each day that they are late and will be accepted only with an accompanying one-page explanation for why they are late and why the instructor should accept them. Electronic submissions will be considered on time if they were sent prior to the start of class on the day that they are due. All written submissions must be typed, using a 12-point font, double space, and one-inch margins. Each submission must also have a title. Papers that exhibit a complete absence of proofreading may be returned to the author as unacceptable. Any submission not conforming to these guidelines may be rejected entirely. A full description of my guidelines is available on the web site. Unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor, students will not be permitted to make up any missed exam.

Course Schedule with Readings

MON (Jan 12): **Introductions, Issues, Frameworks**

WED (Jan 14): **Eurasia: Its Peoples & Religions (a basic survey)**
"Religion in Modern Russian History" (draft essay for The Oxford Handbook of Modern Russian History, forthcoming) [web reader].

NO CLASS 19 JANUARY: MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

WED (Jan 21): **The Foundations of Christianity**
Timothy Ware, The Orthodox Church, pp. 1-42

MON (Jan 26): **Division & Conversion**
Ware, Orthodox Church, pp. 43-86
The Christianization of Rus', from the Primary Chronicle [web reader]

WED (Jan 28): **Moscow & Orthodoxy**
Ware, Orthodox Church, pp. 87-114
Georg Michels, "Rescuing the Orthodox," in Geraci & Khodarkovsky, Of Religion and Empire, pp. 19-37

- WED (Feb 25): **The Problem of "Popular Religion"**
 Paul Bushkovitch, "Popular Religion in the Time of Peter the Great," in John-Paul Himka and Andriy Zayarnyuk, eds, Letters From Heaven: Popular Religion in Russia and Ukraine (Toronto, 2006), pp. 146-164 [reserve or web site]
 Vera Shevzov, "Letting the People into Church: Reflections on Orthodoxy and Community in Late Imperial Russia," in Valerie Kivelson and Robert Greene, eds., Orthodox Russia: Belief and Practice under the Tsars (University Park, 2003), pp. 59-77 [reserve or web site]
- MON (Mar 2): **Women and Female Piety**
 Agnès Kefeli, "The Role of Tatar and Kriashen Women in the Transmission Of Islamic Knowledge," in Geraci & Khodarkovsky, 250-273.
 Nadieszda Kizenko, "Protectors of Women and the Lower Orders," in Kivelson and Greene, eds., Orthodox Russia, pp. 59-77 [reserve or web site]
- WED (Mar 4): **Dissent within Orthodoxy**
 J. Eugene Clay, "Orthodox Missionaries and 'Orthodox Heretics' in Russia, 1886-1917," in Geraci & Khodarkovsky, 38-69.
 Beer, Daniel. "The Medicalization of Deviance in the Russian Orthodox Church, 1880-1905," Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History 5.3 (2004): 451-83 [library on-line catalog or print version in stacks].
- MON (Mar 9): **Managing the Multi-Confessional State: The Framework**
 Crews, Robert. "Empire and the Confessional State: Islam and Religious Politics in Nineteenth-Century Russia." American Historical Review 108, no. 1 (Feb., 2003): 50-83 [library on-line catalog or print version in stacks]
 Geraci & Khodarkovsky, "Introduction" and "Conclusion," pp. 1-9, 335-344.
- WED (Mar 11): **Managing the Multi-Confessional State: Cases**
 Theodore Weeks, "Between Rome and Tsargrad: The Uniate Church in Imperial Russia," in Geraci & Khodarkovsky, pp. 70-91.
 John Klier, "State Policies and the Conversion of Jews in Imperial Russia," in Geraci & Khodarkovsky, pp. 92-112.
 Dittmar Schorkowitz, "The Orthodox Church, Lamaism, and Shamanism," in Geraci & Khodarkovsky, pp. 201-225

- MON (Mar 16): **Islam & Mission**
Firouzeh Mostashari, "Colonial Dilemmas," in Geraci & Khodarkovsky, pp. 229-249
Robert Geraci, "Going Abroad or Going to Russia?" in Geraci & Khodarkovsky, pp. 274-310
- WED (Mar 18): **The Orthodox Church in the Twilight of Empire**
Gregory Freeze, "Subversive Piety: Religion and Political Crisis in Late Imperial Russia," Journal of Modern History 68.2 (1996): 308-350 [library on-line catalog or print version in stacks]
Simon Dixon, "Archimandrite Mikhail (Semenov) and Russian Christian Socialism," Historical Journal 51.3 (2008): 689-718 [library on-line catalog]
- MON (Mar 23): **The Late Empire**
William Husband, "Godless Communists: Atheism and Society in Soviet Russia (DeKalb, 2003), intro & ch. 1
Second reaction paper due
- WED (Mar 25): **Revolution & Antireligious Policy**
Husband, Godless Communists, chap. 2
Documents on religion and atheism from William Rosenberg, ed., Bolshevik Visions: The First Phase of the Cultural Revolution in Soviet Russia (Ann Arbor, 1984), pp. 191-210 [reserve or web site]
- MON (Mar 30): **Secularization & the Soviet Family**
Husband, Godless Communists, chaps. 3-4
Second Geography Quiz
- WED (Apr 1): **Accommodation & Resistance**
Husband, Godless Communists, chapter 5 and epilogue
- NO CLASS 6 & 8 APRIL: SPRING BREAK**
- MON (Apr 13): **Wartime Revival**
Abeed Khalid, Islam after Communism: Religion and Politics in Central Asia (Berkeley, 2007), pp. 1-83

- WED (Apr 15): **Religion in the USSR after World War II**
Khalid, Islam, pp. 84-115
Ware, pp. 145-171
- MON (Apr 20): **Religious Revivals under Perestroika**
Khalid, Islam, pp. 116-139
“The Church and Religion in Soviet Society,” in The Glasnost Papers: Voices on Reform from Moscow, ed. Andrei Melville and Gail lapidus (Boulder, 1990), pp. 121-148 [reserve or web site]
- WED (Apr 22): **Russian Orthodoxy After the USSR**
Zoe Knox, "The Symphonic Ideal: The Moscow Patriarchate's Post-Soviet Leadership," Europe-Asia Studies 55.4 (2003): 575-596 [library on-line catalog]
Irina Papkova, book review in Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History 9.2 (2008): 481-492 [library on-line catalog]
- MON (Apr 27): **Islam After Communism**
Khalid, Islam, pp. 140-203
- WED (Apr 29): **Review & Summary**
No reading
Third reaction paper due

FINAL EXAM: MONDAY 4 May 2009, 10.10 AM