

Russian and Chinese Empire-Building [1450-1750]

AP World History Notes
Chapter 14

Making the Russian Empire

- Russian state centered on the city of Moscow
- Conquered a number of neighboring Russian-speaking cities
- Continued to expand south and east of Moscow
- Brought together a wide variety of different peoples and cultures

Making the Russian Empire



Map 14.2 The Russian Empire
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Motivations for Russian Expansion

- Motivation #1 = security from the nomadic pastoral peoples
 - Lived in the grasslands south and east of the Russian heartland
 - Russians = afraid one of these groups will rise to power like the Mongols
 - These nomads frequently raided Russia's neighbors and sold many of them into slavery



Motivations for Russian Expansion



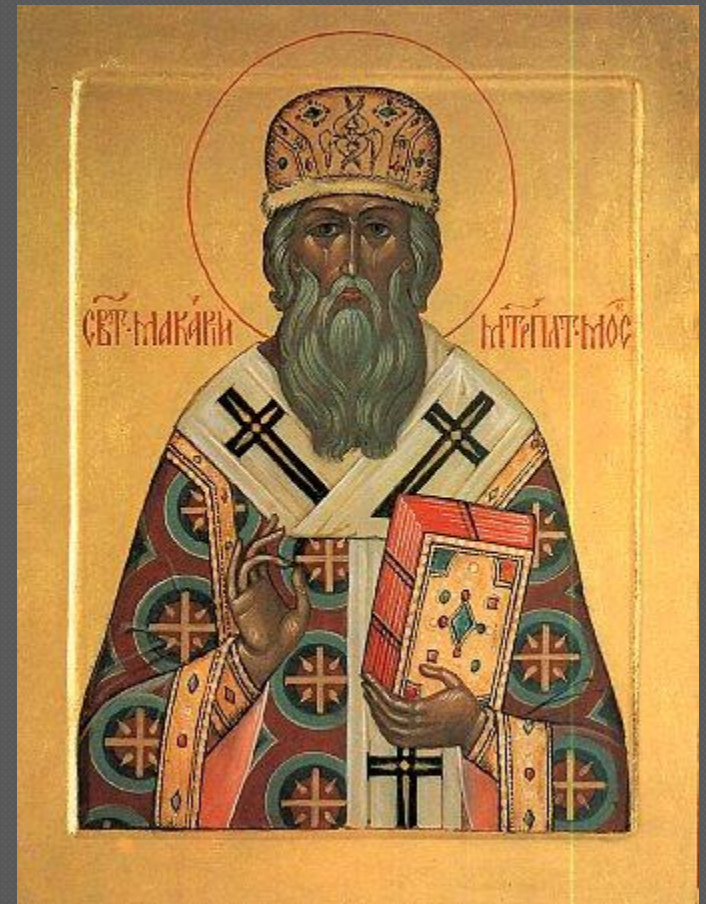
○ Motivation #2 = Pelts of fur-bearing animals

- To the east across the vast expanse of Siberia
- Very valuable and in-demand item
- Nickname = “soft gold”



Russian Point of View

- To Russians, their empire meant:
 - Defending the Russian frontiers
 - Enhancing the power of the Russian state
 - Bringing Christianity, civilization, and enlightenment to “savages”



Life in the Russian Empire



Ivan the Terrible
Tsar of Russia (1533-1584)

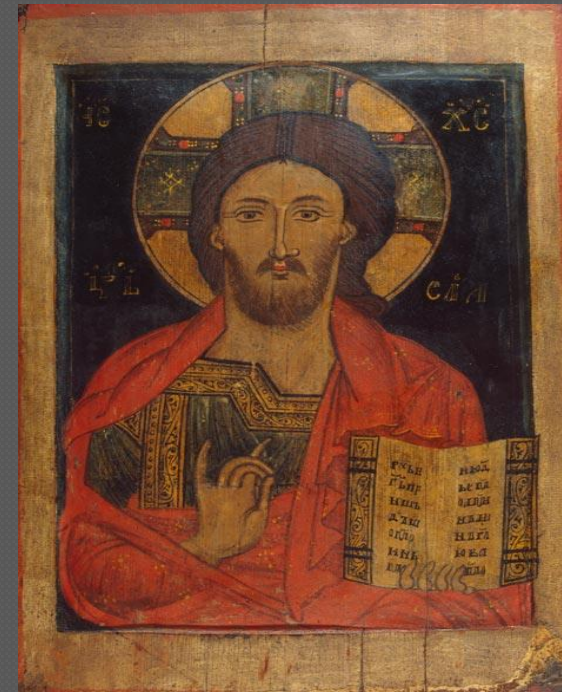
- Everyone had to swear an oath of allegiance to the grand tsar
- Everyone had to pay *yasak* = tribute paid in cash or valuable goods
- New diseases accompanied Russian conquest → ex: smallpox and measles
- People felt the pressure to convert to Christianity
 - Tax breaks, tribute exemptions, and the promise of land if they did

Life in the Russian Empire

- Huge influx of Russian settlers to conquered territories within the empire
 - Began to outnumber the native peoples
 - Ex: By 1720 = population of Siberia = 70% Russian and 30% native Siberian

Life in the Russian Empire

- Native peoples were “Russified” = adopted the Russian language and culture, converted to Christianity, gave up their traditional hunting & gathering lifestyle, etc.



Impact on the Environment



- Loss of hunting ground and pasturelands to Russian agricultural settlers
- Result = native peoples became dependent on Russian markets for crops and luxury goods

The Russian Empire

- By the 18th century = Russia became one of the great powers of Europe
- Power stemmed from wealth found in: rich agricultural lands, valuable furs, and mineral deposits
- Russia became a highly militarized state as well
- Russian Empire stayed intact until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991

The Russian Empire

- Established a tradition of autocratic government with a powerful monarchy
 - Belief = only a strong ruler could hold together such a large empire with such a diverse population
 - Ruled by monarchies until the early 1900s



Peter the Great
Reign: 1682 - 1725

Russian Empire vs. those of other Western European Countries

RUSSIAN EMPIRE

- ◉ Acquired territories next to them that they had been in contact with for a long time
- ◉ Acquired territories *at the same time* that a Russian state was taking shape
- ◉ “Russia was an empire.”

OTHER EUROPEANS

- ◉ Acquired territories far away from them that they didn't know about until 1492
- ◉ Acquired overseas empires **AFTER** establishing themselves as solid European states
- ◉ “The British had an empire.”

Making China an Empire



China's Qing Dynasty Empire
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- Done by the Qing (aka Manchu) Dynasty
 - Ruled from 1644 to 1912
 - Foreigners → invaders from Manchuria
- Enlarged the size of China and incorporated a lot of non-Chinese peoples as they expanded to the north and west

Qing Rulers: Cultural Elements

MAINTAINED

- ◉ Ethnic distinctiveness → forbade intermarriage between themselves and native Chinese

ADOPTED

- ◉ Chinese language
- ◉ Confucian teachings
- ◉ Chinese government techniques

Making China an Empire: Motivations

- Major motivation = security concerns
- To China = expansion was viewed as a defensive necessity
- Result = Qing dynasty China undertook an 80-year military effort (1680-1760) to bring together surrounding regions under Chinese control



Life in the Chinese Empire



Yizhu = 8th Emperor of the
Qing (Manchu) Dynasty

- ◉ In general the Qing rulers:
 - Showed respect for other cultures
 - Did not force people to assimilate to Chinese culture
- ◉ Chinese settlers did not flood the other regions of the empire