

# The Making of Modern Ukraine

## 07 - The Rise of Muscovite Power

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CMpkBOTCgCM>

00:00 Okay, greetings everybody, happy Tuesday.

This is a lecture that I was not expecting to give.

This was going to be Paul Bushkovitch's guest lecture, but as you see, I'm gonna give it.

It's about the origins of the Muscovite state and Muscovite power.

The way things are gonna work the rest of the week, is that on Thursday, my friend and colleague Glenn Dynner is going to give the lecture on Jews in Ukraine, something which he is eminently qualified to do.

Same reading, same everything, there will just be a slightly different person wearing the shirt with the buttons in front of the classroom on Thursday.

So please give Professor Dynner the attention he deserves for making the schlep up here and giving the lecture.

One of the TFs will introduce, and I'll see you again on Tuesday.

So this is also not a lecture I was expecting to give, in the sense that when I gave my first lecture about the rise of Muscovite power, I wouldn't have expected to be in a situation where there is so much to explain.

01:09 So we're in the middle of this war where, just to take two very obvious points that are pertinent, the justification for the war, or one of the justifications for the war has to do with the continuation of some kind of permanent identity from Kyiv a thousand years ago into Russia today.

Another point, which you'll see the pertinence of, I hope, is that many of the people who are doing the fighting in the Russian army today are Asians, are indigenous people from deep into Asia, who are disproportionately fighting and killing and dying in Ukraine.

And so you might be asking yourself, if you're paying attention day by day in this war, "Who are these Buryats, and why are these Buryats doing so much fighting and dying in Ukraine?" Where do they come into the Russian state? Why is it that a people of whom there are only a few hundred thousand who live somewhere around Lake Baikal deep into Asia and are Buddhists, why are they doing so much of the fighting and dying in Ukraine? Why is it that when I visit a woman living in the suburbs of Chernihiv, and I'm asking who the Russian soldiers are who were in her basement, she says, "Well actually, two of them are Buryats." How is that, who are these people? What do they have to do with the history of Russia? By the end of this lecture, I hope that all becomes clear.

02:22 So I wanna start with a philosophical reflection about how you get something from nothing, because once again in this lecture we are dealing with the origins of something.

And of course, the origins of something is a very tender, sensitive subject.

Origins are always tricky, because it would be nice if we could have something from nothing.

You might have noticed that a lot of origin stories involve how something, there was something beautiful and pure at the beginning, right? And it was corrupted later on.

There was this little thing called the Book of Genesis, which is a bit like that.

You might have noticed that national stories are also a bit like that.

There was an ethnicity, it was pure, it was simple.

03:01 It might have been corrupted later by foreigners, and bad things happened.

But deep down in the beginning, it was all folk songs and harmony before the other people came and messed everything up.

Naturally, you'll have understood, I'm sure you're understood already, but it's been a main theme of this class, that things don't come out of nowhere.

That the states and the nations that we're trying to explain always have something to do with contacts with other states and nations.

There's always something out there, which is at the beginning of the story, but it's not in the beginning of its own story.

It's in the middle or or at the end.

So one way to deal with this problem of how you have things that didn't exist before is to imagine this, you know, this state of Eden, this state of innocence.

Another way to deal with this problem is the way that social sciences deal with it, or the way that, ooh, the social science PhD perks up.

The way that, that would be Daniel, yeah he's a postdoc.

Daniel say hi, he's also Ukrainian.

Now you've been doxxed.

04:01 So the way that social sciences generally deal with the question of how you get something from nothing, is you just start with the something.

You don't worry about the origins, things just are as they are.

And something similar can be said about philosophy, that we just assume that there's a person, there's a kind of, you know, there's a person, the person is fully formed.

We don't worry about the way the person came from.

In history, we have to confront, like the weird stories of origins, but we also have to come up with a plausible story of origin ourself.

And I wanted to suggest that a root for plausible stories of origin would be something more like Ovid's "Metamorphoses", which I don't know if you've studied, but the "Metamorphoses" of Ovid are all about weird contacts involving violence and sex and families that generally don't work out, but the theme is transformation.

You're not getting something from nothing.

You're getting something from something else.

You're getting something from some kind of encounter.

And history is more like that.

It's, unexpected things arise from the encounters of things, and then later on you tell a story about how it had to be that way.

But at the time, it's all very messy and confusing.

05:02 It involves some kind of transformation.

Okay, check out this segue.

So Ovid's "Metamorphoses" were probably the major influence or a major influence on Shakespeare.

When I talked to Zelenskyy a couple of Saturdays ago in Kyiv, he made the point that everything was in Shakespeare, which has me thinking about "Hamlet" as I often do anyway.

Hamlet was a prince of what? Help me out.

- Denmark? - Denmark.

- A hundred out of a hundred for the classroom, excellent.

Everybody who spoke up got it right, and everybody who didn't know was quiet, which is like perfect yell behavior, well done.

(students laughing) So Denmark, and Denmark is an heir of what? What kind of a state is it? Vikings, right? Okay, you fell back on the TFs.

It's a Viking state, right? So, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, which for a long time is part of Denmark, Iceland, and Rus, these are all Viking states.

These are all post Viking states, and also another post Viking state which we might forget, because we think of it as so big and important.

06:04 It's the language I'm speaking.

- England.

- England, right? England is also a post Viking state.

So this phenomenon of post Viking states is very important in European history, From England all the way to the East Slavic lands The England of Shakespeare is a post Viking state, right? The Normans, I'm just gonna run this through with you and you'll see where it's going.

The Normans who invaded England in 1066, Norman means Northman or Norseman.

The Normans were a synthetic people of Vikings who had arrived in northern France, who were there for a while, and then they later invaded England.

When they invaded England in 1066, they invaded England in 1066 three days after the Norwegians invaded England in 1066.

It was actually a kind of post Viking pincer movement in England in the early autumn of 1066.

The king of Norway who invaded England in September of 1066 was Harald Hardrada, who you were definitely going to remember, was in the service of Yaroslav the Wise in early Kievan Rus'.

07:09 Harald is the same figure who shows up in Kyiv, who doesn't have much else to do, and becomes a warrior in the service of Yaroslav the Wise, who we know about all this thanks to the Icelandic sagas.

You'll remember Yaroslav the Wise is the one who shows up in the Iceland sagas as Jarisliel, less flatteringly as Jarisliel the Lame, right? So this is all one world, right? The post Viking, who is invading England as the Norwegian king, is the same post Viking Harald who was in the service of Yaroslav the Wise in Kyiv, and who then went on to serve in Byzantium, okay.

So he fails, by the way.

So Harald has this great, he has this fascinating life.

He starts out in Norway, he goes to Kyiv, he serves Yaroslav the Wise.

Shows up in the Icelandic sagas, which let's face it, none of us is ever gonna do, right? Shows up in the Icelandic sagas.

08:01 He goes on to Byzantium, he serves as part of a Ruthenian or a Rusyn bodyguard in Byzantium, then goes back to Norway, succeeds in becoming King, invades England, but gets killed right away, okay.

So like that's, you know, not the way it would've ended in the Netflix serial, but that's so, but his life, this life of Harald, it reminds us that there's this whole arc from Scandinavia to Byzantium.

And in this arc of history, right? Or really from England to Byzantium, where the Vikings are in the middle, and the big pushing forces were the Franks and the Byzantines.

The Franks and the Byzantines are pushing from one side and the other, the Vikings show up in the middle, and then the Vikings end up having to do with the creation of a whole bunch of states from England all the way down, all the way down to Rus', okay.

So when the Normans, the Normans are the post Vikings who win, right? The Norwegians lose, but the Normans are the ones who win.

And it's often forgotten that there were two attacks on England at exactly the same time, although I saw some nodding in the gallery, which is cool.

09:03 So the Normans are the post Vikings who win England.

Their leader goes under the name of William the Conqueror.

He kills the English king, he establish his own elites, and the language has changed, right? The language has changed.

So remember, another big theme of this class, our big argument is how the language is there for you.

The language and the people are not necessarily identical.

Languages change, people move into languages.

So the English language that we're moving into now, or that we're using now has something to do with William the Conqueror conquering England.

It would be very hard for me to create a sentence in English which doesn't involve a word which came from French.

You know, I'm not gonna like show off at this point, but I will give you, I'll read you a passage which we've already read, which is Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" from 1380, the same passage.

"A knight there was and that a worthy man, that from the time that he first began to ride out, he loved chivalry, truth and honor, freedom and courtesy." Right, there isn't gonna be chivalry or courtesy in Chaucer without the Normans, without the post Vikings invading England.

10:03 Or Shakespeare and "Hamlet", the most famous speech is "to be or not to be" right? Which includes a beautiful line about how "conscience makes cowards of us all", which he couldn't have written without the word conscience, which of course is a French word, okay.

So you've gotten the point about this, this big political cultural synthesis, which takes place over a few centuries, and how our world is part of that world.

Our East Slavic Rus' world is part of that world, although it's special.

And one way that it's special, as you know, is that the East Slavic world Rus' becomes Christian under the Byzantines, whereas all the rest of it's going to be Western Christian, right? Boring.

Whereas our part is going to be Eastern Christian.

The other thing which is special, by the time we get to this lecture, and this is the subject of this lecture, is that it no longer exists.

So, England, Norway, Norway slash Denmark, Sweden, these are all fairly durable political entities.

England is still around.

11:00 I mean, by the end of the semester let's see but England is still around, and Denmark, Norway, Sweden, they're also around.

Rus' is not still around, and so that's another difference, and that's the subject that we're getting to today.

What actually happens to Rus', and how are we best to think about that? So I introduced a

next moment of contact in the last lecture.

The moment of contact I tried to introduce in the last lecture was another East/West moment, which was the Mongols coming from one side, and the Teutonic Knights coming from the other side.

So if we're going to explain the origins of Lithuania as we tried to do in the last lecture, we explain the origins of Lithuania not by saying they were always Lithuanians, they were always wonderful pagans, they were very innocent.

You know, they did a lot of human sacrifice, which is how you preserve innocence, as we all know.

No I mean honestly, you've had, I mean the human sacrifice, well I mean. (sighing) Where do I draw all the lines on the jokes knowing that I'm filmed? (students laughing) That's just occurred to me for the first time.

12:10 But let's face it, human sacrifice has a kind of simplicity and clarity, which other forms of, you know, ritual don't.

So the, where was I? Oh, so the Lithuanians, it's not that the Lithuanians were always there and they were pure and they were an ethnicity and so on.

That's not the story at all, right? The story is that the Lithuanians saw what happened to the Prussians, the Lithuanians gathered together some tribes, some Pagan tribes who speak the Baltic Lithuanian language.

The Lithuanians went south and gathered up most of the lands that had been Rus', and on that basis were able to stand up to the Teutonic Knights.

And then because there was a rising state called Poland, the Lithuanians married into the Polish crown, and in alliance with Poland, and having annexed most of what was Rus', Lithuania had, there the Lithuanian rulers created the state which could actually defeat the Teutonic Knights.

13:02 But all of that only makes sense, that whole rise of Lithuania as a great state only makes sense if you understand Teutonic Knights pushing from the West, Mongols have come in from the East and destroyed Rus'.

If the Mongols don't destroy Rus', Lithuania is not going to annex it.

If Teutonic Knights are not pushing in with their program of forced Christianization, the Lithuanians aren't going to consolidate.

So this is another one of these symphonies where larger pressures push, particularities arise, new states are consolidated, right? And so we get to this, we've already gotten to this.

It's the next few verses in Chaucer, right? So the Chaucer, "Above all nations in Pruce and Lettow, had he reysed and in Ruce," you know what that means.

The Teutonic Knights were the (speaking in German).

Great German word, by the way.

A (speaking in German) now is just like, "I'm gonna make, you know, making a little trip, (speaking in German)." But in this context, it means part of a crusade.

You're joining a crusade.

You're coming from France or England or somewhere far away, you're going to join in a crusade.

Pruce is Prussia, which has been fully destroyed.

14:02 Lettow is Lithuania, and Ruce is of course Rus'.

So that's kind of interesting, isn't it? I'm sure when you read this in high school, or in your free time, or when you read it in the future, you just skimmed right over, "What is this Ruce place, R-U-C-E? Probably Chaucer made it up to rhyme with Pruce," right? But no, Ruce is actually the country R-U-S, which we've been studying, which in the 14th century was a completely unproblematic word, okay.

So this Lithuanian trajectory we followed, and we're gonna keep following it.

We're gonna keep following the trajectory of what in this lecture I'm gonna call Lithuanian Rus'.

Because if we're gonna understand the, if we're gonna move east and understand the consequences of the Mongol destruction of Kyiv in 1237 to 1240, we have to then move into the question of the successors of Rus'.

And the successors of Rus' are going to overlap with other things.

15:00 They're going to overlap with the Mongol world, but not only.

Very briefly, we've already done one of the successors of Rus'.

One of the successors of Rus' is Lithuania.

The Lithuanian Grand Dukes called themselves the rulers of Ruthenia, and Ruthenia in Latin, of Rus' in their own language.

So one of the successors of of Rus' is Lithuanian Rus'.

A second successor of Rus', which we briefly talked about, is Galicia and Volhynia.

So this is all, right? This is all on your sheet.

Okay? You nodding, thank you.

So Galicia and Volhynia are the two Westernmost districts of Rus'.

These are very important places to know.

They're very interesting places.

Galicia and Volhynia are English words which come from Latin, but the original terms come from the old Ruthenian names for the places, (speaking in foreign language), hence Galicia, And then Volhynia in Latin is actually (speaking in Latin), but (speaking in Latin), you don't have to know this, I'm just giving you a little break.

16:09 You don't have to write it down, I'm just cruising.

So Volhynia in Latin is (speaking Latin), is from the city of Volodymyr.

Volodymyr becomes (speaking in Latin), and Volodymyr is course of city named after the first baptized ruler of Russia, which is Volodymyr.

So Galicia and Volhynia are what we call these Western districts, they're very important because they hold out as rulers of Rus' for an extra century or so.

They, the leaders of Galicia and Volhynia, claimed also to be the rulers of Kyiv.

They very often actually had their person ruling Kyiv.

After the Mongol onslaught, they managed to hold their own in Galicia and Volhynia.

After 1240 they were the only princes of Rus' who actually engaged the Mongols on the battlefield with anything other than complete failure.

17:05 So, and they managed to hold Kyiv, actually, but of course.

But they managed to hold their own lands, and consolidate the rule over their own lands in the 1240s.

After the end of Kyiv, after the destruction of Kyiv, they refer to themselves as Princes of Rus' and Princes of all of Rus'.

In case I don't get to it later, this is a theme.

If you're gonna call yourself the Prince of Rus', just go ahead and call yourself the Prince of all of Rus', and you will eventually figure out in practice how much all of Rus' turns out to be.

That is the answer to the question of what all of Rus' is.

All of these people called themselves the Prince of all of Rus', okay? Nobody said, "I'm the Prince of Some of Rus', and maybe somebody else is," no.

They all when they, as soon as they thought of it, they all said, "I'm the Prince of all of Rus'." And the question of what all of Rus' is, is determined by practice, how far you can actually get, and then you will call that Rus', whether it was historically Rus' or not.

18:01 So in 2022 we're in a war where Russia is fighting Ukraine in territories on the basis of the idea that these territories are formerly Rus', but they're not.

The lands in the south of Ukraine are territories of the Crimean Khanate.

They were never part of Rus', and but never, so, and this is a traditional theme.

When Moscow, and I'm gonna get to this, when Moscow takes over Novgorod, Novgorod suddenly becomes Rus', but Novgorod didn't itself think that it was Rus'.

It only becomes Rus' after it was conquered, and so on and so forth.

So the whole idea of controlling all of Rus' is essentially a pragmatic idea, right? After the destruction of Rus', okay.

So the point about Galicia-Volhynia is that it's gonna have a bright future.

Galicia and Volhynia are very important to the future, to the history of Ukraine.

But also they maintained some kind of Rusyn Ruthenian statehood for, basically a bonus century into the 1320s, 1330s, when they fall to Lithuania and to Poland.

19:02 So about 1320, the Lithuanians have gotten to Kyiv, and Volhynia becomes part of Lithuania, okay? Volhynia becomes part of Lithuania.

Galicia, Halychyna, becomes part of Poland as of as of 1339.

Okay, so that's, so now we have two successors of Rus'.

We have the Lithuanian Rus', and we have the Galicia and Volhynia Rus', that's two.

The third one, the one that we're gonna focus on today is Mongol Rus'.

So the part of Rus' which falls durably under Mongol control from circa 1240 deep into the 15th century.

So a different story, a story of multiple centuries, multiple generations.

Time matters a lot.

So this is just a basic historian's point.

It matters a lot whether regime governs a territory for 50 years, a hundred years, or 300 years, right? That's just a very, it's a very basic point.

20:03 And so when we're starting to think about what's different between Galicia-Volhynia and the Northeastern territories that become Mongol Rus', durability of Mongol rule.

Galicia-Volhynia encountered the Mongols.

They only very briefly paid tribute.

The territories of Mongol Rus', hint, Mongol Rus' is what's gonna become Moscow and the Russian Empire and all the rest of it, okay? So the territories that become Mongol Rus', that are Mongol Rus', are under Mongol control for centuries.

That's a basic fundamental difference.

So Mongol Rus', here's another way to think about it.

It is one of the successors of Rus' for sure, and we're gonna see the connections between Mongol Rus' and Kievan Rus'.

But it is also one of the many Mongol or post Mongol states all across Asia and eastern Europe.

21:00 So the Mongols, after they come and destroy, which admittedly is like, that's their famous moment.

1240, 1241, they arrive, they destroy, they conquer everyone.

They have to go back for a funeral, as happens, changes all of history, right? The Batu Khan arrives, he destroys, no one can resist him.

Gets a phone call, didn't get a phone call.

He gets notice that he has to go back to Mongolia basically, for what? For a succession crisis.

A funeral is the polite way of saying it, but a succession struggle.

When someone dies, there's a succession struggle, right? Those of you who have families that don't write wills, you know what I'm talking about.

So the, uneasy class-based laughter, okay? (students laughing) So I have to say that because apparently they can't hear when you laugh on the video.

That's been reported to me, like they can hear the jokes but like, then there's silence.

(students laughing) Which from my point of view is a little bit awkward, right? It's like, "He's telling jokes all semester, and the Yale students are just a looking at him." Okay, so 1240, so 1237 to 1241, that's the period that you all remember.

22:09 The Batu Khan comes, he conquers, no one's resistant, so he goes back.

But after this, there is the Mongol state, which is remembered under the name of the Golden Horde, okay? And then, but the Golden Horde over time, itself falls apart into various entities.

And these entities don't, they're often very fuzzy in European history.

They kind of just show up on the margins every now and again, making attacks, or as allies in wars or whatever.

But these are fairly durable entities.

And we have to understand Moscow and not just as a post Rus' entity, but also as one of these post Mongol entities, along with the Nogai Horde, along with the Kazan Khanate, along with the Crimean Khanate.

And by the way, for us, the Crimean Khanate is the most important because the Crimean Khanate is the one that controls Crimea, and then much of the north coast of the Black Sea, what's now the south of Ukraine.

23:09 So we have to imagine the Mongols establishing a state, which over time fragments into a number of different entities, of which one is Moscow.

Of which one is Moscow.

Now, how is Moscow different? Moscow is different in religion.

It's not Pagan as the Mongols are, to use the term of abuse that the Christians use.

And Moscow doesn't convert to Islam.

This is important too.

The rest of these entities convert to Islam.

So, but Moscow doesn't, Moscow is Orthodox.

Moscow's Orthodox, but it's Orthodox in an interesting way, right? It's Orthodox in a place, mark this for the future.

It's Orthodox in a place where there's no other way of being Christian.

This is really important, I mean, I think right down to the present moment.

There's no other way of being Christian.

24:00 If you're Christian, you're Orthodox, that's it.

Whereas west of this, in Kyiv and in the rest of Europe, there are going to be lots of other ways of being Christian.

And even if you are Orthodox, in what's now Ukraine, Belarus, Poland, Lithuania, you're going to be in a series of encounters with other sorts of Christians over the next few

centuries.

In Moscow, this is not true.

Orthodoxy is Christianity, Christianity is Orthodoxy.

And this is all, and related to this, also to mark, there isn't any theology.

There isn't any disputation about religion in Moscow.

In points further west there is going to be, the Orthodox are going to take part in all of the interesting conversations around Reformation, Counter-Reformation, all of that.

That's not going to be happening in Moscow until much later, when Moscow and Kyiv come into contact for the first time, which is not for centuries.

It's not for centuries, it's not in this lecture, it's in the 17th century, okay.

So we're in Mongol Rus'.

Mongol Rus' is the northeast.

25:02 It's the district which I mentioned last time, Suzdal.

And then Suzdal, surrounding territories, the northeast of what had been Rus'.

And the way that the political system is set up by this, is set up in this Northeastern Rus', this Mongol Rus', is really a kind of fresh start, in the sense that the Mongols have come and destroyed.

Okay, good, that's true for everyone.

Then there's the Black Death, it's a bit of a mess.

There's really no one around to write.

And in addition to that, a new principle of political succession is set up.

The principle of political succession in the old Rus', the one based in Kyiv was admittedly very messy and to the point of incomprehensibility, but it had something to do with the ruler and his sons.

26:00 That's about as much as we can say.

And that's by the way, not so unusual in Europe.

This whole idea that it was the eldest son, and it was all very simple.

That usually covers over a whole bunch of illegitimacy and bloodshed, but you know, okay.

So illegitimacy and bloodshed gets a lot of nods.

I just wanna record that for the camera.

All right, so focus.

So in Northeastern Rus', in and around Suzdal, there's a new succession principle which is, how well can you collect taxes for the Mongol overlord? That's the new principle of power.

So the Mongols accept that there's something called Rus'.

They have no trouble with that, but who is the Grand Prince of Rus'? The Grand Prince of Rus' is the person who can collect the tribute.

So that is a new principle of rule.

That is new compared to Kyiv obviously, where if you were in Kyiv, you were the one taking the tribute, right? And by the way, this is a really fundamental thing about political power.

27:05 If you want to figure out who is actually in charge, who is paying tribute to whom? Because everyone says, "I'm the king and the tsar, and all the galaxies," and so on, right? That's very easy.

Having stationary, okay, they didn't have stationary yet, but having a list of titles is very easy, right? But what really matters is, are you paying the tribute, or is someone paying the tribute to you? So the rulers of Muscovy had titles, right? They were the Grand Princes of

Moscow, which sounds great and certainly had its pluses.

But they were paying tribute to the Mongols, and they were the Grand Princes of Moscow because they could pay tribute to the Mongols.

The Mongols chose the man who could collect the tribute.

And so that's a different principle of succession.

The people who ran Mongol Rus' were princes of, they were princes who were descended from the old Rus'.

28:04 Not in any particular distinction, but they were of the blood, but they were only the Grand Princes of Rus' because they were the ones who could collect the taxes.

And then the other way that this is a fresh start is that the whole system is based in a new city, which is Moscow.

So Moscow existed as some kind of fort or something in the 12th century, but Moscow had no princely line.

Moscow is not a district in old Rus'.

Nobody goes to Moscow to rule anything, right? It's not one of these districts Suzdal or like Chernihiv, where you go and you rule.

It's not a district at all.

It's no place, it's nowhere.

Moscow becomes a town, becomes a meaningful place with a princely line after the Mongol destruction of Kyiv, and because it's a Prince of Moscow who's able to collect the tribute.

29:01 It was also, well, there's also some marriage involved.

In 1317, Yuri, who was a Prince of Moscow, married the sister of the Khan of the Golden Horde, right? As one does, you know, in situations like this, right? So he also marries into power, and at that point, power passed durably from a more important bigger city called Tver to Moscow.

And from that point, Moscow is gonna be the center of this entity.

And it's gonna be the Princes of Moscow who eventually remember, it takes them a while, but who eventually remember to say, "We are the rulers of all of Rus'." The first one, by the way to, as far as we know, who says that he's the ruler of all Rus' was Vasily I, who ruled from 1389 to 1399.

And the evidence we have is there's a coin where he appears, and he says, "I am the ruler of all Rus'." On the other side of that coin, it says, "Long live Sultan Tokhtamysh", which reminds you of what the actual political order is.

30:11 He's the ruler of all of Rus', terrific.

But what he means by all of Rus' is the bit of Rus' that is under the control of the Golden Horde, right? That's under the control of the Mongols.

Now all of this, the Mongol connection is very important because when the Mongol connection is broken, the basic state form remains.

There's no clear moment in the history of Muscovy where you can say, "Okay, the Mongols were here, they were doing everything, and then they got on their little horses and left." That's not how it worked at all.

The way that it worked was that somewhere in the middle of the 15th century, Moscow stops paying tribute.

But they don't change at that point, they just stop paying tribute.

It's the same entity, okay? So have a state which is in some way post Rus'.

31:03 Religion, princely family, language, all of that.

But it's also in many ways a new start, a new start under the Mongols.

So it's post post Rus', I would say, and it's post Mongol.

Let me say a word now about the system, because the system is incredibly interesting.

First of all, and to give credit where credit is due, the Muscovites knew how to fight.

And the reason they knew how to fight was that they fought with, and then eventually against the Mongols.

So the Mongol cavalry techniques, which the Mongols brought with them to Europe and which no one could withstand, were then learned by the Muscovites, because of course, the Muscovites were part of the same state.

They were fighting on the same side.

So they were very good at war.

And the way that they set up their armies in five parts has everything to do with the way that the Mongols set set up their armies.

So that's very important to know.

32:01 The Muscovites knew how to fight, that is part of their heritage.

The heritage that they don't have is all the legal bureaucratic heritage of Kyiv, which we've talked about earlier.

They're free and clear of that.

For better or worse, they're free and clear of that.

It's rather the Lithuanians who pick up that heritage, which means that the legal tradition in Mongol Rus' is very simple.

It starts from the idea that the tsar owns everything, which is convenient.

I mean, it's very convenient if you're the tsar.

And okay, and when I say all this, don't overdo it, but do record this and think about it when you're thinking about the history of Russia, the centuries, as centuries pass.

So all the property belongs to the tsar, the ruler.

You can't really own land.

You can own land conditionally.

If I'm the tsar, I'm gonna be the tsar, 'cause I'm the one who's talking.

33:01 You can own land conditionally until I say that you don't anymore, right? So land ownership can be broken at any time.

You own land practically, in exchange for service to me, the tsar.

So everyone who owns land by definition is a servant of the tsar, and almost always that's military service.

So this is the way the army is set up.

You get to control land, but in return, you serve in the army.

That is the fundamental deal.

You control land in exchange for military service, and I can break that at any point.

So you're the fighting class, but you're not exactly a nobility in the sense of West European nobilities.

There is no legal list, there's no register, there's no patent of nobility.

There's no beautiful piece of paper which you can produce and say, "I have a better Latin script than you," or whatever.

You're not really nobles in the sense of being a legal estate.

34:00 You're really nobles it more or less at my at my pleasure.

So there aren't property rights, and there aren't really feudal rights either.

There's this deal, which is a very effective deal.

It works very well, a fighting class in exchange for control of land.

And of course it works very well, so long as we're getting more land all the time.

And that's part of the magic of the system.

We are going to be getting more land all the time for at least a couple of centuries.

The state is going to grow spectacularly, first west into Europe, then south into formerly Muslim territories, and then west all the way to the Pacific Ocean in just a couple of centuries, okay.

This is basically an agrarian country though.

So part of this system is serfdom.

So you are off fighting wars, but you have a land manager and you have serfs on your territory.

The Russian peasants live in communes.

The word for commune, I forgot to write this down, sorry, is (speaking in Russian), which is a very evocative Russian word, 'cause it also means world and peace, which is practically a whole universe of meaning, right? So commune, peace and world, all the same word.

35:09 The right that the peasants had in the system, The one right, was to leave and go somewhere else.

So think about how this works.

The peasants are in a commune.

The commune is on the land of someone who's in this warrior class.

The person who's in the warrior class is personally dependent upon the tsar.

No way anywhere down in this hierarchy does anyone really have any kind of formal rights.

The right that the peasants have is to leave, and the story of serfdom is that that right is taken away.

Beginning from 1497 through let's say through 1649, all of these rights are completely taken away.

So in 1497, I'm not gonna tell the whole story, but in 1497, you're right as peasants, okay, I'll be the peasant.

My right as a peasant to leave is limited to one day a year.

36:01 Okay, that's a restriction.

And then in 1581, that day is taken away, so it's now zero days.

And then from there, the law escalates in the sense of, the landowner has five years to find you if you run away, 10 years to find you if you run away, 15 years to find you if you run away, and serfdom is considered to be complete by 1649, when the landowner has your whole life to find you after you run away, right? So at that point, there's no, like, you can't even go underground for 15 years.

You're a serf until you die.

So roughly 1% of the population belongs to the service class, or the fighting class.

Most of the remaining 99% of the population are peasants, and most of these peasants are bound to the land.

So that's a system which has a logic.

It's a system which has a logic in which you can make, you will do well if you're in the fighting class, if there was more land.

If you were a serf, the only thing you can think about is somehow escaping very far away, and we're gonna get to that before we're done.

37:05 So territorial expansion, there is a lot of it.

Russia, so Muscovy I should say, as soon as it comes into being, as soon as it comes into being, it instantly joins the European age of discovery.

That's one way to think about it, right? So all these other places, like the Netherlands, or Portugal, or Spain, or the Italian states, they've been around for a while, they've been doing other things.

Muscovy comes into being, and immediately, boom, it's expanding territorially on a tremendous scale.

The Muscovy of 1533 is six times as big as the Muscovy of 1462, and that's just the start.

So there are three waves of expansion.

The first wave of expansion is in Europe, and it's westward.

So Moscow is pretty far east, right? So these places we're talking about, Moscow, Tver, that was the extreme northeast of Rus'.

38:05 It's very far east from the point of view of Rus' or from Europe.

The first move that Moscow makes is to the west, controlling in the 1470s, 1480s, 1490s, the other cities that are Orthodox, not necessarily from Rus', the other cities that are Orthodox that are to its West.

The most important of these is Novgorod.

And Novgorod is an ancient city.

Novgorod was a place where many of the rulers of Rus' ruled at some point in their careers.

It was comparably important to Rus' at some points.

It was a very important trading state, but also it was a city which was governed by its notables.

It had an assembly, right? It wasn't a completely vertical situation at all.

This was true of Novgorod, this was true of Pskov.

These places, Novgorod, Pskov, cities where there was freedom, at least for what we now call, like the bourgeoisie.

39:05 Cities where there was assembly, right? These cities had bells.

This is a sort of charming, or uncharming, or depressing detail.

They would ring the bell, which would mean the assembly should meet.

But then symbolically, when these cities were sacked by Moscow and put under Muscovite control, the bells would then be ritually taken away.

So in 1510, for example, the bell from Pskov was taken down and taken away, and everyone knew what that meant.

So 1470s, 1480s, 1490s, early 16th century, Ryazan falls in 1520.

These are cities that are similar culturally, in the sense that they're Orthodox, but these are not actually necessarily cities of Rus'.

So just to, I'm banging this idea across I know, but Rus' kind of becomes whatever you can make it be.

People in Novgorod did not think they were part of Rus'.

But once you conquer it, it then sort of becomes part of Rus', because everything you control, you're going to call Rus'.

40:00 So first chapter of expansion is westward into these cities, which were bigger, Novgorod much bigger than Moscow.

Bigger, more sophisticated, richer than Moscow.

But once they are defeated by Moscow, this is very important.

Over time their elites are humiliated, crushed, dispersed, brought to Moscow, made dependent, and the system that I described in Moscow is then applied.

It takes generations, but is then applied in these other cities, so that the people who had been notables there become servants of the tsar, because there is no other status besides servant of the tsar, which is available.

There is resistance, there is attempts to get Lithuania to help, all kinds of things happen.

But the basic story is the people who had had some kind of status of their own in these cities no longer have status of their own under Moscow.

The Moscow system has spread west.

Second stage is territorial expansion south, and this mostly takes place under Ivan IV, who, the one who's known as Ivan the Terrible, although his name is really more like threatening, or something like this.

41:09 But Ivan IV, who rules for a very long time, 1547 to 1584.

Here again, it's remarkable how just as Moscow comes into being, it is immediately, it immediately begins to expand.

So Ivan IV, he defeats the Khanate of Kazan in 1552, in the years after that.

Kazan, it's today the third biggest city, or maybe the, I think it's the third biggest city in the Russian Federation today, maybe the fourth.

Major city, it's the capital of what's now called Tatarstan.

It's still Muslim, it's still a Muslim place.

Kazan is where, if you can remember all the way back to like a couple weeks ago, this is where the Bulgars were.

So like the Volga Bulgars convert to Islam, they are under the Mongols.

They're known as the Khanate of Kazan.

42:01 They are conquered by Moscow in 1552.

And so if you're asking yourself, "Why are there Tatars in Russia today? Who are these Tatars?" This is who the Tatars are.

The Tatars are the people who were in the Khanate of Kazan, who were in Volga, Bulgaria.

These are the people who are today in Russia south of Moscow.

So this defeat has a couple of meanings, a couple of very important meanings.

The first is Muscovy, you know, basically not long after it's come into existence is already an empire, in the sense that it is ruling people of a different religion, a lot of people of a different religion, Muslims.

Right away, right? So not long after Moscow comes into existence as a state, it is already ruling lots and lots of people of a different religion than itself.

And that is a durable fact about Moscow, the Russian Empire, and for that matter, the Russian Federation today.

The second thing, which is very important about this, and I'm gonna return to it, is that this opens up, this opens up the Volga River and the lands east of the Volga River, which are generally known as Siberia.

43:11 So from European Russia all the way to the Pacific Ocean, beautiful, rich territory, lots of valuable things, furs mainly.

There are only about 200,000 people living there at the time.

That is now, once the Khanate of Kazan is destroyed, that's all open.

The last move of Ivan though is to go back west and begin the Livonian wars.

Which don't worry, in two lectures we're gonna spend a lot of time on the Livonian wars.

In the Livonian wars, Ivan is trying to pick up the Baltic territories, which were originally laid down by the Teutonic Knights.

The Teutonic Knights convert to Lutheranism, they change their ways, they build nice towns, they trade.

44:01 And their realm starts to fall apart, Moscow intervenes.

Moscow's intervention, and we're gonna have much of a lecture about this, generates a Lithuanian and a Polish response.

This is the 1560s.

The Lithuanian and Polish response is to form the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth.

And as we're gonna see, it's the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth which actually generates the conditions of the thing that we call Ukraine.

So in a weird way, it was Ivan the Terrible who's responsible for Ukraine, So you know, we've heard how it was, you know, Lenin, we've heard how it was Hitler, we've heard how it was the gays and the Jews and the European Union, but you know, Ivan the Terrible actually sets off the chain of events.

Okay, don't worry, we'll develop all this.

But the thing to know here in this context is that the Livonian wars don't go well.

They go very badly, and Ivan becomes quite paranoid and carries out a whole series of seriously weird purges, to which one could devote an entire lecture, which involve a private guard called the Oprichniki, who go around with black hoods and severed dogs heads or wolf's heads on their horses, and carry out purges, murderous purges of the people who are supposed to be traitors, a reign of terror all over Muscovy in the 1560s and into the 1570s.

45:28 All these cities, like Novgorod for example, are purged again, and in Novgorod thousands of people are murdered.

This is the part of Ivan's rule, which is why he's remembered as Ivan the Terrible.

This, the paranoia, the purges.

And in this situation where they're losing, to pull in Lithuania, and there are, these crazy purges are going on.

The Crimean Khanate, which still exists, Kazan Khanate gone, Crimean Khanate still there.

The Crimean Khanate invades and almost takes Moscow in 1571.

46:01 Okay, so at that point Ivan, by the way, sobers up.

Sobers up, the purges slow down.

I didn't mean that in the alcoholic sense.

He had many, he had many issues.

But no, he seems to take stock and the purges slow down and then they make a truce with Poland and Lithuania in 1582.

But the other thing that happens under Ivan, which is what I'm gonna leave you with, is the third direction of expansion, which is actually global.

So it's eastern, but it's actually global.

Getting it all the way to the Pacific Ocean is actually global.

Getting all the way to the Pacific Ocean, starting around the same time you begin trade with England, which was 1554.

That was a total accident, by the way.

The English were in the Arctic Ocean looking for a passage to China, which hint, hint, they

didn't find.

And all of the boats capsized except for one, but the one that didn't found Russia.

And being merchants they said, "Oh, I bet these guys have something to trade," and of course they did.

47:01 And one of the things the Russians had to trade was fur, which was a hugely important good at the time.

And where do you get fur? You get fur in Siberia.

And so this is actually, is that me? I'm sorry.

So the global part of this is that Russia is entering the global economy on the Atlantic side and on the Pacific side at about the same time.

So the way that this works in practice, very quickly, is that the territory, once the Kazan Khanate has been defeated, this territory is open.

The Muscovites move in.

The people that they send are called Kazakhs, and a Kazakh is basically a free person.

We'll talk more about them.

The Kazakhs go and they conquer, with the help of European weapons.

This is also a globalized element of this, and it's why Russia is part of the European age of discovery, if you like, at this point.

They're using muskets, they're using gun powder weapons, and that's one of the reasons why they're so successful.

They find lots of people who they can oppress and collect tribute from in the form of beaver and black fox, and especially sable pelts, which are enormously profitable at the time.

48:11 They get their way across, they move across all of Siberia.

Very quickly, the first expedition to the Pacific is in 1639.

A man called Semyon Dezhnev crosses the Bering Strait.

That is, he reaches North America, in 1647.

So in a very, very short period of time, a huge amount of territory, right? An eighth, a ninth of the Earth's surface is now under control of Moscow.

And that's not just a matter of territory, it's also a matter of human variety.

There are roughly 500 groups in this territory, speaking roughly 120 languages.

And many of these groups still exist, and you can read about them in the news as they're being mobilized to fight in Ukraine.

But it's also, as I've tried to stress, it's globalization, because Russia is trading the Atlantic and the Pacific at the same time.

49:06 And finally, this is the very last sentence, with China.

So one of the limits, one of the few limits that Russia, that Moscow reaches is with the Chinese.

They reach, they sign a peace treaty with China in 1689 in Nerchinsk, which establishes the border between Muscovy and China.

But more importantly, it establishes terms of trade between Muscovy and China so that all those furs can be traded to China for luxury goods.

So the route to China, which the English were trying to discover, eventually does take place, but by way of land rather than by way of sea.

So this is the origins of Muscovite power.

A new system, an enormous amount of new territory, and the success of centralization in all

of this.

What this has to do with all of Rus', of course, you know, is very fuzzy.

50:03 If I've gotten anything across, I hope it's this, that Rus' has many successors, and we wouldn't want deny the connection between Rus' to Galicia-Volhynia, or to Lithuania, or at the state that's founded in Moscow.

But Moscow also has very much to do with the Mongol period, which lasts for so very much longer there than elsewhere.

And it has very much to do with the fact that its first moves when it comes into existence, are territorial expansion to Europe, but mostly into Asia.

Okay, thank you very much.