

The Romanov dynasty:  
from splendor to revolution  
(1613-1918)



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# Summer session

**The Loire Valley: the  
cradle of the French  
Renaissance**

**The Bonaparte Saga  
(revised and updated  
version of 2016  
course on Napoleon)**

Fall session

**The history  
of Korea**

**Paris: a  
history**

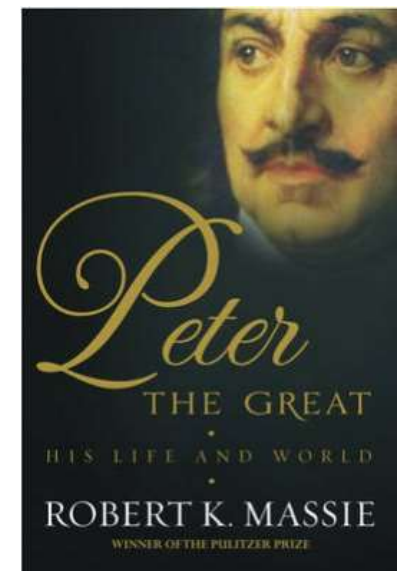
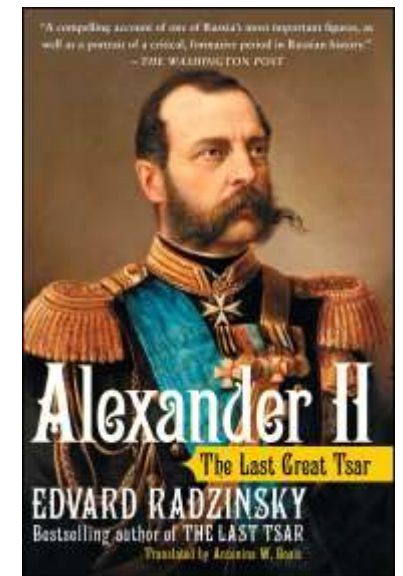
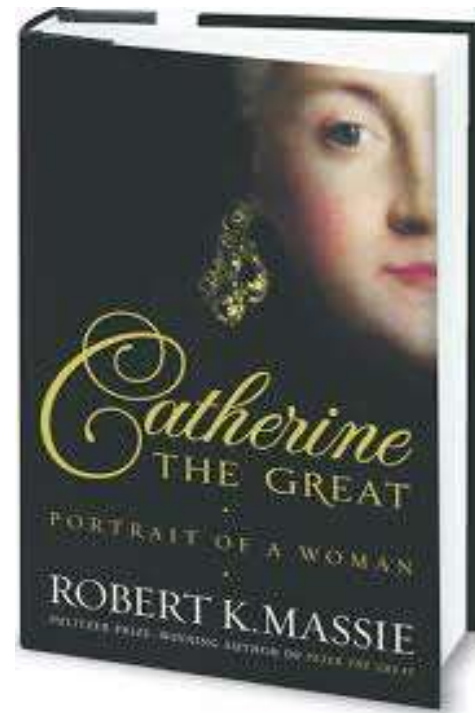




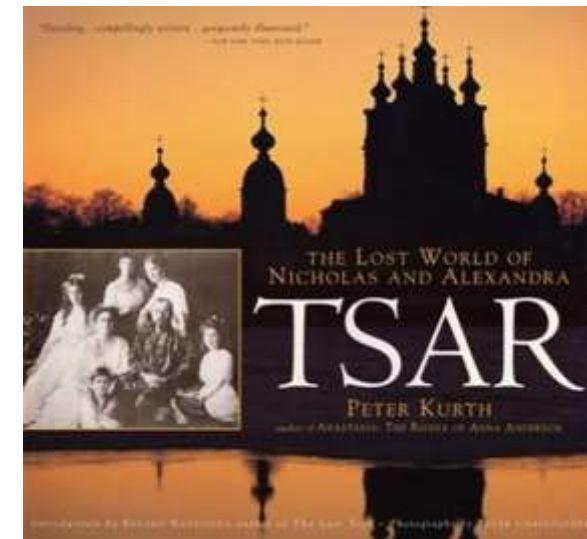
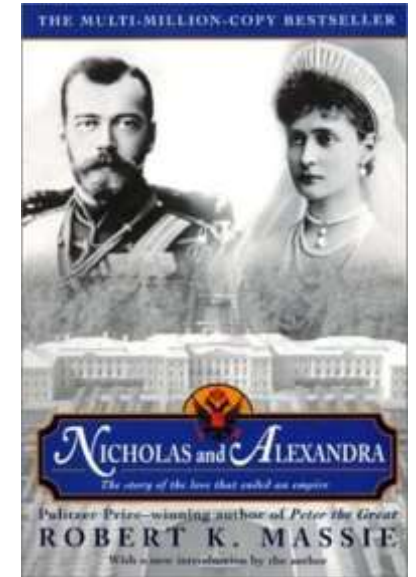
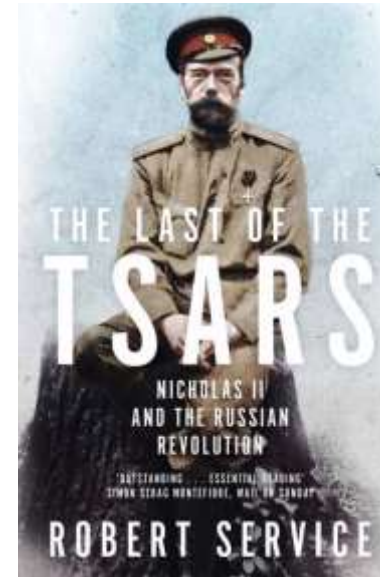
# Course outline

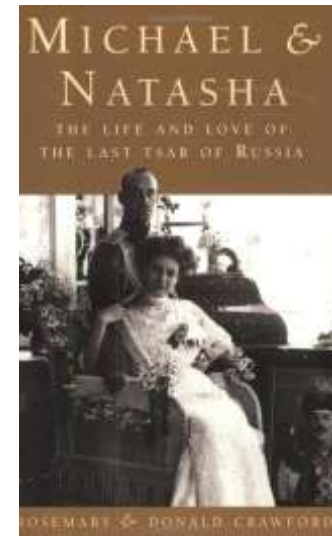
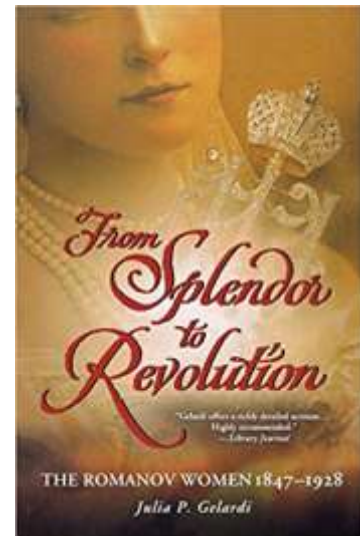
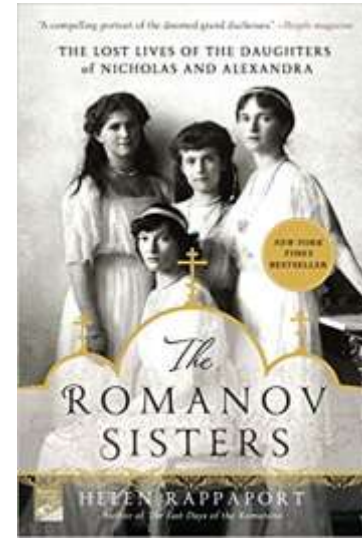
1. 1613: the birth of a dynasty
2. Peter the Great and the birth of imperial Russia
3. Catherine the Great, the usurper
4. Alexander I (the “savior of Europe”): the emperor who defeated Napoleon
5. Alexander II, the “czar liberator”: a revolution from above
6. Alexander III: the founding of a police state?
7. Nicolas II: the czar who “ran out of luck”

Readings: a few  
suggestions



## Nicolas II and his family









St. Petersburg, 21 February 1913: the opening ceremonies of the tercentenary of the Romanov dynasty

*An “extravaganza of pageantry”*

A triumphant dynasty





The imperial family in  
**Moscow** (the ancient capital  
of Russia where czars were  
all crowned)







Kostroma:  
Mikhail Romanov  
elected as ruler  
in 1613









Nicolas II at the Ipatiev Monastery





The Ipatiev House  
(Ekaterinburg, Siberia)



## Russia in 1913: a prosperous Empire?

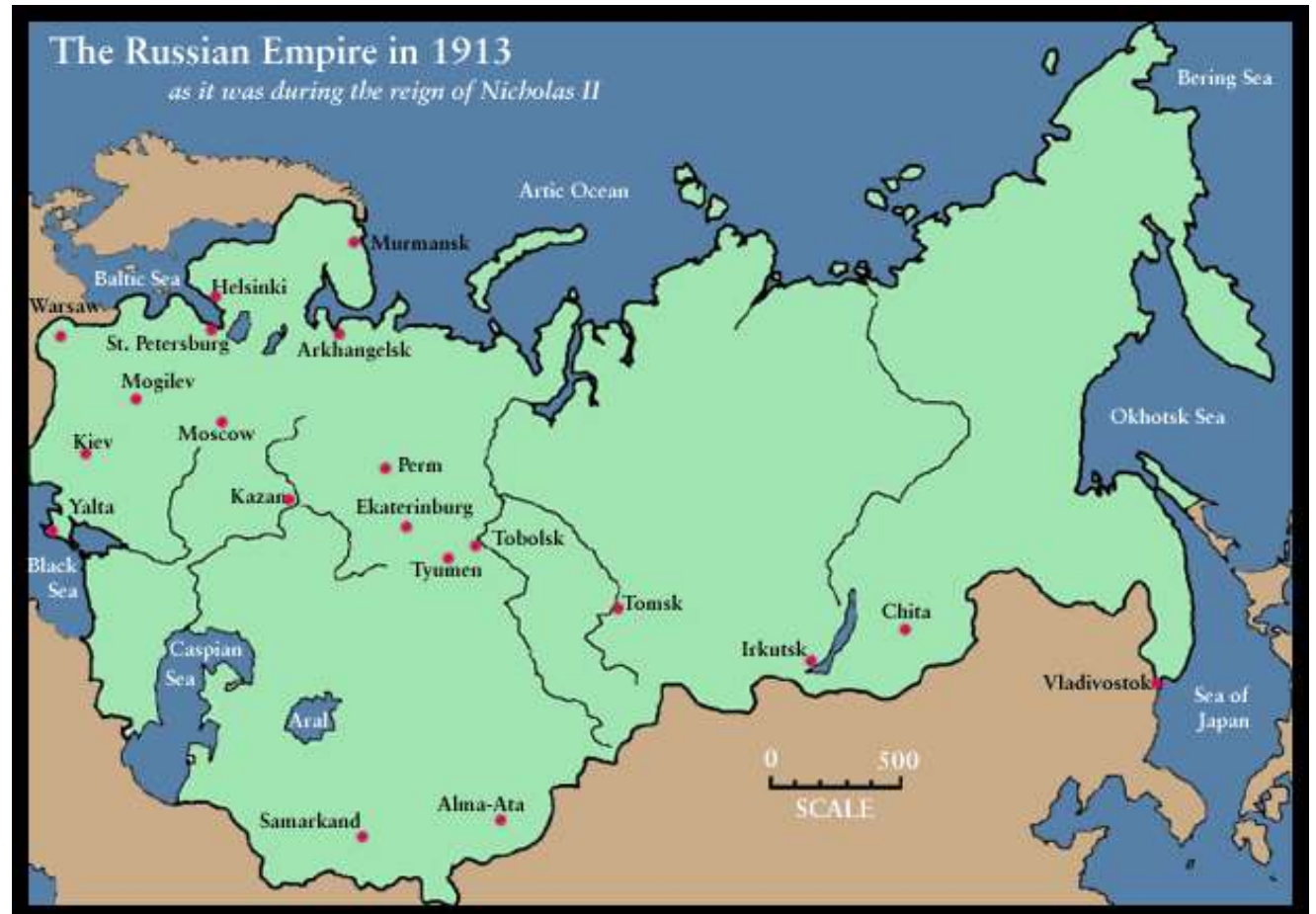
Population: 125 million

Astonishing diversity of peoples/nationalities

A booming economy

Plenty of natural resources

A major European power



Central Powers  
Allied Powers



The Franco-Russian alliance

EUROPE

Central, Entente and Neutral powers

SCALE OF KILOMETERS  
0 100 200 300 400 500

SCALE OF MILES  
0 100 200 300 400 500





1917: the abdication of  
Nicolas II

The Romanov tercentenary: a precarious triumph







1917: Grand Duke **Mikhail** (Mikhail II)  
renounced the throne

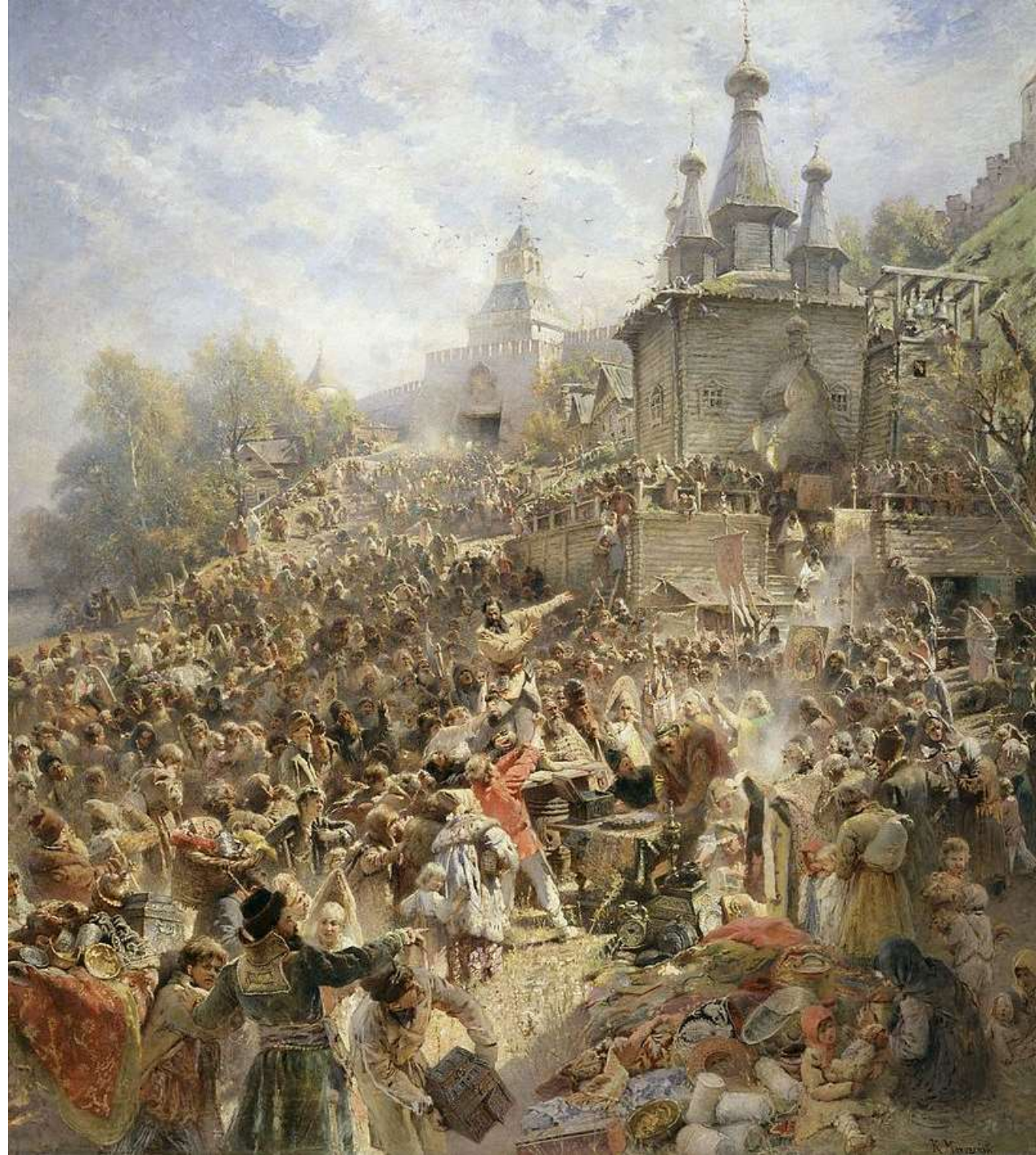


The early history of the Romanovs:  
three hundred years of glory, power  
and tragedy



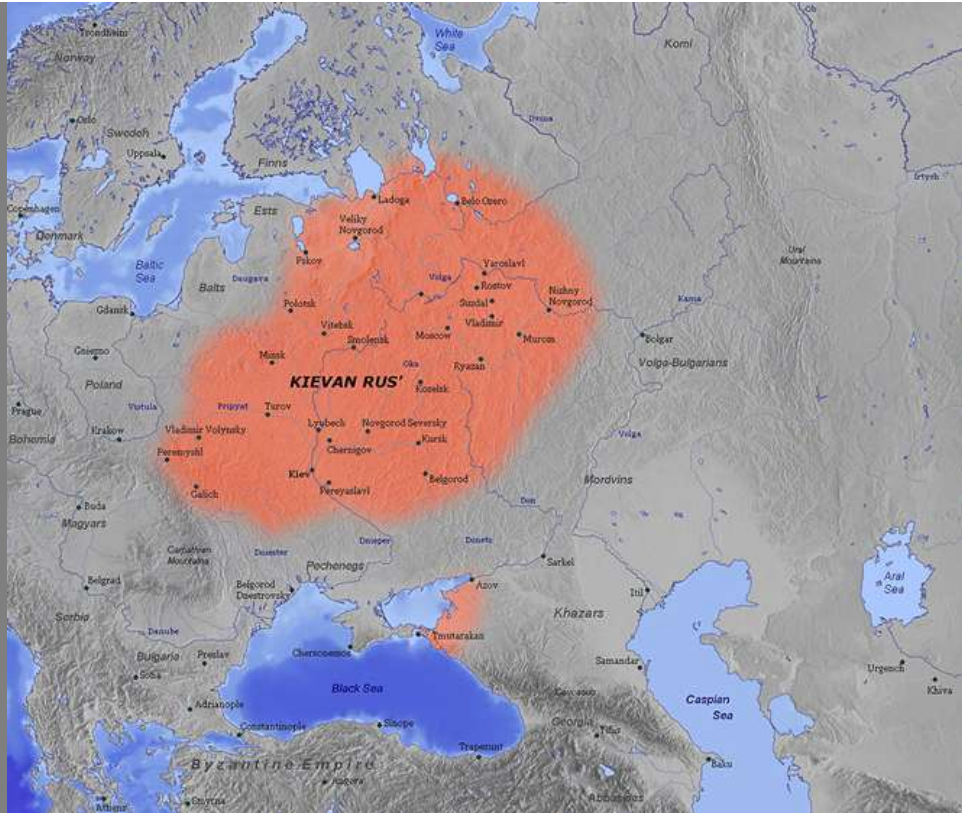
Russia « *Time of Troubles* »  
(1584 – 1613)

The History of Russia: a history of  
murderous conflicts in the name of  
power









## Oleg: the conquest of Kiev

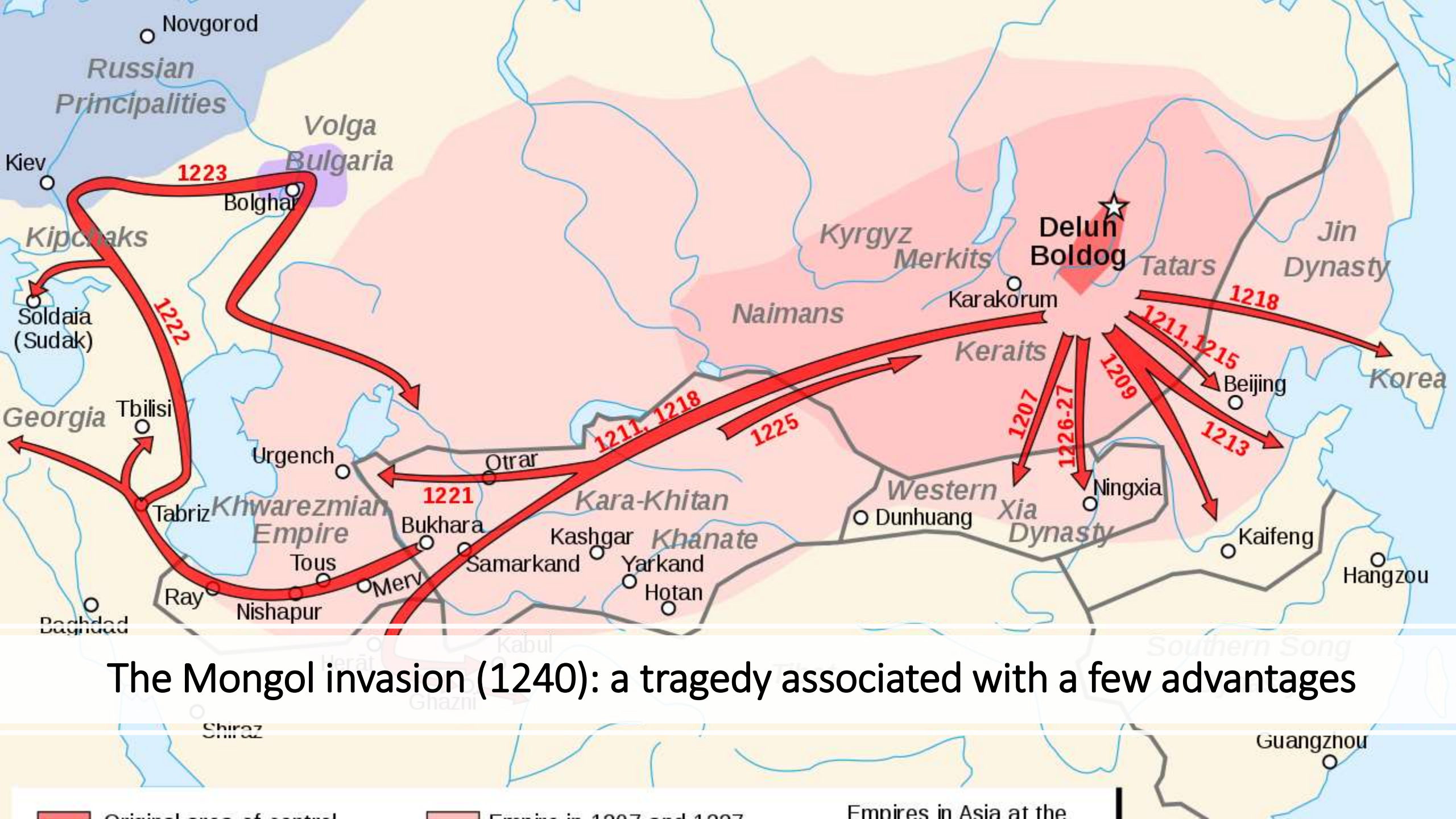
The principality of Kiev surrounded by threatening neighbors

The Slavic (complex) tradition: brothers (not the eldest son) to succeed the Prince

Constant in-fighting among members of the Rurik dynasty







The Mongol invasion (1240): a tragedy associated with a few advantages



The end of in-fighting

The Mongol domination: local  
princes to administer and  
control the peoples

The princes willing to submit  
favored by the Mongols

The rise of the Grand Duchy of  
Moscow (1317)









## The end of the Roman Empire (395)

The collapse of the West  
(green)

The Eastern Roman/Byzantine  
Empire (red)







1453: the siege of Constantinople & the end of the  
Byzantine Empire



Ivan III (1462 – 1505): a key role in  
unifying Russia

Marriage with the niece of the last Byzantine  
emperor (prestige)

The adoption of the double-headed Byzantine  
eagle (protector of Russia)

Title of *Czar* (Caesar)





# Ivan IV (« the Terrible »)

Early domestic reforms to build a unified state

Ivan IV's first wife: **Anastasia Romanovna**

The death of Anastasia in 1560 (a conspiracy?): a dramatic change of policies

1. The creation of the ***oprichnina*** (a separate territory within Russia where Ivan held **absolute power**)
2. The principle of **collective responsibility** (to exterminate adversaries suspected of plotting against Ivan)











The destruction of Novgorod  
(1570)





3. Ivan killed his own son &  
heir



2 sons survived Ivan IV:  
1. Feodor (unfit to rule and childless)  
2. Dmitry



Boris Godunov – The real ruler  
2 major innovations







1. Serfdom institutionalized:  
the need to prevent the  
mobility of peasants

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The creation of the Russian Patriarchate  
(independent from Constantinople)





## The Time of Troubles

Confusion and uncertainty: a series of *fake* czars

Uprisings and peasants riots





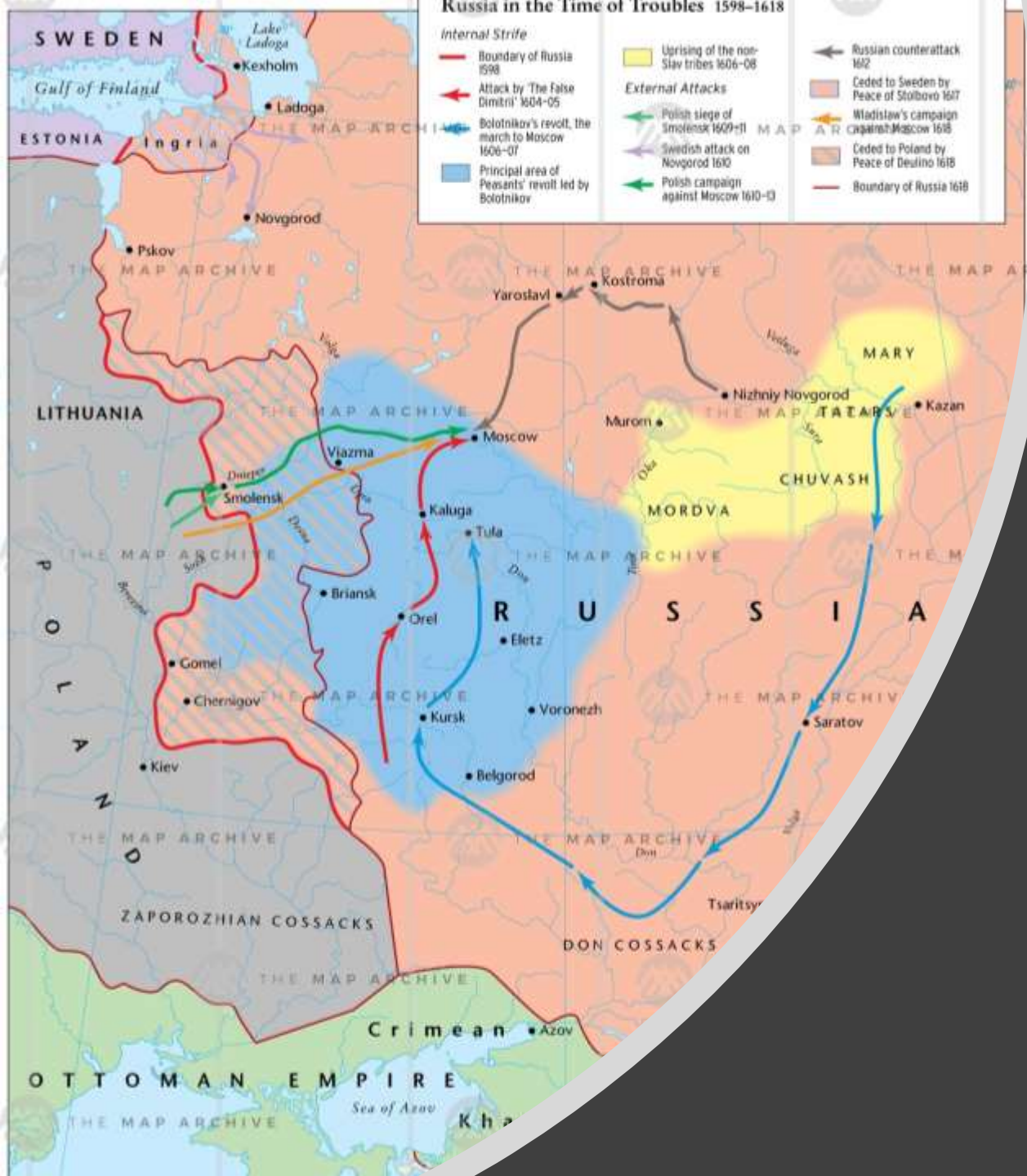


## The Great Famine









Foreign involvement over the  
succession to the Russian throne:  
Poland and Sweden

Will Russia survive?



# The Polish-Muscovite War (1605-1618)

The rise of a national coalition to defend Russia

Moscow re-conquered from the Poles (4 November 1612)

4 November: national holiday following the collapse of the Soviet Union



Mikhail Romanov elected  
czar

21 July 1613: the coronation  
of Mikhail I

A new dynasty for Russia





