

Dr. Leah Goldman
Office: Old Main 204C
Office Hours: Mon/Weds 1:30-3:00
lgoldman@washjeff.edu

HIST 239: Kiev, Muscovy, and Russia **Second Debate Assignment**

Overview

The goal of this assignment is to explore a major question in Russian history through debate and discussion. Using our primary documents and textbook as sources, we will examine the central question from all angles and develop a well-grounded scholarly interpretation of this moment in Russian history.

Instructions

Debate Teams: Work with your team to thoroughly prepare your arguments in favor of your assigned debate position. Make sure you are familiar with all relevant historical facts and primary sources; your arguments should be based first and foremost on these materials. Be prepared to answer **both** the questions outlined on this assignment sheet and relevant questions posed by the audience. *Please note: **collaboration** is a big part of this assignment! All team members should contribute to preparation and performance.

Audience Members: You must actively participate in the debate, as well! Be prepared to respond to the debate teams with your own comments and questions. Be sure to review the primary sources and textbook. Think about how you would answer the questions on this assignment sheet and about what other issues and questions you would like to discuss.

Procedure:

1. I read out the central question.
2. Each team gives a prepared **opening statement**, which clearly articulates their position and gives evidence for it.
3. The floor is open to further discussion

Debate #2 Questions

The **central question** is: **Who understood Russia best, the Slavophiles or the Westernizers?**

Supplemental issues to consider:

- Did Orthodox Christianity harm Russia by preventing it from participating in the advancements made by Western Europe? Or did it benefit Russia by enabling it to develop a uniquely unified society and culture?
- When Peter the Great ordered his subjects to adopt the norms of Western Europe, did he return Russia to its original developmental path? Or did he force Russia onto an artificial path alien to its nature?
- Was Russia governed by autocracy in the mid-19th century because that is Russia's most natural form of government? Or was it because Russia's rulers were unwilling to fully commit to reforms that were in the country's best interest?

Teams and positions:

Timera, Paige, and Andreanna: Obviously, the Slavophiles were right!

Katie, Rakhia, and Dan: No way, the Westernizers were right!

Good luck!!!