

APPANAGE RUSSIA

CRISIS COMMITTEE



**Hello delegates,**

My name is Paul, and I'll be your director for this year. Working with me are your moderator, Tristan; your crisis manager, Davis; and your analysts, Lawrence, Lilian, Philip, and Sofia. We're going to be working together to make this council as entertaining and educational (yeah yeah, I know) as possible.

A bit about me? I am a third year student studying archaeology, and this is also my third year doing UTMUN. Now enough about me.

Let's talk about something far more interesting: Russia. Russian history is as brutal as the land itself, especially during our time of study. Geography sets the stage with freezing winters and mud-ridden summers. This has huge effects on how Russia's economy and society functions. Coupled with that are less-than-neighbourly neighbours: the power-hungry nations of western and central Europe, The Byzantine Empire (a consistent love-hate partner), and (big surprise) various nomadic groups, one of which would eventually pose quite a problem for the idea of Russian independence.

Uh oh, it looks like it's suddenly 1300 and all of you are Russian Princess. You are all under the rule of Toqta Khan of the Golden Horde (Halperin, 2009), one of the successor states to Genghis Khan's massive empire. Bummer. But, there is hope: through working together and with wise reactions to the crises that will inevitably come your way, you might just be able shake off the Tatar Yoke. Of course, your problems are not so limited. This is politics, after all, and your fellow Princes will want as much power as they can get. How rude. You will have to interact with your colleagues, but how will you do it? Will you cooperate with them, destroy them, or perhaps a mix of both? I am not in a position to recommend an approach, so you will have to rule your Principality your way. Good luck.

I hope this stuff is as fun for you as it is for me. Personally, I think this period of history is horrendously understudied (kudos to Charles Halperin for writing many of my sources), but it had a horrendous impact on Russia, both as a country and an idea. Acting as one of these Princes in competition with each other is one of the best ways to understand how these Princedoms and politics worked, and how the rise to power really worked. However, as you are doing your research, note that history will not necessarily progress in our council as it did in real life. Moscow might not rise to be Russia's centrepiece (sorry Moscow delegate), Novgorod might not receive the harsh punishment doled out to it by the rest of the Principalities (congratulations Novgorod delegate), and maybe you will not find the independence you seek from your Tatar overlords. But, in trying to accomplish whatever goals you bring to our council, I, on behalf of the Appanage Russia crisis staff, hope you have fun.

Happy researching (good one, right.)

Paul Schweitzer, Appanage Russia Director

**Introduction:**

Welcome to Russia! The year is 1300, and there is quite a lot to discuss. Please keep in mind that this guide should serve as a beginning point to the research delegates should do, and is not all-inclusive by any means.

Kievan Rus':

To understand how Russia worked in the appanage period, or the “Mongol Yoke”, one must look at how it worked in the previous period, known as Kievan Rus'. This predecessor state functioned much in the same way it did in the appanage period, with a grand Prince ruling over other Princedoms. The Primary Chronicle (one of the only sources on Kievan Rus') shows that Kievan Rus was originally formed as a state when people native to Russia (Slavs) invited three Varangian (Scandinavian) Princes to rule over them. The last survivor of these would go on to found a dynasty after his namesake, Rurik (Zenkovsky, 1974). Rurikids would continue to rule in Kievan Rus'; a Rurikid Prince named Vladimir would adopt Eastern Orthodoxy as Kievan Rus' state religion, for example (Zenkovsky, 1974). This was generally accepted by Russians at the time. The economy of Kievan Rus' is not well known, but basic assumptions about the importance of agricultural practices and furs in the economy can be made (Halperin, 2009). The Kievans' most frequent rivals, beyond each other, would be nomadic peoples, such as the Pechenegs and their successors, the Polovtsy, both of whom would consistently war with Kievan Princes (Halperin, 1987). These conflicts are an apt foreshadowing for the conflict that would appear on their doorstep in 1223 (Halperin, 1987).

The Mongol Invasion:

The Russians were, to say the least, unprepared to face the Mongol Empire. The battle of Kalka in 1223 saw a force of Kievans and Polovtsy demolished by a nomadic force they had not encountered before (Halperin, 2009). Though there was some discussion of treaties between the Kievans and the Mongols (likely in the Kipchak language of the Polovtsy), the battle of Kalka marked the beginning of the Mongols' bloody advance into Russia. After subduing the nomads to the east, the Mongols would attack their first Russian Principality in 1237, that of Ryazan (de Hartog, 1996; Halperin, 2009). The Russians were unprepared for such an encounter and could not effectively mobilize, especially cooperatively. Russian cities would fall over the course of the next three years. In 1240, Kiev would finally fall (Halperin, 2009). 1240 marked the realistic end of war between Russian Princes and the Mongols. Only the grand Prince of Galicia-Volhynia would put up any further resistance (Halperin, 2010). The Mongol forces would continue into Europe as far as Silesia (Cheshire, 1926) but Russia would serve as a bulwark for Mongol rule, for the most part (Guins, 1963). Though individual Principalities and cities felt the effects of the Mongol invasion differently, they were all effectively under Mongol rule at this point.

**Political Situation:**

Fast-forward to 1300 again. What effects did the Mongol invasion have? Politically, there was still a grand Prince, who now resided as Grand Prince of Vladimir. This Princedom was now confirmed by a “trip to the horde”, which entailed pledging allegiance to the Khan in the Khanates capital (Kort, 2008), Sarai in this case. This hegemony was not as strong as it once had been, and by 1300 is vulnerable to challenge. Some of its breakaway Principalities already challenged it for its former position (including Moscow and Tver) (de Hartog, 1996). Other large vassals within the Golden Horde breathed a sigh of relief at Vladimir’s gradual decline. Novgorod, for example, had survived much of the Mongol invasion by preemptively surrendering to the Mongol forces (Halperin, 1987), much to the disdain of other Principalities. Even in their beneficial position the state still feared Vladimir’s approach, which is itself a testament to the Grand Prince’s former power. This power was gained through the approval of the Khan, and it is often the case that working with the Khans closely directly benefitted the Princes. It is crucial that you know when to cooperate, and know when the moment is right for rebellion! That moment, of course, cannot come about due to a major factor that has affected Russia since its’ Kievan Rus’ days: true Russian unity has not yet been achieved.

As for the Golden Horde, a recent squabble for power has just taken place between the Khan, Toqta, and a powerful general, Nogai. Toqta has just recently (as of 1300) attacked Nogai’s forces with his own at Kukanlyk. Nogai was killed in the fight, by a Russian no less. Though Nogai was a strong personality, with a strong lust for power and treasure, Toqta remains calm and is managing to keep the Golden Horde together as he repairs the damage done by this civil war (de Hartog, 1996).

Economic Situation:

Economically, Russia undoubtedly saw much change. Indeed, the devastation took its toll on the cities of Rus’. Destruction of cities and large-scale depopulation had obvious and immediate effects on the Russian economy (Halperin, 1987). Additionally, continuing raids and a forced tribute continued the burden of the people of Russia, and various skilled builders were removed to the steppe to help construct new Mongolian cities. This was coupled with Russian geography and consistent droughts, which led to frequent famines and further depopulation. Overall, the costs that the Mongol rule incurred are “beyond calculation” (Halperin 2009, 13) when looked at in this light. However, new ways of income did open, and Russian Princes did their best to shift the tax burdens away from themselves. It was the peasants who would feel the majority of the Tatar yoke’s burden, as Princes controlled taxes and could take them as they pleased (Halperin, 1987). Mongol taxes were, additionally, proportional to wealth, so wealthier Princes would exact higher tribute from peasants in order to keep up with the tribute. Other new sources of income included trade on a scale not seen before, as the Russians now had access to the expansive Mongol trade network (Halperin, 2009). This caused many goods not seen before in Russia to be found



there, including goods from China. This trade would be beneficial to many towns, and would contribute much to their growth (Halperin, 1987). Lastly, Princes could partake in the military campaigns of their Mongol overlords and share in the loot that was taken. This was often the case with Principalities in the south and western portions of appanage Russia (Halperin, 1987). Overall, the economy had not weakened, necessarily. It had changed. The key to economic success for the Russians was to adapt to the new way the economy functioned, and to spend effectively on procurement and bribes.

Religious Situation:

Though the Mongols changed the economy, they left religious institutions of their subjects largely unchanged (Halperin, 1987). This means that, as of 1300, the Russian population is overwhelmingly East-Orthodox Christian. There is some interaction with neighbouring religion, of course. Catholicism and the Pope have some sway in western vassals of the Golden Horde, notably in Galicia-Volhynia (de Hartog, 1996). As the Mongols gradually converted to Islam, they retained their religious tolerance and did not impose their religion over the Russians (de Hartog, 1996). This religious difference would eventually be used against them as a rallying point. This can be seen in the *Zadonschina*, an epic poem which depicted the battle of Kulikovo Field in 1380 (80 years after our council starts). “And blood flowed in a stream. The infidels began fleeing on all sides. . .” (Safony of Ryazan, in Zenkovsky, 1974). This depiction of Mongols as cowardly infidels would allow the Russians to rally around the idea of Christian brothers defeating foreign invaders.

External Political Situation:

As mentioned before, Russia was surrounded by external influences as well as internal (Mongol) ones. As of 1300, potential allies and enemies surround the lands of the Russian Princes. To the west, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania grows at an impressive pace (de Hartog, 1996), and is poised to absorb neighbouring Polotsk and Minsk, which are positioned east of Lithuania (on the edge of the Golden Horde’s realm). Lithuanian expansion west and north is blocked by the Kingdom of Poland, as well as the Teutonic Order (de Hartog, 1996). A branch of this organization of knights also borders Russia; the Livonian Order (formerly the Livonian Brothers of the Sword). Offering little help to heathens, Orthodox Christians, or Muslims, the Livonian knights did not respond to the Mongol invasion of Russia. However, they have a vested interest in aiding Catholics as well as keeping powerful Russian states from expanding (Halperin, 2009). Further to the west lies the Holy Roman Empire, though interaction with this entity is small barring some trade and cultural/religious exchange. To the South, Bulgaria sits on the edge of the Golden Horde’s area of influence, fractured by neighbouring Hungary and the Byzantines. As Hungary recovers from Mongol attacks, Byzantium faces raids and territorial losses at the hands of Ottoman Turks under Osman I (Halperin, 2009). Other interactions with southern Europe include various Italian influences. The Pope is always eager to expand the reaches of Catholic Christendom, and so rewards any who convert to Catholicism. The Genoese and



Venetians, too, compete for trade in Crimea, and though Nogai Khan (a supporter of the Venetians) has been killed as of the start of the council, the competition here is still fierce (de Hartog, 1996). Lastly, to the North, pagan Finns reside in the lands of the Novgorod Republic as well as encroaching Sweden, whose intentions are mixed at best, especially towards Orthodox Christians (de Hartog, 1996).

Character List:

1. Andrey III Alexandrovich, Grand Prince of Vladimir

Andrey is currently the Grand Prince of all of Russia, a position of unique power within the court. A son of the legendary Alexander Nevsky (Kuchkin, 1986), Andrey has large shoes to fill. As the position suggests, Andrey is supposedly the most favoured by the Khans, and as such has supposed authority over his fellow Princes. This idea is not baseless; Vladimir is a powerful state, still among the most powerful in Russia. However, it is now vulnerable to challenge. Upstart Principalities, such as Moscow (under the rule of Andrey's brother) and Tver (under the rule of his uncle), have broken away from Vladimir and seek the authority it once had. Not to mention other powerful upstarts coveting the title of Vladimir, notably Rostov. Andrey should focus on retaining his power and his title of Grand Prince through alliances with other Princes or through a good relationship with Khan Toqta. He should also work to keep breakaway Principalities from becoming a serious threat.

2. Daniil Alexandrovich, Prince of Moscow

Daniil currently reigns as Prince of Moscow. Moscow was, at the time of the Mongol invasion, a wooded trade post and a small village. Thanks to its key position in relation to trade, its thick woods that provide a degree of protection from Mongol raids, and its good relationship with the Khans, Moscow is thriving (de Hartog, 1996). Daniil has taken advantage of this and is very much in the running to become Grand Prince (Kuchkin, 1986), a position currently held by his brother Andrey. Though Moscow may be able to challenge Vladimir on its own (or with the support of his son in Novgorod), its traditional rival of Tver will pose much more of a risk. Daniil should attempt to gain the title of Grand Prince, while making sure to achieve supremacy over Tver. He should also consider attacking weaker neighbours, such as Ryazan or Starodub.

3. Mikhail Yaroslavich of Tver, Prince of Tver

Mikhail, Prince in Tver, is the younger brother of Alexander Nevsky, a legendary and popular Grand Prince. He would have good claims on the title of Grand Prince, were it not for his nephews Andrey (the Grand Prince) and Daniil (Prince of Moscow) (de Hartog, 1996). Tver is in a similar situation as Moscow, having survived the brunt of the Mongol invasion and benefitting from its geographical position in terms of trade (de Hartog, 1996). This pits Tver and Moscow against each other as they compete for the Grand Princedom.



Mikhail should work to become Grand Prince, and should make sure that Moscow does not expand too far.

4. Yury Daniilovich, Prince of Novgorod

Please note that, historically, Yury was not Prince of Novgorod in 1300. He will act as such for this council. Yury is the son of Daniil, who serves as Prince of Moscow (de Hartog, 1996). Yury therefore has a good relationship with his father and can support him when able, but Novgorod is not without its own troubles. Pskov has earned de facto independence from Novgorod with its key alliances, and the Republic of Novgorod's massive size and northern location sees it in competition with neighbouring Finns, Lithuanians, Swedes, all of whom are notoriously aggressive. These pale, of course, in comparison to the zealous aggression of the Teutonic Order and its branches, who have little love for non-Catholics (de-Hartog, 1996). Yury should attempt to make gains off of its western neighbours if possible, and should try to reassert some authority over Pskov.

5. Daumantas of Pskov, Prince of Pskov

Note, Daumantas' reign ended in 1299 (Goldfrank, 1998), but he will serve as Prince of Pskov for this council. Pskov is a smaller Principality claimed by many. Novgorod, for example, has traditionally been associated with it (Halperin, 2009). Lithuania too, would be happy with the growing state under its control. A member of the Hanseatic League, Pskov is not alone, and has access to significant wealth to move around with. Also friendly with Lithuania (Halperin, 2009), Daumantas should pursue all possible allies to grow into a health independent state.

6. Aleksandr Glebovich, Prince of Smolensk

Smolensk is a large Principality in a key position. Being on the Volga, and within reach of the Black Sea as well as the Baltic, Smolensk is a place rich in trade (de Hartog, 1996). With this trade (and wealth) comes plentiful influence and interaction with powers beyond the realm of the Golden Horde. This influence gains Aleksandr potential allies in the west, and Aleksandr should consider using these to expand his already impressive wealth, or to pursue different goals, perhaps even the title of Grand Prince. Aleksandr should also be wary of Smolensk's traditional rival, Chernigov (de Hartog, 1996).

7. Konstantin Romanovich, Prince of Ryazan-Murom

Konstantin's position is one of desperation. Having been the first Principality to suffer the Mongol invasion (Halperin, 2009), Ryazan is not in a terrific position to overcome their devastation. To the southwest, Vladimir and its various breakaway states pose a massive threat and would happily expand their influence to Ryazan's lands. Ryazan has few advantages other than its size, which allows it to encompass a diverse group of peoples. Some of these are warrior nomads, some of which could be called on to defend



Ryazan (which they may do if rewarded adequately...). Additional potential allies could be other states in a similar situation, such as Starodub.

8. Ivan Mikhailovich, Prince of Starodub

Starodub is a tiny Principality and a breakaway from the Grand Principality of Vladimir. Though it struggles for survival between aggressive neighbours (Moscow and Nizhy-Novgorod) (de Hartog, 1996), the state persists. Though Starodub is considered insignificant by many, it is still a Principality and could grow to greatness if maneuvered correctly. Ivan's first priority should be to secure allies so its neighbours have a difficult time taking advantage of it. He could also consider attempting to solidify his relationship with the Khan as protection.

9. Lev Daniilovich, King of Galicia-Volhynia

Lev has a position unique among Russian Princes: a kingdom. This title is a relic of his predecessor Daniil when he sought aid from the Pope (de Hartog, 1996) against the Mongols just after their invasion. These western interactions made Galicia's Mongol overlords unhappy, and so relations have been soured since. Lev will not have an easy time negotiating with the Khans, but his western ideals do have their merit. Potential allies lie to the west, many of whom would be willing to help a friendly kingdom overcome its neighbouring Principalities. Lev could also consider reconciliation with the Pope, but the price of this may be conversion to Catholicism!

10. Oleg Romanovich, Prince of Chernigov

Chernigov is one of a few surviving Principalities from Kievan Rus' days. A large competitor in the south, Chernigov comes into competition with other southern Principalities, such as Smolensk (de Hartog, 1996). However, the fall of Kievan Rus' has proven challenging for Chernigov. Once heavily dependent on Kiev (de Hartog, 1996), Chernigov has since been left to fend for itself. Gaining power in the south would be a good way to recover, and such a thing might only be accomplished at the expense of its neighbours. Oleg should be careful not to anger too many Princes, or they may rise against him.

11. Vladimir Ivanovich, Prince of Kiev

Vladimir is in an unenviable position. Kiev, after the invasion of the Mongols, was devastated (Halperin, 2009). It no longer holds a position of power, far from it. Covetous neighbours seek Kiev as a prize of prestige. Smolensk and Chernigov would each happily take the city in their struggle for the south. Additionally, Lithuania seeks to expand and will likely not stop before they get to Kiev. Vladimir needs to make allies, and quickly. It is doubtful that he can trust his fellow Southern Princes, so he should consider turning to



Princes who are not an immediate threat to him. Alternatively, he could support non-Russian excursions.

12. Konstantin Borisovich, Prince of Rostov

Konstantin is, unlike many others in Russia, in charge of a Principality that is on the rise. Increasing privilege given to him by the Golden Horde (de Hartog, 1996) sees Konstantin in a good position. This has been slighted by Nogai's death, but Rostov pursues. A breakaway state of the Grand Principality of Vladimir, Rostov may make claims on it as Konstantin sees fit. He should be wary of others in a similar position, such as Tver or Moscow. Konstantin should use his privilege with the Khans to make potential gains at the expense of his opponents, while being careful to make enough alliances to sustain his state.

13. Bryacheslav Vasilikovich, Prince of Vitebsk

Please note that Bryacheslav was not historically Prince of Vitebsk in 1300. Vitebsk is in desperation, as Lithuania gradually absorbs western Principalities, Vitebsk cannot benefit from the Khans' support due to its western location (Halperin, 1987). Though it was, for the most part, spared from the Mongol invasion (Halperin, 1987), Vitebsk has failed to thrive and Bryacheslav faces ever growing enemies to the west. He should secure support from anyone he can as soon as possible should Lithuania finally grow tired of waiting. He could also side with the Lithuanians, though this would certainly earn the disdain of fellow Princes.

14. Dionid Vladimirovich, Prince of Turov-Pinsk

Note that Dionid might not have been Prince at the time of our council (lack of sources). Turov-Pinsk is one of the westernmost Principalities in Russia, and thus is in direct contact with foreign nations such as Lithuania, who already holds some dominion over it. Turov-Pinsk has previously worked with them to increase independence from Galicia, its former overlord. Now its independence is once again under fire. Dionid can embrace the westerners, or attempt to gain support from his former rivals, including the King of Galicia-Volhynia.

15. Ivan Dmitrievich, Prince of Pereyasavl

Pereyasavl's recent (as of 1300) history has been one of unfortunate gambles. They were supporters of Nogai, now deceased. Ivan's predecessor was also a hindrance to Andrey III, who currently sits as Grand Prince (Halperin, 2009). As a smaller breakaway state of Vladimir, Pereyasavl does not have much support from the Khans or other Princes. Ivan, thus, has his work cut out for him. Most consider Pereyasavl irrelevant at this point in time, but maneuvering could place Pereyasavl in power, and could even install Ivan as Grand Prince. Ivan should find fellow Princes whose goals align and work with them to gain a favourable result.



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