



GEOGRAPHY OF RUSSIA

TSARS, SLAVS & SOVIETS – ACHS – MR. HOWARD

THE SHEER SIZE OF RUSSIA

- Russia takes up 1/6th of the worlds land mass – that is 2 and 2/3's the size of the US spanning across 9 time zones.
- Land size & Population do not correlate
- How did Russia get so big? Ivan III (The Great)
 - Annexation
 - Inheritance
 - Puppets
 - Bought it

HOW ANNEXATION WORKED

- Countries located around Russia that were struggling were convinced “hey, join us and we’ll fix you.”
- If countries failed to comply he went to war and took them – historians often nickname him ‘The Vulture’ because of this tactic of picking off struggling countries.
- End result – lands that were once not Russian become Russian.

HOW INHERITANCE WORKED

- Pretty simple concept right? Someone dies and their 'stuff' is left to someone else.
- However, Ivan was notorious for claiming inheritances that may or may not have belonged to him. 'Oh, Jim Bob died? Well, he was my 5th cousin three times removed, I think I'll take that.'
- Countries often had no option but to comply when Ivan was backed by such a huge army.

PUPPETS & BUYING LAND

- Ivan was notorious for acquiring puppet states – these states were technically independent (ie. Not Russian) but were told what to do by Russia.
- Every single puppet state Ivan acquired eventually became annexed as part of Russia.
- When all else failed, Ivan would buy land.
- End result? Russia tripled in size from the time Ivan left the throne.

WHERE DID SIBERIA COME FROM?

- Ivan IV (The Terrible) continued his grandfather's policies of annexation (mostly) and doubled the size of Russia by the end of his reign.
- That gave us the entire modern Russian territory minus Siberia. So where did that come from?
- A group called the Cossacks.

COSSACKS CONT..

- The Cossacks were a fierce and highly mobile fighting force that stormed Western Russia and quickly dispelled of anyone against the crown.
- They setup trading networks and satellite governments to control the Western lands.
- They even conquered Alaska which was part of Russia's holdings until America purchased it from them.
- By the mid-1800's Russia was the biggest empire known to man (at the time)

IMPORTANT GEOGRAPHIC FEATURES OF RUSSIA

- Russia has a vast, connected waterway system. It is so well connected that to get from Vladivostok (far East) to St. Petersburg (far West) all you would need is a canoe.
- Russia has vast supplies of natural resources such as coal, natural gas, oil and rare metals. It also is the most water rich country in the world – home to Lake Baikal, the deepest fresh water lake in the world.