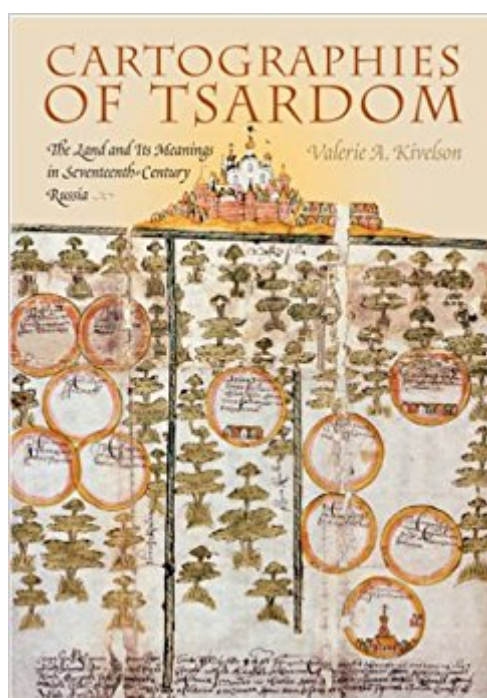


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Cartographies Of Tsardom: The Land And Its Meanings In Seventeenth-Century Russia



Synopsis

Toward the end of the sixteenth century, and throughout the seventeenth, thinking in spatial terms assumed extraordinary urgency among Russia's ruling elites. The two great developments of this era in Russian history—the enserfment of the peasantry and the conquest of a vast Eastern empire—fundamentally concerned spatial control and concepts of movements across the land. In *Cartographies of Tsardom*, Valerie Kivelson explores how these twin themes of fixity and mobility obliged Russians, from tsar to peasant, to think in spatial terms. She builds her case through close study of two very different kinds of maps: the hundreds of local maps hand-drawn by amateurs as evidence in property litigations, and the maps of the new territories that stretched from the Urals to the Pacific. In both the simple (but strikingly beautiful and even moving) maps that local residents drafted and in the more formal maps of the newly conquered Siberian spaces, Kivelson shows that the Russians saw the land (be it a peasant's plot or the Siberian taiga) as marked by the grace of divine providence. She argues that the unceasing tension between fixity and mobility led to the emergence in Eurasia of an empire quite different from that in North America. In her words, the Russian empire that took shape in the decades before Peter the Great proclaimed its existence was a "spacious mantle," a "patchwork quilt of difference under a single tsar" that granted religious and cultural space to non-Russian, non-Orthodox populations even as it strove to tie them down to serve its own growing fiscal needs. The unresolved, perhaps unresolvable, tension between these contrary impulses was both the strength and the weakness of empire in Russia. This handsomely illustrated and beautifully written book, which features twenty-four pages of color plates, will appeal to everyone fascinated by the history of Russia and all who are intrigued by the art of mapmaking.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Valerie Kivelson has produced an extraordinarily impressive book, a pioneering and penetrating study of maps produced by Russians in the seventeenth century. . . . Her research casts fresh light on such major themes of seventeenth-century Russian history as the development of serfdom and the tsardom's phenomenal eastward expansion." [— Samuel H. Baron, Russian Review, July 2007](#)

"Students of Russian history will find in this book a balanced and very careful re-evaluation of some aspects of the Muscovy worldview. How did people think of Nature, the power structure they were living in, and the rights of colonized and colonizers? They will also get access to full-color reproductions of some of the most extraordinary maps made in that period. For the lay reader, with little or no background in either cartography or Russian history, this is simply a delightful treasure of novel ideas and eye-openers. From now on, forget about Mercator, and remember Semen Remezov!" [— Stefaan Van Ryssen, Leonardo, February 2007](#)

"Like a good map, Valerie Kivelson's fascinating book poses new questions about how Muscovites understood their own territory and their place within it and the wider world, arguing convincingly that spatial thinking colored Muscovite politics, religion and culture. The fruit of many years' research, generously illustrated and based on archival materials, this book will change the way that we think about Muscovite Russia." [— Lindsey Hughes, SSEES, University College London](#)

"Valerie Kivelson's analysis of mapping and legal disputes in the pre-Petrine Muscovite empire makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the organization of property and territory and so of the nature of serfdom and the Muscovite empire itself. This is exactly the kind of book that demonstrates that maps cannot be relegated to mere illustration; rather, in their production and use, they have been crucial components of all sorts of spatial practice in the early modern and modern worlds. Solidly rooted in empirical research, *Cartographies of Tsardom* blends the social with the cultural in a truly innovative manner." [— Matthew Edney, Director, History of Cartography Project, University of Wisconsin—Madison](#)

"In this beautifully written and richly illustrated book Valerie Kivelson uses hundreds of original maps and drawings to reconstruct the world of Muscovite society and politics. Focusing on ideas about place and space in seventeenth century Russia, she presents a bold new interpretation of the relationship between Russians and their tsar and lays bare the workings of the early modern Russian imperial system." [— Francine Hirsch, author of *Empire of Nations: Ethnographic Knowledge and the Making of the Soviet Union*](#)

"This is a wondrous book

that, figuratively and literally, adds another dimension to Russian history and introduces the reader to a little-known language, cartography in early modern Russia. With its novel approach, broad comparative context, and graceful prose, Valerie Kivelson's book is a landmark achievement." — Michael Khodarkovsky, author of *Russia's Steppe Frontier: The Making of a Colonial Empire, 1600–1800* "Cartographies of Tsardom is a fascinating interdisciplinary book that breaks new ground in assessing the roles of history, geography, social structure, and religion in Early Modern Russia. Valerie Kivelson provides a compelling argument for using visual material as evidence of a consultative rather than dictatorial autocracy in Early Modern Russia. New territorial maps and seemingly mundane maps of land disputes turn out to reflect a center-periphery dynamic of nuanced interaction rather than one-sided dominance, a relationship reiterated in contemporary court cases and government policy. In the charting of physical space, provincial Russians appear determined to mark the value of their own sociopolitical status, all the while conceiving their place in the world within an articulated model of paradise." — Michael Flier, Harvard University "In this imaginative and provocative book, Valerie Kivelson explores early Russian maps as a source for understanding the mind of early Russia and offers intriguing hypotheses about conceptions of empire, space, law, and society in Muscovy." — Richard Wortman, Columbia University

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Lots of studies of history have often used maps as illustrations to show growth of "empires" or "civilizations." Kivelson actually focuses on how maps evolve over time and on different types of maps. Often maps are used to "claim" territory so disputes arise that have different maps for the same area. She makes conclusions based on the different types of maps of the Russian empire.

It seems that maps are getting the attention they deserve. A lot of attention and care to an almost unexplored field. Excellent result. A pity money considerations prevented more color plates. A bit too much of black and white.

The Book was fine however the condition was not as described.. Lots of written comments throughout the text and not what I wanted.. This was the only one available however had I been aware I would have waited until a better copy was available..

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