

TRACY K. DENNISON

California Institution of Technology
Division of Humanities and Social Sciences
+1 626-395-1742
tkd@hss.caltech.edu

APPOINTMENTS

2022- Ronald and Maxine Linde Leadership Chair,
Division of the Humanities and Social Sciences
2022- Edie and Lew Wasserman Professor of Social Science History
2011-2022 Professor of Social Science History, California Institute of Technology
2009- 2011 Associate Professor of History (without tenure), California Institute of
Technology
2006-2009 Assistant Professor of History, California Institute of Technology
2003-2006 Post-doctoral Research Fellow, Centre for History & Economics and
Robinson College, University of Cambridge, UK
2005-2006 Temporary Lecturer in Russian History, University of Cambridge
Department of Slavonic Studies, Faculty of Medieval and Modern
Languages

EDUCATION

2004 Ph.D. University of Cambridge
1999 M.Phil. University of Oxford
1995-97 Russian State University for the Humanities (RSUH), Moscow, Russia
1992 B.A. Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA

PRIZES/GRANTS/AWARDS

Caltech Division of the Humanities and Social Sciences, Brass Division Award for
Excellence in Teaching, 2016
Alexander von Humboldt Fellowship for Experienced Researchers, 2015-17
(Department of Economic History, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich)
W. Bruce Lincoln Prize for Best First Monograph (Association for Slavic, East
European, and Eurasian Studies), 2012
Henry A. Wallace Prize for Best Book in Non-U.S. Agricultural History
(Agricultural History Society), 2012
Economic History Society Prize for Best First Monograph, 2012
NSF award for Imperial Russian Incomes Project (2010-11), as part of the Global
Price and Income History Group (NSF: SES-0922531) (with Peter Lindert (PI), UC
Davis, and Steven Nafziger, Williams College)
The Economic History Association Alexander Gerschenkron Prize for Best
Dissertation in non-American Economic History, 2004
The Institute of Historical Research Pollard Prize for Best Paper Presented at an IHR
Seminar, 2004
Research Fellowship 2004-06, Cambridge Centre for History & Economics and
Robinson College

M. M. Postan Fellowship 2003-04 (awarded by the Institute of Historical Research
and the Economic History Society)
Ellen McArthur Studentship 2000, 2001, 2002
Earhart Fellowship 2001-02

PUBLICATIONS

Book

The Institutional Framework of Russian Serfdom (Cambridge University Press, 2011)

Articles and Book Chapters (* = peer-reviewed)

*“Weak State, Strong Commune: Authority in the Imperial Russian Countryside”, forthcoming in *Revista Storica Italiana*

“Historical Political Economy in History and the Social Sciences” (with Scott Gehlbach), forthcoming in Jared Rubin and Jeffrey A. Jenkins (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Historical Political Economy*.

*“Context is Everything: the Problem of History in Quantitative Social Science”, *Journal of Historical Political Economy*, vol. 1, March 2021.

“Institutions and Material Conditions: The Problem of History in Piketty’s *Capital and Ideology*”, review essay in *Oeconomia* 2021.

“Eastern Europe: the Socialist Experiment” (with Alex Klein), in *The Cambridge Economic History of the Modern World* (ed. S. Broadberry, K. Fukao). Cambridge University Press, 2021.

* “Overcoming Institutional Inertia: Serfdom, the State, and Agrarian Reform in Prussia and Russia”, in A. Caiani and M. Broers (ed.) *A History of the European Reformations* (Bloomsbury, 2019).

* “Две культуры и экономическая история” [The ‘Two Cultures’ and Economic History, *Вопросы Истории* [*Problems in History*], 2017. (with published comments by a select number of Russian economists and historians).

* “Context is Everything: Situating Demographic Patterns” in K. Matthijs, S. Hin, J. Kok, and H. Matsuo (eds.), *The Future of Historical Demography: Upside Down and Inside Out* (Leuven, 2016).

* “Institutions, Demography, and Economic Growth” (with Sheilagh Ogilvie), *Journal of Economic History*, March 2016.

* “The Institutional Context of Serfdom in England and Russia” in C. Briggs, P. Kitson, and S. Thompson (eds.), *Population, Welfare, and Economic Change in Britain, 1290-1834* (London, 2014).

* “Does the European Marriage Pattern Explain Economic Growth?” (with Sheilagh Ogilvie), *Journal of Economic History* (September 2014).

“The Institutional Framework of Serfdom in Russia: the View from 1861” in S. Cavaciocchi (ed.), *Serfdom and Slavery in the European Economy in the 11th-18th centuries: Proceedings of the Datini Institute Study Week* (Firenze University Press, 2014).

* “Contract Enforcement in Russian Serf Society”, *The Economic History Review* 66(3), 2013, pp. 715-32.

* “Micro-perspectives on Living Standards in Nineteenth-Century Russia” (with Steven Nafziger), *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 43(3), December 2012.

* “Household Formation, Institutions, and Economic Development: Evidence from Imperial Russia”, *Journal of the History of the Family* 16, 2011, pp. 456-65.

“Agriculture” (with J. Simpson), in S. Broadberry and K. O’Rourke (eds), *An Economic History of Modern Europe: Volume 1 1700-1870* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

* “Serfdom and Social Capital in Bohemia and Russia” (with Sheilagh Ogilvie), *The Economic History Review* 60(3), 2007, pp. 513-44.

* “Did Serfdom Matter? Russian Rural Society, 1750-1860”, *Historical Research*, 79(203), 2006, 74-89.

“Servants and Labourers in a Serf Society: the Role of Service in Rural Russia, 1745-1825” in S. Pasleau and I. Schopp with R. Sarti (eds.), *Proceedings of the Servant Project* (Liège, 2006).

* “Economy and Society in Rural Russia: The Serf Estate of Voshchazhnikovo 1750-1860” (Dissertation Summary), *Journal of Economic History*, 65(2), 2005, pp. 536-9.

“Krest’ianskie dvorokhoziaistva v imenii Voshchazhnikovo v 1816-1858 godakh” [“The peasant household economy on the estate of Voshchazhnikovo 1816-1858”], in *Vestnik Sankt-Peterburgskogo Universiteta. Serii Istorii* 2(1), 2005, pp. 147-54.

“Household Structure and Family Economy on a Russian Serf Estate: Voshchazhnikovo 1816-1858” in T. Häminen, J. Partanen, and Y. Shikalov (eds.), *Family Life on the Northwestern Margins of Imperial Russia* (Joensuu, Finland, 2004).

* “The Invention of the Russian Rural Commune: Haxthausen and the Evidence” (with A. W. Carus) in *The Historical Journal*, 46(3), 2003, 561-82.

* “Serfdom and Household Structure in Central Russia: Voshchazhnikovo 1816-1858” in *Continuity and Change* 18(3), 2003, 395-429.

“Muzhiki i peizane” [“Peasants and *paysans*”] in *Neprikosnovennyi zapas*, No 2 (22), 2002, pp. 126-131.

Reviews

- Tomila Lankina. *The Estate Origins of Democracy in Russia: From Imperial Bourgeoisie to Post-Communist Middle Class* (Cambridge, 2022). Reviewed in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 53(4), Spring 2023.
- David Darrow, *Tsardom of Sufficiency, Empire of Norms: Statistics, Land Allotments, and Agrarian Reform in Russia, 1700-1921* (McGill University Press). Reviewed in *Slavic Review* vol. 78(4), January 2020.
- Boris Gorshkov, *Peasants in Russia from Serfdom to Stalin: Accommodation, Survival, Resistance* (Bloomsbury, 2018). Reviewed in *Journal of Modern History*, vol. 92(1), March 2020.
- S. Smith-Peter, *Imagining Russian Regions: Subnational Identity and Civil Society in Nineteenth-Century Russia* (Brill, 2018). Reviewed in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 49(4), Spring 2019, pp. 668-69.
- J. Bushnell, *Russian Peasant Women Who Refused to Marry: Spasovite Old Believers in the 18th-19th Centuries* (Indiana, 2017). Reviewed in *American Historical Review* 123(5), December 2018, pp. 1790-91.
- S. Antonov, *Bankrupts and Usurers of Imperial Russia: Debt, Property, and the Law in the Age of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy* (Harvard, 2016), Reviewed in *Journal of Modern History* 90(4), December 2018, pp. 987-8.
- D. Smith, *The Institutional Revolution: Measurement and the Economic Emergence of the Modern World* (Chicago, 2012). Reviewed in *Journal of Economic History* 73(1), 2013, pp. 294-5.
- I.A. Khristoforov, *Sud'ba Reformy: Russkoe Krest'ianstvo v Pravitel'stvennoi Politike do i posle Otmeny Krepostnogo Prava (1830-1890 gg)*. Reviewed in *Slavic Review* 72(2), 2013.
- L. Friesen, *Rural Revolutions in Southern Ukraine: Peasants, Nobles, and Colonists 1774-1905* (Cambridge, MA, 2008). Reviewed in *Journal of Economic History* 69(4), 2009, pp. 1170-71.
- C. Gaudin, *Ruling Peasants: Village and State in Late Imperial Russia* (De Kalb, IL, 2007). Reviewed in *The Agricultural History Review* 56(2), 2008, pp. 257-8.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Book Manuscript: *The Political Economy of Serfdom in Europe: State Capacity, Property Rights, and Institutional Change* (chapters in draft)

Papers/Articles:

“Capitalism under Feudalism? Property Rights and Economic Development in Imperial Russia” (under review)

“Degrees of Freedom: Russian Women Under Serfdom”

“Elite Conflict and the Emergence of Inclusive Institutions”

“The State as Landlord: Crown Demesnes east of the Elbe in Comparative Perspective”

TEACHING

Reading Dostoevsky

Ordinary People in the European Past
 European Agriculture/Peasantries since 1700
 Russia in the Nineteenth Century
 Soviet Russia
 Stalinism
 Mortality Crises and Epidemic Disease in the Past
 History of Europe since 1815
 History of Early Modern Europe
 Household and Family Forms in History
 Perspectives on Russian History through Literature
 Perspectives on German History through Literature
 Problems in Historical Demography

Supervision of Undergraduate Theses in Historical Demography, Economic History,
 Soviet History/Politics, Agrarian Politics/Land Reform

INVITED PRESENTATIONS (MOST RECENT)

- “On the Development of Property Rights: the View from Russia”, Russian History Workshop,
 University of Turin, 2022
- “Serfdom and State Formation: Institutional Change in Prussia and Russia.” 2022 *John Hicks Memorial
 Lecture in Economic History*. University of Oxford.
- “The Political Economy of Serfdom in Europe.” 2021 *Figuerola Lecture*, Fundacion Ramón Areces,
 Madrid.
- “State Capacity and the Rise and Fall of Serfdom in Europe”, International Macro-
 History Online Seminar Series (CEPR and The Graduate Institute (Geneva)), March 2021.
- “Serfdom, Law, and State Capacity in Europe”, presentation of book project to EMG, March 2021
- “The Political Economy of Serfdom: State Capacity and Institutional Change in Prussia and Russia”,
 Cambridge University, Economic History Core Seminar, Oct 2019
- “The Political Economy of Serfdom: State Capacity and Institutional Change in Prussia and Russia”,
 Oxford, Warwick, London (OWL) Workshop in Economic History, LSE, Oct 2019
- “Elites as Obstacles to Economic Development: the Abolition of Serfdom in Eastern
 Europe” (Keynote Address), WEast meeting at the Ukrainian Catholic University, L’viv,
 March 2019.
- “Eastern Europe and the Little Divergence”, Roundtable panel at the Centre for Urban History, L’viv,
 Ukraine, March 2019.
- “Institutions and Marriage Patterns in Pre-industrial Europe” presented to Caltech
 Early Modern Group, 2018
- “Overcoming Institutional Inertia: Serfdom, the State and Agrarian Reform in Prussia
 and Russia”, presented to Caltech Social Science History Seminar, 2017
- “Using Micro-level Evidence to Address Macro-level Questions: Serfdom and the
 Economic History of Russia”, presented at a History Workshop (Journée d’Études)
 at the University of Rennes, November 2016
- “The ‘Two Cultures’ and Economic History” (keynote address), presented at WEast
 meeting at the Higher School of Economics, Moscow, September 2016
- “The Political Economy of Serfdom in Europe”, presented at the University of
 Warwick, July 2016
- “The Political Economy of Imperial Russia”, presented at the Economic History

Seminar of the Paris School of Economics, 2016
“Russia as a Weak State: the Political Economy of Serfdom”, presented at the
Graduate Seminar in Russian and East European History, EHESS, Paris, 2016
“Four Legs Good, Two Legs Bad: Inequality in Russia in Historical Perspective”,
presented at the Seminar on Inequality, Harvard, 2015

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Association for Slavic and East European Studies, 2022
Association for Slavic and East European Studies, 2019
Association for Slavic and East European Studies, 2018
Association for Slavic and East European Studies, 2017
Association for Slavic and East European Studies, 2015
European Social Science History Conference, 2014
All-UC Economic History Conference, 2014
Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES), 2012
Higher School of Economics (HSE) Annual International Conference (Moscow) 2010
Economic History Society (Warwick) 2009
All UC Economic History Conference (Pasadena) 2008
Social Science History Association (Miami) 2008
Social Science History Association (Chicago) 2007
Economic History Society (Leicester) 2005
Institute for Historical Research (London) 2005
Economic History Association (San Jose) 2004
European Social Science History Association (Berlin) 2004
Conference of the European Project on Servants (Essex) 2003
Economic History Society (Birmingham) 2002

PROFESSIONAL AND INSTITUTE SERVICE

Chair, Caltech Faculty Athletics Committee (2018-22)
Bishop Prize Selection Committee (2015-present)
Faculty Board (2018-21)
Faculty Board Steering Committee (2019-2021)
Editor and Contributor, *Broadstreet Blog* (for Historical Political Economy)
Editor, Cambridge University Press series “Elements in Economic History” (launching 2023)
Reviewer for: *Agricultural History Review*, *American Political Science Review*, *Cahiers du Monde Russe*,
Continuity & Change, *Economic History Review*, *Explanations in Economic History*, *History of the*
Family, *Journal of Economic History*, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, *Kritika*, *Slavic Review*