



# The Domostroi: Rules for Russian Households in the Time of Ivan the Terrible

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A manual on household management, the *Domostroi* is one of the few sources on the social history and secular life of Russia in the time of Ivan the Terrible. It depicts a society that prized religious orthodoxy, reliance on tradition, and absolute subordination of the individual to the family and the state. Specific instructions tell how to arrange hay, visit monasteries, distill vodka, treat servants, entertain clergy, cut out robes, and carry out many other daily activities. Carolyn Johnston Pouncy here offers, with an informative introduction, the first complete English translation.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"The *Domostroi*, which literally means 'household order,' is a 16th-century Russian guide to life for noblemen, an exhaustive inventory of homilies, rules and recipes ranging from how to instill obedience in a wife to instructions for making mead and storing cabbage. Students of Russian history have long valued the *Domostroi* for its insights into how society was ordered in the early days of czarist rule. But even the merely curious can revel in the domestic preoccupations and atavistic advice in this ably translated and annotated edition .... Much of the *Domostroi* reads like a kind of 'Hints from Heloise' and Abelard."?Alessandra Stanley, *New York Times Book Review*

"The *Domostroi* is a wonderful resource for the social history of the Muscovite period that is, sadly, little seen by any but the most serious specialist. . . . This translation goes a long way toward opening the *Domostroi* to a wider audience. . . . The translation itself reads well?a difficult feat, considering the abstruse style of the original. Throughout, Pouncy uses footnotes to educate readers with fuller information about the history and society of Muscovy, controversies among modern historians, choices she made for the translation and bibliographic citations for her work."?Russian Review

#### Language Notes

Text: English (translation)

Original Language: Russian

### Users Review

#### From reader reviews:

##### Ruth Brinkman:

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