

History 048: The Rise and Fall of the Russian Empire: Imperial Russia, 1689-1917

PROSPECTIVE SYLLABUS

[I will be revising the syllabus for FALL 2022. But the general structure of the course will remain similar.]

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In the mid-seventeenth century, Muscovite Russia was one of many mid-tier states in Europe struggling to survive, having just experienced political implosion and foreign occupation—Polish forces sat in the Moscow Kremlin—during the Time of Troubles (1604-1613). By the mid-eighteenth century, Russia had become a vast empire and had emerged as one of the great powers of Europe. Down to 1917, the Russian Empire continued to play a precocious role in Europe's—and the world's—military, political, and cultural developments. How and why did Russia become the center of the world's largest land empire? What was the cost of the Russian empire's "greatness," both to its own population and to other peoples? Why did so many Russians have doubts about their country's path and so obsess about their relationship to Europe? What constants determined this trajectory—and what has changed in Russian culture and society?

The only prerequisites for this course are a curiosity for Russian history and a willingness to explore its drama and complexity. No prior knowledge of the subject is assumed.

Russian history, like any history, is multifaceted and complex. No account can cover all its nuances and variety. This course will focus in particular on Russia's growth as an empire, in political and diplomatic terms; on the consolidation of the autocracy that accompanied this growth; and, the responses of Russians to these two developments. In examining these responses, we will focus especially on aspects of Russian culture: literature, painting, and music.



Vasilii Surikov, *Morning of the Execution of the Strel'tsy* (1881). Tret'iakov Gallery, Moscow.

GRADING:

Participation in class discussions:	20%
In-class exam (Feb. 24):	25%
Seven-page paper (March 30)	25%
Take-home final exam (two essays) (May 4):	30%

FORMAT AND EXPECTATIONS:

Each week students will attend two lectures. If you cannot attend a lecture, *it is your responsibility* to find out what you have missed. *Please come to each lecture class having completed the assigned readings for that day.* “To complete the readings” means allowing yourself sufficient time both to read through the assigned materials *and to think about them.* Bear in mind that “active participation” means asking good questions as well as proposing good answers. Roughly two-thirds of class time will be devoted to lectures, but I will use a portion of each lecture period to hold discussions of assigned readings and key course themes. I welcome questions during the course of the lectures.

READING: Reading assignments average ca. 100 pp. per week. That is an average, however. On certain weeks, esp. in the first half of the semester, the reading will be heavier. (Of course, that means the reading load on certain other weeks—esp. in the weeks in which assignments are due and in the second half of the semester— will be correspondingly less.) Please plan your reading schedule accordingly.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Out of considerations of equity to other students in the course, and on the grounds of basic ethics, this course will view any question of violations of academic integrity as serious issues. All students are expected to adhere to the University of Pennsylvania’s Code of Academic Integrity: <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/osl/acadint.html>.

In this course, any suspected violation of academic integrity or plagiarism will be submitted to the College’s Office of Student Conduct (OSC). Please acquaint yourselves with the College’s webpage for undergraduate students on academic integrity: <http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/index.html>

COMPUTERS: considering both the effect on the general classroom environment and on how computers affect note-taking, I ask that you not use computers during class for note-taking purposes. If you need accommodations, please speak with me. (Please see the article from the *Chronicle of Higher Education* that I have posted at the Canvas site: “Why I am Asking You Not to Use Laptops.”)

REQUIRED TEXTS (available at the Penn Book Center, 34th and Sansom Streets):

- Anton Chekhov, *Five Plays: Ivanov, the Seagull, Uncle Vanya, Three Sisters, and the Cherry Orchard* (Oxford World's Classics) [we will read *The Cherry Orchard*]
- James Cracraft, *The Revolution of Peter the Great*
- James Cracraft, ed., *Major Problems in the History of Imperial Russia* (Major Problems in European History Series)
- Nikolai Gogol, *The Overcoat and Other Short Stories* (Dover Thrift Edition)
- Geoffrey Hosking, *Russia: People and Empire*
- Isabel De Madariaga, *Catherine the Great: A Short History*
- Leo Tolstoy, *Great Short Works of Leo Tolstoy* (Perennial Classics) [we will read only *Hadji Murad*; the price of this edition of collected works, however, is cheaper than the version of *Hadji Murad* published as a separate volume.]

* Other readings as .pdf at course’s Canvas site.

* Readings from the *Cambridge History of Russia* on-line through VP, and .pdf at Canvas site.

WEEK 1:

Weds.: Lecture 1: INTRODUCTION

WEEK 2:

Mon.: MLK Day: **NO CLASS:** [but you are responsible for these readings]

- Hosking, part II, ch. 1, “The First Crisis of Empire” [30 pp.]
- Look over maps: Hosking, pp. viii-xv; Cracraft, *Major Problems*, p. 5
- Look over Hosking, “Chronology,” pp. 485-492.

Weds.: Lecture 2: THE MUSCOVITE HERITAGE

- Pipes, “The Environment and its Consequences” in *Major Problems*, pp. 3-21 [17 pp.]
- Cracraft, *Revolution*, Preface and ch. 1 [28 pp.]
- Look over Cracraft, *Revolution*, Chronology, pp. 169-73.

WEEK 3:

Mon.: Lecture 3: PETER THE GREAT

- Cracraft, *Revolution*, chs. 2, 3, 5 [67 pp.]
- Hosking, part II, ch. 2 (“The Secular State of Peter the Great”) [20 pp.]
- *Paul Bushkovich, “Peter the Great and the Northern War,” *Cambridge History of Russia*, vol. 2, pp. 489-503 (14 pp.)

Weds.: Lecture 4: THE PETRINE REVOLUTION

- Cracraft, *Revolution*, chs. 4, 6, conclusion [68 pp.]
- *Documents in Russian History:*
http://academic.shu.edu/russianhistory/index.php/Table_of_Contents
 - “Proclamation on the Introduction of the New Calendar, December 20, 1699”
 - “Decree on Single Inheritance, March 23, 1714”
 - “Pavel Miliukov on the reforms of Peter the Great”
- *Alexander Pushkin, *The Bronze Horseman* [available on-line at:
<http://www.tyutchev.org.uk/Download/Bronze%20Horseman.pdf>; ca. 13 pp. Read only the poem and the notes.]

WEEK 4:

Mon.: Lecture 5: AN AGE OF NOBILITY?

- Hosking, part II, ch. 3 (“Assimilating Peter’s Heritage”) [25 pp.]
- Hosking, part III, ch. 1 (“The Nobility”), pp. 153-171 [18 pp.] [*NB: this is not the entire chapter*]
- Anisimov, “Empire of the Nobility” in *Major Problems*, pp. 128-46 [18 pp.]
- *Documents in Russian History:*
http://academic.shu.edu/russianhistory/index.php/Table_of_Contents
 - “The ‘Conditions’ of Anna Ivanovna’s Accession to the Throne, 1730”
 - “Peter III’s Manifesto Freeing Nobles from Obligatory Service: 1762”

Weds.: Lecture 6: THE SOCIAL ORDER: OR, HOW THE OTHER HALF LIVED

- Hosking, part III, ch. 3 (“The Peasantry”) [26 pp.]
- De Madariaga, *Catherine the Great*, chs. 2, 12 [28 pp.]

WEEK 5:

Mon: Lecture 7: GREAT CATHERINE

- De Madariaga, *Catherine the Great*, chs. 1, 3-5 [53 pp.]
- *Documents in Russian History*:
http://academic.shu.edu/russianhistory/index.php/Table_of_Contents
 - “The Instructions of Catherine II to the Legislative Commission of 1767”
- “Catherine’s Charter to the Nobility” (1785) in Cracraft, *Major Problems*, pp. 205-12 [7 pp.]
- Alexander Radishchev excoriates Russia’s Social System (1790) in *Major Problems*, pp. 198-200, 212-20 [8 pp.]

Weds: Lecture 8: ENLIGHTENED ABSOLUTISM

- De Madariaga, *Catherine the Great*, chs. 8, 10-11, 15-16 [67 pp.]

WEEK 6:

Mon.: Lecture 9: EMPIRE IN THE WEST AND IN THE EAST

- Hosking, part I (“The Russian Empire: How and Why”) [42 pp.]
- De Madariaga, *Catherine the Great*, chs. 7, 13 [24 pp.]
- *Vladimir Bobrovnikov, “Islam in the Russian Empire,” *Cambridge History of the Russian Empire*, vol. 2, pp. 202-216 [NB: this is only the first part of the chapter!!!] [14 pp.]

Weds.: Lecture 10: REFORM AND REACTION UNDER ALEXANDER I

- Hosking, Part II, ch. 4 (“The Apogee of the Secular State”) [30 pp.]
- Marc Raeff, “The ‘Constitutionalism’ of Alexander I” in *Major Problems*, pp. 255-68 [13 pp.]
- N. M. Karamzin defends the Established Order (1811) in *Major Problems*, pp. 282-91 [9 pp.]

*****EXAM STUDY SHEET DISTRIBUTED*****

WEEK 7:

Mon.: Lecture 11: THE NAPOLEONIC WARS AND 1812: RUSSIA SAVES EUROPE?

- Hosking, Part III, ch. 2 (“The Army”) [15 pp.]
- *Dominic Lieven, “Conclusion,” *Russia against Napoleon: The True Story of the Campaigns of War and Peace* (New York: Viking, 2009), pp. 521-28 [pdf] (7 pp.).

Weds.: ***** IN-CLASS EXAM *****

WEEK 8:

Mon.: Lecture 12: NICHOLAS I: CAUTIOUS REFORMER OR CAUTIOUS REACTIONARY?

- Hosking, Part III, ch. 1 (“The Nobility”), pp. 171-182 [11 pp.]
- Nicholas Riasanovsky, “The Supreme Commander” in *Major Problems*, pp. 268-82 [14 pp.]
- *Documents in Russian History*:
http://academic.shu.edu/russianhistory/index.php/Table_of_Contents
 - Pëtr Chaadaev, “First Philosophical Letter”

Weds.: Lecture 13: “A REMARKABLE DECADE” (1830s): THE ORIGINS OF THE INTELLIGENTSIA

- Hosking, pt. III, ch. 6 (“The Birth of the Intelligentsia”) [22 pp.]
- Hosking, Part II, ch. 7 (“Literature as Nation-BUILDER”) [25 pp.]
- Nikolai Gogol, “The Overcoat” in *The Overcoat and Other Short Stories* [24 pp.]

WEEK 9:

Mon.: RUSSIA AND THE EUROPEAN ORDER: THE CRIMEAN WAR

- *Walter Moss, “Alexander II and His Times,” Part I, chs. 1-3 on-line at <http://people.emich.edu/wmoss/publications/>
- *Tolstoy’s “Sebastopol in December, 1854” pp. 5-36, on-line at: <http://archive.org/stream/sevastopol00tolsrich#page/n9/mode/2up>
- *David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, “Russian Foreign Policy, 1815-1917,” *Cambridge History of Russia*, vol. 2, pp. 554-74 [20 pp.]

Weds.: Lecture 15: ALEXANDER II: THE TSAR LIBERATOR?

- Hosking, part 4, ch. 1 (“The Reforms of Alexander II”) [30 pp.]
- Francis Weislo, “The Dilemmas of Emancipation” in *Major Problems*, pp. 314-16 [1 pp.]
- *Documents in Russian History*:
http://academic.shu.edu/russianhistory/index.php/Table_of_Contents
 - “The Manifesto of February 19, 1861”

WEEK 10:

Mon.: Lecture 16: EMPIRE

- Tolstoy, *Hadji Murad* in *Great Short Works of Leo Tolstoy* [120 pp.]
- *Review Bobrovnikov, “Islam in the Russian Empire,” pp. 202-216 (week 6)*

PAPER TOPICS DISTRIBUTED

Weds.: Lecture 17: PARADOXES OF THE REFORM PERIOD

- Richard Wortman, “Towards the Rule of Law,” in *Major Problems*, pp. 316-27 [11 pp.]
- *Larissa Zakharova, “The Reign of Alexander II: A Watershed?,” *The Cambridge History of Russia*, vol. 2, pp. 593-616 (23 pp.)

WEEK 11:

Mon.: Lecture 18: THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

- Hosking, Part 4, ch. 2 (“Russian Socialism”) [21 pp.]
- Documents in *Major Problems*, pp. 381-97, 520, 528-48:
 - Vera Figner Defends Assassination in *Major Problems* [6 pp.]
 - Manifesto of Alexander III affirming Autocracy in *Major Problems* [1 pp.]
 - Constantine Pobedonostsev attacks Democracy in *Major Problems* [7 pp.]
 - S. I. Kanatchikov recounts his Adventures, in *Major Problems* [20 pp.]

Weds.: Lecture 19: MOSCOW AND ST. PETERSBURG AS CULTURAL AND POLITICAL SYMBOLS

- *Orlando Figes, ch. 3: “Moscow, Moscow!,” in *Natasha’s Dance: A Cultural History of Russia* (New York: Picador, 2002), pp. 150-71 [.pdf at Canvas site].
- *Alexander Herzen, “Moscow and Petersburg: 1842,” from *Moskva i Petersburg: Pro et contra* in *The Russia Reader: History, Culture, Politics*, eds. Adele Barker and Bruce Grant (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), pp. 22-30 [.pdf at Canvas site].

SEVEN-PAGE PAPER DUE

WEEK 12:

Mon.: Lecture 20: ALEXANDER III: REACTION, OR REFORM BY A DIFFERENT PATH?

- Richard Pipes, "Toward the Police State," in *Major Problems*, pp.361-69 [8 pp.]

Weds.: **NO CLASS**

WEEK 13:

Mon.: Lecture 21: RUSSIAN CULTURE IN THE LATE EMPIRE: THE ITINERANTS AND RUSSIAN MUSIC

- *Fedor Dostoevsky, "A Speech Delivered on June 8, 1880 at the Meeting of the Society of Lovers of Russian Literature" in *Pages from the Journal of an Author*, trans. S. Kotliansky and J. Middleton Murray (Boston: John W. Bruce, 1916) , pp. 47-68, at: http://books.google.com/books?id=jDA6AAAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gb_s_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false [21 pp.]
- *Rosamund Bartlett, "Russian Culture, 1801-1917," *Cambridge History of Russia*, vol. 2, pp. 92-115. [23 pp.]

Weds.: Lecture 22: MULTICONFESSIONAL EMPIRE: OR, JEWS IN THE LAND OF THE TSARS

- Hosking, Part 4, ch. 3 ("Russification") [30 pp.]
- Edward Thaden, "Russification" in *Major Problems*, pp. 403-409 [6 pp.]
- *Benjamin Nathans, "The Jews," in *The Cambridge History of Russia*, pp. 184-201 [17 pp.].

WEEK 14:

Mon.: Lecture 23: NICHOLAS II: AN AUTOCRAT FACES THE MODERN WORLD

- Anton Chekhov, "The Cherry Orchard" [53 pp.]
- Gary Hamburg, "The Nobility in Crisis" in *Major Problems*, pp. 491-94 [3 pp.]
- *Dominic Lieven, "Autocratic Government," ch. 5 of *Nicholas II: Twilight of Empire* (New York: St. Martin's, 1996), pp. 102-131 [.pdf at Canvas site].

Weds.: Lecture 24: THE REVOLUTION OF 1905; or, War and Revolution, part 1

- Hosking, Part 4, ch. 4 ("Revolution of 1905") [25 pp.]
- Terence Emmons, "The Constitutional Movement" in *Major Problems*, pp. 551-78 [27 pp.]
- *Documents in Russian History*:
http://academic.shu.edu/russianhistory/index.php/Table_of_Contents
 - "Workers' Petition of Jan. 9, 1905"
 - "The Manifesto of Oct. 19, 1905"

WEEK 15

Mon.: Lecture 25: RUSSIA IN WW I: or, War and Revolution, part 2

- *Mark von Hagen, "The First World War," *Cambridge History of Russia*, **vol. 3**, pp. 93-113 [20 pp.]

Weds.: Lecture 26: Two Revolutions—and the end of Imperial Russia. And. . . what did it all mean? (Wrapping up)

- Hosking, pt. 4, ch. 6: "The Revolution of 1917" (24 pp.)

***** TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM HANDED OUT IN CLASS *****

TAKE-HOME FINAL (two essays) DUE NOON, Weds. MAY 4