

History 377  
Fall 2003

## **The HISTORY of RUSSIA to 1900**

([www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/russia](http://www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/russia))

Instructor: Jeff Jones                      [jwjones@uncg.edu](mailto:jwjones@uncg.edu)

Office: 224a McIver 334-4068; home phone: 286-4820

Office Hours: M 9-9:50; W 2-2:50; F 1-1:50; and by appointment

### **Introduction**

Russia today is one of the most influential countries in the world, and it has had a fascinating and difficult history. The primary goal of this course is to introduce students to the issues and debates raised in that history from its origins in roughly the 9th century until the eve of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We will examine Russia's history, as much as possible, from the point of view of those living it, trying to understand events through their eyes and to thereby acquire a fuller understanding of Russia today.

An underlying theme in the study of history is the importance of the past in shaping the way people see themselves and the world today, including students in this class. We inherently judge other cultures from the perspective of our own; today we tend to view Russia as a formerly communist totalitarian society undergoing a difficult transition to democracy. This course contextualizes that process historically and introduces students to alternative ways of interpreting Russian history by weighing the evidence and the merits of differing points of view.

The course is divided into two sections: Early Russia to 1700; and Imperial Russia 1700-1900. Relying on primary historical sources, we will approach the subject material from several perspectives, including political, social, economic, and cultural, with a number of themes in mind: society and government; ideology/religion; family/gender; class; war and peace, as well as others.

### **Goals & Objectives**

By the end of the class students will understand, firstly, that history is not just the memorization of dates and facts, but rather the interpretation of the past; and, secondly, that we tend to see Russia and the world through a number of basic assumptions that are not always accurate. Students will take from the class the skills to critically appraise varying historical arguments and to clearly express their own interpretations.

### **Readings:**

Nikolai Gogol, *Inspector General*

Marker and May, *Days of A Russian Noblewoman*

Clyman and Vowles, *Russia Through Women's Eyes*

Ivan Turgenev, *Fathers and Sons*

Reserve articles and online material designated below

Optional: MacKenzie-Curran, *A History of Russia, the Soviet Union & Beyond*

**Course Web Page:** The course web page is at [www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/russia](http://www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/russia)  
The page has course readings, summaries of the notes, a timeline, and other features relevant to the course.

**Assignments:**

Participation	25 %
Research Assignment	15 %
Midterm Exam	30 %
Final Exam	30 %

**Participation:** Your 25% class participation grade consists of several worksheets to be turned in at the beginning of the class periods designated below; and several Reaction Pieces, 1-2 pages double-spaced. These are intended to be your *reaction to or opinion of* the assigned readings designated below, *not* a summary of the reading material. The total sum of these assignments is 50 points, which will be divided by two for the final participation grade. Students who miss an in-class quiz can *only* make it up with a legitimate reason. Inform me beforehand if you know you have to miss a quiz and we will schedule a make-up.

**Exams:** There is a midterm exam and a final exam (each worth 30%) for the class. The exams cover *only* the part of the course for which they are designated (Midterm: Early Russia-1700; Final: Imperial Russia 1700-1900), so they are *not cumulative*. Each exam includes a Take Home Essay, worth 10% of the overall exam grade, the topic for which will be distributed prior to the exam, with the essay to be turned in on exam day.

**Research Assignment:** The Research Assignment (worth 15%) requires you to define the issues and arguments involved in a topic of historiographical debate related to the course, i.e. the nature of early Slavic society and culture; the impact of the Mongols in Russian history; the role of Ivan the Terrible, Peter the Great, Catherine the Great, or some other ruler in Russian history; the rise of capitalism in Russia, etc. For the assignment (double-spaced, 4-6 pages), you should summarize the opposing sides of an historical debate for a topic chosen ahead of time and approved by the instructor, identifying at least 3-5 major books or articles on that topic in a bibliography. The assignment is not due until the last day of class but can be turned in at any point of the semester after September 15<sup>th</sup>; be forewarned: we have a lot of reading toward the end of the semester, so you need to work on this assignment well before it is due.

**Grading:** Grades are compiled on a point system. For example, if you make 80 on the midterm (16/20) + 87 on the midterm Take Home Essay (8.7/10) + 88 on participation (22/25) + 85 on the Research Assignment (12.8/15) + 84 on the final exam (16.8/20) + 90 on the final Take Home Essay (9/10) your final grade = **85.3** or B. Keep up with your grades on the chart at the end of the syllabus to know what grade you have going into the Final Exam.

## **Class Schedule**

Monday, August 18. Introduction: Images of Russia

- Reading for next class: Why Study History Through Primary Sources?

Wednesday, August 20. Introduction (cont'd): Early Settlements in Russia

### **Part I: Early Russia to 1700**

Friday, August 22. The Daily Life of the Early Slavs

- Reading for next class: Excerpts from *The Russian Primary Chronicle*
- **Worksheet 1** due at the beginning of the next class

Monday, August 25. The “Norman Theory”: Discussion of the Reading

Wednesday, August 27. Kievan Rus & the Christianization of Russia

- Reading for next class: “An Arab Traveler to Kiev”; Optional: “Lay of Igor’s Campaign”; **\*\*Reaction Piece** (1-2 pages) to the Arab Traveler reading due in class

Friday, August 29. The Fall of Kiev: Discussion of the Reading

- Reading for next class: Accounts of the Mongol Invasion of Russia
- Reaction Piece (1-2 pages) to this reading due in class

Wednesday, September 3. The Mongol Invasion & its Aftermath: Discussion of Reading

- Reading for next class: “The Mongol Impact on Russia” by George Vernadsky

Friday, September 5. The Mongol Impact (cont'd): Varying Views

Monday, September 8. The Rise of Novgorod

- Reading for next class: *The Novgorod Chronicle*
- **Worksheet 2** due at the beginning of class

Wednesday, September 10. The Fall of Novgorod & Rise of Muscovy

Friday, September 12. The Rise of Muscovy

- Reading for next Friday: “Ivan the Terrible as Renaissance Prince” by Michael Cherniavsky; Excerpts from “The Correspondence Between Tsar Ivan IV and Prince Andrei Kurbsky”; and “Ivan IV’s Rampage Against Novgorod”
- Reaction Piece (1-2 pages) to these readings due in class

Monday, September 15. The Rise of Muscovy (cont'd)

Wednesday, September 17. Ivan IV (the “Terrible”)

Friday, September 19. The Latter Reign of Ivan IV

- Reading for next Wednesday: A German Merchant’s Account of Famine in Russia

Monday, September 22. The Roots of the “Time of Troubles”

Wednesday, September 24. The “Time of Troubles”: Discussion of Readings

- Reading for next class: “An English Account of the Bolotnikov Uprising”; Optional: excerpt from *Russian Rebels*, pp. 1-47

Friday, September 26. The “Time of Troubles” (cont’d) & Reestablishment of Autocracy

- Reading for next Wednesday: Excerpts from The Law Code of 1649; Optional: “Ballad to Stenka Razin” and “Tsar’s Edict Concerning Stenka Razin”
- Reaction Piece (1-2 pages) to this reading due in class

Monday, September 29. The Origins of Serfdom & the Revolt of Stenka Razin

Wednesday, October 1. The Origins of Serfdom (cont’d): Discussion of the Reading

Friday, October 3. Religion in Russia: in-class viewing of “Faces of Russia” (Part I)

- Reading for next Wednesday: Excerpts from *Avvakum’s Autobiography*
- Worksheet 3 due at the beginning of class

Monday, October 6. Religious Crisis in Russia

Wednesday, October 8. The Church Schism: Discussion of Reading

Friday, October 10. **MIDTERM EXAM**

## **Part II: Imperial Russia 1700-1900**

Wednesday, October 15. Peter the Great: Childhood & Early Reign

- Reading for next Monday: “The Artisan Tsar” by V. O. Kliuchevsky and Personal Observations and Recollections of Peter the Great

Friday, October 17. Peter the Great (cont’d)

Monday, October 20. Peter the Great (cont’d): Discussion of Reading

Wednesday, October 22. Russia in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century

- Reading for next class: Views of Catherine the Great & Catherine the Great’s Views; Optional: Excerpts from “Catherine the Great’s Instructions”
- Reading for Monday: Excerpts from Alexander Radishchev’s “A Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow”; Reaction Piece (1-2 pages) to this reading due in class

Friday, October 24. Catherine the Great: Enlightened Despotism?

Monday, October 27. Catherine & Alexander Radishchev: Discussion of the Reading

Wednesday, October 29. The Pugachev Rebellion

- Reading for next class: Edicts of Emelian Pugachev

Friday, October 31. The Pugachev Rebellion (cont'd): Discussion of Reading

- **BEGIN READING:** *Days of A Russian Noblewoman: The Memoirs of Anna Labzina* (Introduction and memoir only); Reaction Piece (1-2 pages) to the book due in class Monday, November 10; Optional Reading: Labzina's diary

Monday, November 3. Paul and Alexander I

- Optional: "The Decembrists" & "Apology of a Madman"

Wednesday, November 5. Napoleon in Russia & the Decembrist Uprising

Friday, November 7. The Decembrist Uprising of 1825 & the "Iron Tsar" Nicholas I

- Reading for next Friday: *Inspector General* by Nikolai Gogol & "Letter to Gogol"
- Reaction Piece (1-2 pages) to these readings due in class

Monday, November 10. Tsar Nicholas I & Discussion of *Days of a Russian Noblewoman*

Wednesday, November 12. Guest Lecture by Professor David MacKenzie: Russian Foreign Policy in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

Friday, November 14. Russian Literature as Social Critique: Discussion of Readings

Monday, November 17. Russia in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century

- Reading for next Monday: excerpts (TBA) from *Russia Through Women's Eyes*
- Reaction Piece (1-2 pages) to this reading due in class

Wednesday, November 19. Alexander II's Great Reforms

Friday, November 21. Gogol: in-class viewing of "Faces of Russia" (Part II)

Monday, November 24. Women in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Russia: Discussion of Reading

**BEGIN READING:** *Fathers and Sons* by Ivan Turgenev; Reaction Piece (1-2 pages) to the book due in class Friday, December 5

Monday, December 1. Nineteenth Century Russian Literature & Art

Wednesday, December 3. Opposition to Tsardom in Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century Russia

Friday, December 5. Russia's Generation Gap: Discussion of *Fathers and Sons*

- Reading for next class: "A Little Jewish Girl in the Russian Pale, 1890"

Monday, December 8. Russia on the Eve of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

**RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT DUE ON THE LAST DAY OF CLASS**

**Final Exam: Friday, December 12 Noon-3:00**

**GRADE RECORD for History 377**

Participation Grade (WS = Worksheet; RP = Reaction Piece; Q= Quiz)

{Note: Worksheets and Reaction Pieces are worth 3-5 pts.}

Add your scores on these assignments:

WS 1 _____	RP 1 _____	RP 6 _____
WS 2 _____	RP 2 _____	RP 7 _____
WS 3 _____	RP 3 _____	RP 8 _____
	RP 4 _____	RP 9 _____
	RP 5 _____	

Part. Grade (25 points total)

$$\underline{\quad\quad\quad} + \underline{\quad\quad\quad} + \underline{\quad\quad\quad} = \underline{\quad\quad\quad}/2 = \boxed{\quad\quad\quad}$$

+

Midterm (20 pts.)

$$\text{(number grade) } \underline{\quad\quad\quad} \times .20 = \boxed{\quad\quad\quad}$$

+

Midterm Take Home Essay (10 pts.)

$$\text{(number grade) } \underline{\quad\quad\quad} \times .10 = \boxed{\quad\quad\quad}$$

+

Research Assignment (15 pts.)

$$\text{(number grade) } \underline{\quad\quad\quad} \times .15 = \boxed{\quad\quad\quad}$$

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\*This is your numerical grade for the course going into the Final Exam, which covers the remaining 30 % of the grade, including a Take Home Essay Question worth 10 % of the overall course grade. To convert the number to a letter grade, divide it by 70, which is the total number of points possible prior to the Final Exam.