

The Russian Empire to 1917

HIS 343L

Unique # 39305 (REE335: 44490)
T Th 2-3.30 ~ WEL 2.304

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Tsar Nicholas II, in 17c costume (1913)

In this course we will examine fundamental issues regarding political, social, cultural life in the modern Russian Empire:

- autocracy as a political system
- national identity at the crossroads of Europe and Asia;
- poverty & modern industry in a predominantly rural society
- political opposition and the revolutionary movement

Readings (Required): available at bookstores and on-line bookstores:

Geoffrey Hosking, *Russia: People and Empire*
V. Kivelson and J. Neuberger, eds., *Picturing Russia: Explorations in Visual Culture*
Anna Labzina, *Days of a Russian Noblewoman*
B. Engel & C. Rosenthal, eds., *Five Sisters: Women Against the Tsar*
Orlando Figes, *A People's Tragedy: A History of the Russian Revolution*

Additional required readings will be on-line on our Blackboard site on the "Course Documents" page

Assignments & Grading (+/- will be used)

Map Exercise - 10% Due Sep 8
Short Essays/Participation/Attendance: 10%
Two In-Class Exams, 20% each = 40%
Take-home Final Exam 40%

Attendance in class is required.

In case of absence it is your responsibility to find out about anything you missed including scheduling and other changes.

Additional information on **assignments** will be distributed in class.

No make-up exams will be allowed without written documentation for a family or medical emergency. Students with **special needs** may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259. Students who will miss class for **religious** holidays or other University sanctioned events should contact me **in advance** to make accommodations.

How to succeed in this course

1. Come to class prepared to participate actively.
2. Listen actively, ask questions, join in discussions.
3. Do all the reading when it is assigned. Plan ahead so that you know which weeks require more reading and which weeks require less.
4. Take an active part in group discussions.
5. Listen to the kinds of questions I raise in lectures. Think about the subjects I discuss repeatedly. Pay attention to themes that come up over and over again. If you pay attention to the major themes, you will be able to determine which details are important as well.

CLASSROOM COURTESY

All students are expected to attend each class, to arrive on time, and to stay for the entire class. Late arrival, early departure, ringing cell phones, texting, tweeting, surfing, chatting, newspaper reading, and sleeping, etc. distract and disrupt the entire class. Your courtesy will be appreciated by everyone in the class.

If you must leave the room for any reason you may not return during that class session, so be prepared to stay for the entire class when you enter the room.

Laptops are permitted for note taking only. Use of laptops is allowed in the first two rows only. Inappropriate usage earns one warning before your use of a laptop is banned.

THERE WILL BE NO EXAM REVIEW SESSIONS IN THIS CLASS.

I know that many students benefit from these, but there are always students who cannot attend sessions, no matter when they are scheduled. So for the sake of fairness, each student will be responsible for deciding which topics and themes are most important, which arguments are most persuasive, which examples (evidence) support those arguments best.

Assignments

1. Attendance at lectures is required.
2. Assigned Reading is to be completed before the lectures for any given week. Plan ahead. Some weeks there will be as little as 50 pages of reading. But at the end of the semester, you will have to read as much as 200 pages per week.
3. Map Exercise. On Sep 3, we will pass out a blank map of European Russia, a blank map of the Russian Empire and a list of geographical sites for you to fill in. Completed maps will be due on Sept 10.
NO LATE MAPS WILL BE ACCEPTED (without written excuse from a doctor or funeral home director). If you add this class late, read the syllabus and mark your calendar.
4. Participation Grade/Group Work. On Sep 1, Sep 20, Oct 13, and Nov 18 we will divide the class into groups to discuss specific readings. Each student will be responsible for bringing a short essay to class (typed, printed out, with name and date on it) and then for collectively composing the answer to a more detailed question with a group of other students.
5. Two in-class midterm exams. Exams will include short answers and short essays. The exams will test your ability to integrate material from lectures, discussions and readings.
6. The final exam is a take-home exam. Part of the final will be equivalent to a mid-term; testing your ability to integrate lectures and readings from the last third of the course. The 'final' part of the final is intended to test your ability to draw conclusions based on material covered during the entire semester, including lectures, discussions and readings.

Lectures & Readings

* denotes on-line reading on Blackboard

Aug 25 Intro: Geography

Aug 30 Pre-Petrine Russian Empire

Reading:

**Hosking*: xix-xxviii, 39-74 (optional, skim: 3-39)

Sep 1 Pre-Petrine Russian Empire

Reading: **Picturing Russia*: 1-50

THURS Sep 1: BRING TO CLASS

Write: 1-2 paragraphs:

What do these essays tell us about early-modern Russia's institutions before Peter (government, religion, social structure, empire)?

Sep 6-8: Peter the Great

Reading:

**Hosking*: 75-94, 225-233

Picturing Russia, 51-62

*Miliukov on Peter the Great

Sep 13-15 Catherine the Great

Reading:

**Hosking*: 95-119, 153-171

*Radishchev, *A Journey from St Petersburg to Moscow*, 212-220

*Catherine's "Instruction"

THUR Sep 8

Map Exercise is due in class

Sep 20 Nobles, Serfs, Women, Religion: Social Life in the 18th century

Discussion of **Labzina**

Reading:

Hosking: 198-210

Picturing Russia, 63-75

Labzina, *Days of a Russian Noblewoman*, pp 3-117 (required)

(Intro and Diary: optional)

TUE Sep 20

Write: 1-2 paragraphs:

What does Labzina's memoir tell us about social life in 18th c Russia: government, social structure, religion, gender)?

THURS Sep 22 First Midterm Exam

[on material covered through and including Sept 20]

Sep 27-29 Alexander I and the Decembrist Revolution

Reading:

Hosking: 120-44, 183-197

The Decembrist Movement: 100-105, 119-123, 162-79

Oct 4 Nicholas I: Autocracy and Oppositions

Oct 6 Birth of the Intelligentsia

Reading:

Hosking: 144-49, 198-262, 263-85

*Herzen

Oct 11 Peasants and Serfdom

Oct 13 "The Parting of the Ways"

Reading:

*M.E. Vasilieva, "Notes of a Serf Woman"

*Rodney Bohac, "The 1827 Uprising at Bernovo," 55-67

Picturing Russia, 71-89

Write: 1-2 paragraphs (*Picturing Russia*, pp 71-89)

What do nobles' albums, merchants' portraits, Petersburg cultural life, and responses to Ivanov's painting tell us about the fissures that were dividing Russia in the early 19th c?

Be prepared to discuss these fissures in relation to the Decembrist uprising and the "Birth of the Intelligentsia"

Oct 18 Alexander II and Emancipation of the Serfs

Oct 20 The Great Reforms

Reading:

Hosking: 315-44

Picturing Russia, 90-95

*Peasants' petitions in response to Emancipation, 170-185

[Start *Five Sisters*, Required 3-142]

Oct 25-27 Populism to Terrorism

Reading:

Hosking: 345-59

Five Sisters: REQUIRED: 3-142 (Optional, 143-249)

Nov 1 Second Midterm Exam

[on material covered up through and including October 27]

Nov 3 Alexander III and Nicholas II

Reading:

Figs, *People's Tragedy*, 3-24, 35-83

Nov 8 Empire and Russification

Nov 10 Post-reform Politics: Left & Right

Reading:

Hosking, 359-97

Picturing Russia, 100-138

Figs, *People's Tragedy*, 84-121, 139-173

*Lenin, *What is to be Done?*

Nov 15 1905 Revolution

Nov 17 *Picturing Russia*, 100-108

Reading:

[Hosking, 398-423 – optional, Figes covers the same territory]

Figes, *People's Tragedy*, 173-212

*Gapon's petition to Nicholas II

*The October Manifesto

Picturing Russia, 133-38

Write: 1-2 paragraphs (*Picturing Russia*, 109-32):

What do the essays in PR tell us about social and cultural life in turn-of-the-century Russian villages and cities on the eve of the 1905 Revolution?

Nov 22 Pseudo-Constitutional rule

Nov 24 THANKSGIVING - NO CLASS

Reading:

Figes, 213-303

Nov 29 1917: From World War to Revolution...

Dec 1 1917: From Revolution to Revolution

Reading:

Figes, 307-500

Picturing Russia, 142-47

Th Dec 9, final exam due by 5pm. Andy Straw's office: BUR