

HSTR 357: Russia to 1881 (Imperial Russia)

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LA 308
MWF, 9:00-9:50am

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This is an upper-level history course that will examine the political, cultural, and socioeconomic history of the Russian lands over more than a thousand years, from the earliest archaeological record through the fall of the Romanov dynasty.

Topics to be examined include: the establishment of the first Russian state at Kiev; the role of Orthodox Christianity in shaping Russian culture; the Mongol invasions and the emergence of Muscovy as the preeminent Russian principality; Peter the Great's efforts to modernize and remake Muscovite Russia; the establishment of the imperial system and its maintenance under Peter's successors; noble culture and peasant culture in the pre-Emancipation countryside; intellectual debates on the direction of Russian society; the Russian empire as a multi-confessional and multi-ethnic polity; the Great Reforms of the 1860s, peasant emancipation, and the transformation of Russian society; autocratic culture and the limits of reformability; the rise of radical opposition to the tsarist regime; "dual polarization" and the social crisis of late imperial Russia.

In addition, we will explore three major themes that run across the semester. What was the Russian autocratic system; how did it define the relationship between individuals, the state, and society; and how did men and women of different classes and estates seek to adapt, support, or challenge this system and relationship over the course of the Muscovite and imperial periods? In focusing on these questions, we will examine also the articulation of opposition to autocratic rule. What alternative visions of political, social, and/or economic organization did these opponents of autocracy put forward?

Required texts: The following texts are available for purchase at the Bookstore.

- *A Life Under Russian Serfdom: The Memoirs of Savva Dmitrievich Purlevskii, 1800-1868*, trans. and ed. Boris Gorshkov (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2005)
- Olga Semyonova Tian-Shanskaia, *Village Life in Late Tsarist Russia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993)
- Vera Figner, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1991)
- Anna Pavlovna Vygodskaia, *The Story of a Life: Memoirs of a Young Jewish Woman in the Russian Empire*, ed. and trans. Eugene M. Avrutin and Robert H. Greene (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2012)
- Anton Chekhov, *The Cherry Orchard*, trans. Lawrence Selenick (New York: Norton, 2010)

Recommended text: This text is an optional accompaniment to the material we will cover in lecture. There are many good textbook surveys of Russian history; this is as good as any and has the added advantage of affordability. Copies are available for purchase at the Bookstore.

- Abraham Ascher, *Russia: A Short History*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oneworld, 2017)

Learning outcomes: 1) An overview of the general narrative and major themes in Russian history; 2) A familiarity with key questions in the historiography of imperial Russia; 3) Enhancement of critical reading and analytical writing skills

Assignments and expectations:

We will read and discuss multiple books and texts this semester; you will write two 5-7 page papers (your choice of texts and topics). **PAPERS ARE DUE ON DAYS MARKED “DISCUSSION/PAPER OPTION” IN THE SYLLABUS BELOW.**

These will be analytical papers, based around a thesis (not summaries or “book reports”). I’ve suggested possible questions to consider on discussion days in the syllabus below. Feel free to structure your paper around these questions (any or all, as you see fit). Successful papers will be based around a thesis statement, amply evidenced with textual materials, well written, and mechanically sound. Sloppy papers hastily compiled will receive the grades they merit. **(See guide to writing papers and grading rubric attached).**

I expect that you will come to class having read all of the material all of the time. Be prepared to engage in substantive class discussions. Be prepared for reading quizzes each week; if discussions falter or prove unproductive, we will have *more* quizzes. I will take attendance irregularly throughout the semester. Attendance and participation will count toward your final grade. (Note: I understand participation not as random non-sequiturs and digressive interjections, but thoughtful, informed discussion reflecting an engagement with the readings).

On days marked “Discussion” in the schedule below, please make sure you bring the relevant readings with you to class (either print-outs or electronic copies). If you do not have the readings with you, I will ask you to leave. Despite great advances in technology and pedagogy, we cannot have a meaningful, text-based discussion if you do not have the texts in front of you.

Grading and procedure:

Grading will be assessed as follows. Late work will not be accepted; plan accordingly

- Two analytical papers (60%)
- Final project (30%)
- Active, engaged attendance and participation; reading quizzes as/if needed (quizzes cannot be made up): (10%)
- No late work will be accepted after the due date.

Mandatory things:

- All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php
- Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting another’s work, words, or ideas as one’s own. **Be aware that submitting plagiarized work will result in automatic failure of the course.**
- Students with documented disabilities will receive reasonable modifications in this course. Your responsibilities are to request them from me with sufficient advance notice,

and to be prepared to provide verification of disability and its impact from Disability Services for Students. Please speak with me after class or during my office hours to discuss the details. For more information, visit the Disability Services for Students website at <http://www.umt.edu/disability>.

- This course is offered for a traditional letter grade or Credit/No Credit. Please be advised that the deadline for changing your grading option is the fifteenth day of the semester. I will not sign requests for a grading option change thereafter.

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

WEEK 1

M, Aug 27: Introduction to the Course

- Ascher, *Russia*, 1-15

W, Aug 29: The “Road from the Varangians to the Greeks”

- MOODLE: Stories from the Primary Chronicle: “Prolegomenon”; “The Apostle Andrew Comes to Russia”; “The Founding of the City of Kiev”; “The Beginning of the Russian State and the Arrival of Rurik”; “Vladimir Christianizes Russia” in Serge A. Zenkovsky, ed., *Medieval Russia’s Epics, Chronicles, and Tales*, rev. ed. (New York: Meridian, 1974), 43-51, 65-71
- Questions to consider: The Primary Chronicle was written by numerous Orthodox clergymen over many years and was completed at Kiev, c. 1113. What can we say about the style in which the chronicles were written? How do the authors interpret and make sense of the historical events they describe? How do the chroniclers understand historical causation (i.e., what makes history happen)?

F, Aug 31: DISCUSSION/PAPER OPTION: The Baptism of Rus’

- MOODLE: Vladimir Monomakh’s Instruction to His Children (c. 1096), in Serge A. Zenkovsky, ed., *Medieval Russia’s Epics, Chronicles, and Tales*, rev. ed. (New York: Meridian, 1974), 92-100
- Questions to consider: Why did Vladimir choose to adopt Orthodoxy Christianity for himself and his subjects? What did the Christian faith mean to Vladimir Monomakh and how did he seek to reflect his faith in his life’s works? What do this week’s texts tell us about the importance of Orthodox Christianity in early Russian culture?

WEEK 2

M, Sept 3: LABOR DAY; NO CLASS

W, Sept 5: Kievan Culture and Society

- MOODLE: Early Russian Law Codes: Russian Justice, The Short Version (mid-11th c); The Church Statute of Kiev (late 11th c) in Basil Dmytryshyn, ed., *Medieval Russia: A Sourcebook, 900-1700*, 2nd ed. (Hinsdale, IL: Dryden Press, 1973), 44-54
- Questions to consider: What sort of values are reflected in these earliest of Russian law codes? What can we learn about Kievan culture, moral codes, behavioral norms, and social structures from these documents? How would you characterize Kievan politics and society based on these texts?

F, Sept 7: The Coming of the Mongols and the Rise of Moscow

- Ascher, *Russia*, 15-22
- MOODLE: Tale of the Destruction of Riazan (c. 16th c?), in Serge A. Zenkovsky, ed., *Medieval Russia's Epics, Chronicles, and Tales*, rev. ed. (New York: Meridian, 1974), 198-207
- MOODLE: Charles Halperin, "Interpreting the Mongol Yoke: The Ideology of Silence," in Daniel H. Kaiser and Gary Marker, *Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings, 860-1860s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 104-07
- Questions to consider: How do the Russian chroniclers make sense of the Mongol invasion? What does Halperin mean by the "ideology of silence"? What were the immediate and long-term consequences of Mongol rule over the Russian lands?

WEEK 3

M, Sept 10: "Gathering in the Russian Lands": Ivan the Great and the Rise of Muscovy

- Ascher, *Russia*, 23-36

W, Sept 12: Ivan the Terrible and the Problem of Autocratic Misrule

- Ascher, *Russia*, 36-46
- MOODLE: Viacheslav Shaposhnik, "Ivan the Terrible: The First Russian Tsar," *Russian Studies in History* 53:1 (2014): 74-80
- MOODLE: "A Foreigner Describes the *Oprichnina* of Tsar Ivan the Terrible (1565-1570)," in Daniel H. Kaiser and Gary Marker, *Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings, 860-1860s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 151-54

F, Sept 14: DISCUSSION/PAPER OPTION: Understanding Autocracy in Muscovy

- MOODLE: Nancy Shields Kollmann, "The Façade of Autocracy" and Robert O. Crummey, "Ivan IV: Reformer or Tyrant?" in Daniel H. Kaiser and Gary Marker, *Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings, 860-1860s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 154-63
- Questions to consider: What does Kollman mean when she describes the Muscovite autocracy as a "façade"? What was the nature of the political relationship between the grand prince (later, tsar) and his boyars? How did Ivan IV deviate from the accepted (albeit, unwritten) norms of political culture in Muscovy? How are we to make sense of Ivan IV's erratic behavior and policies?

WEEK 4

M, Sept 17: DISCUSSION/PAPER OPTION: Elite Culture in Muscovy

- MOODLE: Robert O. Crummey, "The Boyars of Muscovy: A Modern View"; Nancy Shields Kollmann, "The Seclusion of Elite Muscovite Women," in Daniel H. Kaiser and Gary Marker, *Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings, 860-1860s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 183-92
- MOODLE: Grigorii Kotoshikhin on Boyar Weddings (c. 1666); A Marriage Contract (1668), in Daniel H. Kaiser and Gary Marker, *Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings, 860-1860s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 176-80
- MOODLE: Letters to *stol'nik* Andrei Il'ich Bezobrazov from his Wife (1687); Adam Olearius on Food and Dining (1630s), in Daniel H. Kaiser and Gary Marker,

Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings, 860-1860s (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 213-17

- MOODLE: Excerpts from the *Domostroi* (Book of Household Management, mid-16th c)
- Questions to consider: What political, social, and cultural roles did the boyar elite play in the Muscovite system? What power, if any, did elite women wield in Muscovite culture and politics? Why were kinship networks and family dynamics so important in Muscovy? What do these sources tell us about gender roles, household structure and management, and patterns of family life in Muscovy?

W, Sept 19: The Seventeenth Century: Schism & Enserfment

- Ascher, *Russia*, 47-61
- MOODLE: Richard Hellie, "Enserfment in Muscovite Russia"; Ch. 11 of the 1649 *Ulozhenie*, in James Cracraft, ed., *Major Problems in the History of Imperial Russia* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1994), 46-67
- Questions to consider: What does the gradual process of enserfment tell us about political and social structures in Muscovy? How can the terms of enserfment be seen as evidence of "collaborative autocracy"?

F, Sept 21: DISCUSSION/PAPER OPTION: Muscovite Lives

- MOODLE: The Life of Yuliania Lazarevsky, in Serge A. Zenkovsky, ed., *Medieval Russia's Epics, Chronicles, and Tales*, rev. ed. (New York: Meridian, 1974), 391-99
- MOODLE: Excerpts from the Autobiography of Archpriest Avvakum, in Thomas Riha, ed., *Readings in Russian Civilization*, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 128-140
- Questions to consider: Two very different characters emerge in the readings for today. The story of Yuliania's life is one of the first pieces of biographical literature to appear in Russian. Avvakum's is the oldest autobiography in Russian literature. Borrowing from many literary genres (hagiography, biblical scripture, historical chronicles), both texts present their subjects as positive heroes worthy of emulation by virtue of their holy lives. What Christian qualities do these figures embody? How do both figures make sense of the suffering and trials they have endured for the faith? What common traits do they share, what differences do you detect, and why?

WEEK 5

M, Sept 24: Peter the Great and the Muscovite Legacy

- Ascher, *Russia*, 61-71

W, Sept 26: The Petrine Transformation

- MOODLE: E. V. Anisimov, "Peter I: Birth of the Empire"; James Cracraft, "Kliuchevsky on Peter the Great"; Petrine Reform Legislation; Reforming the Church; Feofan Prokopovich Eulogizes Peter the Great," in James Cracraft, ed., *Major Problems in the History of Imperial Russia* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1994), 81-126

F, Sept 28: DISCUSSION/PAPER OPTION: Peter as Reformer or Revolutionary?

- Questions to consider: Peter's reforms are often regarded as Russia's "westernization." What sorts of ideas and innovations did Peter seek to borrow from western Europe and what, very pointedly, did he choose not to introduce? Is "westernization" a suitable conceptual framework to describe the Petrine reforms? What can we say about the tempo

and nature of Petrine reform? How did Peter's reforms alter the principles of collaborative autocracy inherited from his predecessors? How did the size and scope of the state change under Peter? Is the Petrine era best characterized as one of reform or revolution?

WEEK 6

M, Oct 1: Great Catherine: Enlightenment and Autocracy

- Ascher, *Russia*, 72-84
- MOODLE: Catherine the Great's "Instructions"; Sergei Solov'ev, "The Legislative Commission of 1767," in Thomas Riha, ed., *Readings in Russian Civilization*, vol. 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 252-60
- MOODLE: Isabel de Madariaga, "Catherine as Woman and Ruler," in James Cracraft, ed., *Major Problems in the History of Imperial Russia* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1994), 166-79
- Questions to consider: Catherine discovered that implementing Enlightenment principles was far trickier than professing them. What enlightenment influences do we see in Catherine's Instructions? What limitations did Catherine's commitment to autocratic rule impose on the notion of enlightenment? Why did the Legislative Commission fail?

W, Oct 3: Enlightenment and Empire: Imperial Expansion in the 18th Century

- MOODLE: P. P. Shafirov Justifies the Empire; M. V. Lomonosov Extolls Russian Greatness; Russia Annexes Crimea, in James Cracraft, ed., *Major Problems in the History of Imperial Russia* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1994), 245-52
- Questions to consider: What principles and assumptions underscored Russian imperial expansion in the eighteenth century? How and to what extent did Catherine attempt to apply enlightenment principles to the administration of a growing empire? What tensions (indeed, contradictions) do you see between these principles and the reality of territorial expansion?

F, Oct 5: DISCUSSION/PAPER OPTION: The Radishchev Affair and the Limitations of Enlightened Autocracy

- MOODLE: Alexander Radishchev, *A Journey from St Petersburg to Moscow* (excerpts), in Thomas Riha, ed., *Readings in Russian Civilization*, vol. 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 261-79
- Questions to consider: According to Radishchev, what were the main problems facing Russia? How can they be overcome? What did the empress find so troubling (and dangerous) about Radishchev's book? Why did she think one Radishchev worse than a thousand Pugachevs? What does Catherine's response tell us about the tensions between enlightenment thought and autocratic power? Was Catherine an enlightened autocrat?

WEEK 7

M, Oct 8: Peasant Life in Rural Russia

- MOODLE: Conditions of Peasants in the 18th Century, in Basil Dmytryshyn, *Imperial Russia: A Source Book, 1700-1917*, 2nd ed. (Hinsdale, IL: Dryden Press, 1974), 124-27
- MOODLE: Peter Kolchin, "Peasant Patterns of Resistance," in Daniel H. Kaiser and Gary Marker, *Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings, 860-1860s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 303-11

- MOODLE: Peter Czap, Jr., “A Large Family: The Peasant’s Greatest Wealth,” in Daniel H. Kaiser and Gary Marker, *Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings, 860-1860s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 356-62
- Questions to consider: How was Russian serfdom similar to and different from slavery in the Americas? What makes these systems of unfree labor alike or unlike? How much freedom, if any, did peasants really possess? How did peasant life change over the eighteenth century?

W, Oct 10: Noble Life and Culture

- MOODLE: Helju Bennett, “Russia’s System of Ranks and Orders,” in Daniel H. Kaiser and Gary Marker, *Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings, 860-1860s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 232-37
- MOODLE: Marc Raeff, “The Home and School Life of a Young Nobleman,” in Daniel H. Kaiser and Gary Marker, *Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings, 860-1860s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 366-69
- MOODLE: Nikolai Gogol, “The Nose” (1835-36), in Gogol, *Diary of a Madman and Other Stories*, trans. Ronald Wilks (New York: Penguin, 1987), 42-70
- Questions to consider: How did noble life and the mentality of the noble class change as a result of the Petrine revolution? Why did Russian nobles consider the Catherinean period the “golden age” of the Russian nobility? How did Catherine view the relationship between the autocrat and his (or her) nobles? To what extent were the values and outlooks of 18th-c. Russian noblemen shaped by the education they received?

F, Oct 12: DISCUSSION/PAPER OPTION: The Life of Savva Purlevskii

- Gorshkov, ed., *A Life Under Russian Serfdom*
- Questions to consider: Was Purlevskii a “typical” serf? Why or why not? How was Purlevskii’s experience similar to or different from the conditions described by Peter Czap on the Mishino estate? What does Purlevskii’s memoir tell us about family relations among the peasantry? What sort of power did masters wield over their serfs, and to what degree? Though unfree, Purlevskii experienced a serfdom very different from the litany of injustices recorded/invented by Radishchev. What is Purlevskii’s critique of the serf system and how did he come to arrive at this critique? What does “freedom” mean to Purlevskii? (5-7 pp)

WEEK 8

M, Oct 15: Paul and Alexander: The Problem of a Constitution

- Ascher, *Russia*, 84-90
- MOODLE: Marc Raeff, “The ‘Constitutionalism’ of Alexander I,” in James Cracraft, ed., *Major Problems in the History of Imperial Russia* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1994), 256-68
- Questions to consider: What was Speransky’s vision for reforming Russia? To what extent did this coincide with Alexander I’s own notion of constitutionalism? Why did Speransky fail?

W, Oct 17: 1812 and Russian National Consciousness

- Ascher, *Russia*, 90-101

- MOODLE: Alexander I's Proclamations During the War of 1812, in Basil Dmytryshyn, *Imperial Russia: A Source Book, 1700-1917*, 2nd ed. (Hinsdale, IL: Dryden Press, 1974), 157-60
- Questions to consider: To what emotions does Alexander appeal in his address to the Russian people? What is the Russian nation fighting for in its war against Napoleon? To what institutions, traditions, and values does Alexander ascribe the Russian victory? What is Alexander's vision of the Russian nation/people?

F, Oct 19: The Decembrist Revolt of 1825

- Ascher, *Russia*, 101-04

WEEK 9

M, Oct 22: DISCUSSION/PAPER OPTION: The Decembrists

- MOODLE: Documents on the Decembrists, in Thomas Riha, ed., *Readings in Russian Civilization*, vol. 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 295-302
- Questions to consider: What is wrong with Russia in 1825, according to the Decembrists? Can it be fixed? If so, how? Where do the Decembrists look for inspiration and possible models to emulate? What elements of Russian society do you think would be most responsive to the kind of changes the Decembrists sought to implement?

W, Oct 24: The Nikolaevan Era: Romanticism and "Official Nationality"

- MOODLE: Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, "The Supreme Commander: Nicholas I," in James Cracraft, ed., *Major Problems in the History of Imperial Russia* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1994), 268-82
- MOODLE: The Marquis de Custine is Dazzled by the Imperial Court, 1839, in James Cracraft, ed., *Major Problems in the History of Imperial Russia* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1994), 292-302
- Questions to consider: How did Nicholas I understand his duties and responsibilities as autocrat? By what means (imperial decrees, court ritual, etc.) did he seek to project and make visible the power of the autocrat? What effects did Official Nationality have on Russian intellectual and political life?

F, Oct 26: Slavophiles and Westernizers

- Ascher, *Russia*, 104-15
- MOODLE: P. V. Annenkov, *The Extraordinary Decade: Literary Memoirs* (1840s, excerpts), in Daniel H. Kaiser and Gary Marker, *Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings, 860-1860s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 414-17
- Questions to consider: What were the fundamental differences and similarities between the ideas of the Westernizers and the Slavophiles? What rules governed intellectual salon society in the first half of the 19th century?

WEEK 10

M, Oct 29: DISCUSSION/PAPER OPTION: Intellectual life in Nikolaevan Russia

- MOODLE: Vissarion Belinskii, "Letter to Gogol"; Alexander Herzen, "Young Moscow," in Thomas Riha, ed., *Readings in Russian Civilization*, vol. 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 315-31

- MOODLE: Nicholas V. Riasanovsky, “The Split between the Government and the Educated Public,” in Daniel H. Kaiser and Gary Marker, *Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings, 860-1860s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 421-27
- Questions to consider: Russian historian Nicholas Riasanovsky famously wrote that there was a “parting of the ways” between the Russian state and educated society (*obshchestvo*) in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Where and on what issues did the state and educated Russians differ? What kind of competing visions of Russian identity and Russia’s future do we see emerging here? Why was Belinsky so fierce in his criticism of Gogol? What role ought the writer play in Russian society, according to Belinsky, and why did he regard Gogol’s book as such a “dire sin”?

W, Oct 31: Visions of Empire: From Toleration to Russification

- MOODLE: Andreas Kappeler, “The Multi-Ethnic Empire”; Edward C. Thaden, “Russification,” in James Cracraft, ed., *Major Problems in the History of Imperial Russia* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1994), 398-409
- Questions to consider: How did Russian imperial policy toward non-Russian and non-Orthodox minorities evolve from the late eighteenth through the nineteenth centuries? What relation do you see between the evolution of these policies and developments in intellectual and cultural life?

F, Nov. 2: The Crimean Debacle; Prelude to Reform

- Ascher, *Russia*, 115-18
- MOODLE: W. Bruce Lincoln, “The Genesis of an ‘Enlightened’ Bureaucracy (1825-56)”; Walter M. Pintner, “The Russian Civil Service on the Eve of the Great Reforms,” in Daniel H. Kaiser and Gary Marker, *Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings, 860-1860s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 257-67
- Questions to consider: What factors accounted for the emergence of the so-called “enlightened bureaucrats” in the first half of the 19th c? What were their visions for reforming Russia and how far did those visions reach?

WEEK 11

M, Nov 5: The Great Reforms

- Ascher, *Russia*, 119-27
- MOODLE: Larissa Zakharova, “The Government and the Great Reforms of the 1860s”; Terence Emmons, “The Emancipation and the Nobility,” in Daniel H. Kaiser and Gary Marker, *Reinterpreting Russian History: Readings, 860-1860s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 436-45
- Questions to consider: In terms of scope, tempo, and goals, what comparisons and contrasts can we see between the Petrine reforms and the Great Reforms?

W, Nov 7 Russian Society After the Reforms; The Limits of Reformability

- Ascher, *Russia*, 127-31
- MOODLE: Gleb Uspenskii, “From a Village Diary,” in Thomas Riha, ed., *Readings in Russian Civilization*, vol. 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 358-367
- Questions to consider: What does Uspensky see as the principal legacies of serfdom? Would you characterize him as a Slavophile or Westernizer?

F, Nov 9: DISCUSSION/PAPER OPTION: Olga Tian-Shanskaia on the Post-Emancipation Village

- Tian-Shanskaia, *Village Life in Late Imperial Russia*
- Questions to consider: What does Tian-Shanskaia's study tell us about gender relations in the village? Morality? Social relations? How do the peasants view themselves in relation to the outside world? How does the author's status as an outsider (not a peasant, not from the village) influence (or distort?) her views of peasant life and culture? What's wrong with the peasant village? How can it be fixed? (can it?). How did emancipation change preexisting patterns of social, cultural, and economic life in the Russian village? Were peasants better off after 1861 or not? How and why?

WEEK 12

M, Nov 12: VETERANS DAY; NO CLASS

W, Nov 14: The Rise of Radicalism and the Death of an Emperor

- Ascher, *Russia*, 131-42
- MOODLE: Nechaev's Catechism of a Revolutionary (1868); Demands of the Narodnaia Volia, in Basil Dmytryshyn, *Imperial Russia: A Source Book, 1700-1917*, 2nd ed. (Hinsdale, IL: Dryden Press, 1974), 303-16
- Questions to consider: Why does Nechaev title his piece a "catechism"? According to Nechaev, by what principles must a revolutionary live? Why did the members of Narodnaia Volia (the People's Will) embrace terror as a viable political tactic? What is their vision for Russia?

F, Nov 16: Industrialization and Social Change

- MOODLE: Victoria Bonnell, "The Labor Force," in James Cracraft, ed., *Major Problems in the History of Imperial Russia* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1994), 454-68
- MOODLE: S. I. Kanatchikov, "From the Story of My Life," in Victoria E. Bonnell, *The Russian Worker: Life and Labor under the Tsarist Regime* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 36-71
- Questions to consider: The son of a peasant, S. I. Kanatchikov (1879-1940) grew up in a rural district of Moscow Province and began working in Moscow factories as a young man. He became involved in the radical underground movement and joined the Bolsheviks in 1905. Imprisoned and exiled to Siberia by the tsarist regime for revolutionary activity, he played an active part in the revolutionary movement and became a mid-level functionary in the Soviet government after 1917. How did the experience of urban life and factory work change Kanatchikov's life and outlook? How did Kanatchikov regard his fellow workers, how did workers regard their bosses, and how did a sense of class consciousness emerge among the Russian working population? How did the experience of men and women workers differ and in what ways were they similar?

WEEK 13

M, Nov 19: DISCUSSION/PAPER OPTION: The Making of a Radical

- Figner, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist* (focus on the first half of the memoir, through p 171).
- Questions to consider: How did a nice girl from a respectable noble family become a devoted adherent of revolutionary violence? What factors influenced Figner's own path to revolution? How did Figner and her comrades formulate a moral justification for

terror? What characteristics was an ideal revolutionary expected to embody, and how did Figner seek to mold herself in this image?

W, Nov 21 & F, Nov 23: THANKSGIVING BREAK; NO CLASS

WEEK 14

M, Nov 26: DISCUSSION/PAPER OPTION: Russian Thought in the Era of Counter-Reform

- MOODLE: Constantine Pobedonostsev Attacks Democracy, 1896, in James Cracraft, ed., *Major Problems in the History of Imperial Russia* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1994), 390-97
- Questions to consider: As tutor to the last two tsars and long-time over-procurator of the Holy Synod (the government body that oversaw the Russian Orthodox Church), K. P. Pobedonostsev (1827-1907) wielded enormous influence in Russian political life in the last decades of the imperial regime. In addition to his political responsibilities, he was a prolific writer, as well, who devoted much of his work to justifying the principles of autocratic government and assailing the arguments of liberal reformers and socialist radicals (who saw Pobedonostsev as the very incarnation of political reaction). As you read this piece, consider the arguments Pobedonostsev puts forward to justify the autocratic system and assail the principles of participatory politics. What similarities do you see between his views and those expressed in the principles of Official Nationality? How would you characterize Pobedonostsev's views on European politics, society, and culture at the end of the nineteenth century? According to Pobedonostsev, what principles must Russia embrace (and what principles must Russia reject) in order to be a great power?

W, Nov 28: DISCUSSION/PAPER OPTION: The Life of Anna Vygodskaiia

- Vygodskaiia, *Story of a Life*
- Questions to consider: How does Vygodskaiia describe the interactions between Jews, Poles, and Russians in the western borderlands of the empire? Why does acquiring an education matter so much to Vygodskaiia? How was Vygodskaiia, a Jewish woman, made to feel an outsider in late-19th c. Russian society? Did she feel herself to be an outsider? How does Vygodskaiia's memoir help us to fill in the gaps of reconstructing "everyday lives" or "ordinary stories" from imperial Russia? Vera Figner and Anna Vygodskaiia led very different lives and followed very different paths. What similarities and differences do you see between Vygodskaiia's determination to become a "useful person" and Figner's?

F, Nov 30: The Crisis of the Autocracy and the Revolution of 1905

- Ascher, *Russia*, pp 143-57

WEEK 15

M, Dec 3: The Duma Experiment

- Ascher, *Russia*, 157-66
- MOODLE: Petr Stolypin, "We Need a Great Russia," in Thomas Riha, ed., *Readings in Russian Civilization*, vol. 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 456-64
- Questions to consider: Stolypin described his agrarian reforms as a "wager on the strong." What did he mean by this? In what ways would Stolypin's reforms have altered

Russian society? Had he lived, would Stolypin and his reforms have saved the autocratic system or presided over its transformation into a different sort of entity altogether?

W, Dec 5: The Great War and the Fall of the Romanov Dynasty

- Ascher, *Russia*, 166-78

F, Dec 7: DISCUSSION/PAPER OPTION: Chekhov, *The Cherry Orchard*

- Questions to consider: Since the play's premiere in 1904, audiences and readers have tended to view the country estate and the characters who inhabit it as representing a microcosm of Russian society in the early twentieth century. Chekhov himself disliked overly political interpretations of his work, however the changes taking place on the estate and in the family seem to mirror larger transformations taking place in Russia society at large. What are these changes? Choose two or three of the characters in the play. How do they cope (or fail to cope) with the socioeconomic and cultural changes taking place in Russia at the end of the imperial period?

FINALS WEEK

W, Dec 12: Final project due by 12pm, noon.

Final Project

Our readings have emphasized the personal experience of ordinary (and extraordinary) Russian men and women over the course of more than a millennium. For your final project, you will select (or invent) an historical figure (real or imaginary) and reflect on how that character might have experienced, understood, and made sense of a particular historical event or events. You might write *as* the character you've chosen, and compose a letter or letters to friends or family (in English!) or diary entry/entries, memoirs, or an autobiography; or you could write *about* the character you've selected, and compose a biographical sketch of him or her.

For instance, you might write as (or about) a peasant on the experience of unfreedom or liberation, or a landowner dealing with the consequences of the emancipation settlement; you might write as a social elite experiencing the upheavals of the Petrine Revolution, or as a religious dissenter troubled by disturbances in the social and cultural order of things; you might write as a soldier in one of Russia's victorious (or less than victorious) campaigns, as a radical revolutionary entering the nineteenth-century underground, or as an officer in the tsarist police seeking to root out political subversion.

This is a relatively free-form assignment and the specific mode is up to you, but your writing should be informed by the readings we have done this semester. Draw on the details and specifics from the texts we've read as you sketch out the thoughts and feelings of your historical actor. The point is to think imaginatively and creatively (but accurately and plausibly!) about the historical past, and to develop a sense of empathy for historical actors high and low. I encourage you to start thinking about this project early in the semester, and to talk to me about questions, ideas, etc.

Total word count should be 2000-2500 words.

This final project is due by email (or hard copy delivered to my dept. mailbox, LA 256) no later than 12pm, noon, on Wednesday, December 12.

Guide to Writing Papers

You will write two analytical papers this semester. They will be double-spaced with standard margins, 12-point Times New Roman font, and an original title of your own devising. Number and staple your pages. Do not use a cover page. When citing sources, ***EITHER*** use footnotes formatted in Chicago Style or use parenthetical citation (author name, page number), but not both. If you've taken HSTR 200, you should be familiar with citation. If not, or if you require a refresher, consult the Chicago Manual of Style or any number of online guides for Chicago format, such as [this one](#); in any case, do not simply invent your own system of citation. Adhere to the stipulated page lengths above.

These will be formal analytical papers, not summaries or “book reports” or personalized journal entries. Whether you liked the book or not is immaterial. Whether the film made you sad or angry is beside the point. Successful papers will be based around a clear, compelling thesis statement and supported by ample evidence from the text(s). I expect that your paper will be well written and mechanically sound. Do not confuse “well written” with flowery and verbose. I am looking for clear and muscular prose, not wordy constructions, windy phrases, or synonyms plucked from a thesaurus. Use active voice; passive voice obscures meaning and agency.¹ Proofread carefully for mechanics and usage. Never turn in a paper still warm from the printer. Go through your paper carefully, line by line. Then go through it again. I will stop reading your paper after the tenth mechanical error. This doesn't mean that you get nine freebies; it literally means that I will go no further and will assign you a grade based on what I was able to read. I don't expect your writing to be flawless, but I do expect you to submit your very best work. If you're serious about improving your writing, I'll be happy to work with you. If you “don't like writing” and are uninterested in developing this critical skill, you should really find another course to take.

I take plagiarism very seriously. Plagiarism is a violation of the Student Conduct Code and will result in an automatic F for the course.

Finally, I'd encourage you to take advantage of the resources available at the Writing Center. Visit their [website](#) for more information.

¹ Yes, there are certain situations in which the passive voice is perfectly correct. But in the vast majority of cases you should avoid it. Why? Passive voice makes it unclear *who* is performing the action in the sentence. How can you tell if a sentence is in active voice or passive voice? A quick test: If you can add “by zombies” to the end sentence and it makes sense, it's passive and you should probably rework it. To wit: Ivan the Terrible read the book (active voice – we know who performed the action). The book was read (passive voice – read *by whom?* Zombies?).

Grading Rubric

I will use the following rubric to evaluate your writing and assign grades to your papers:

The Superior Paper (A range)

- **Thesis:** Easily identifiable, plausible, novel, sophisticated, insightful, crystal clear.
- **Structure:** Evident, understandable, appropriate for formal college-level writing. Excellent transitions from point to point. Paragraphs support solid topic sentences and flow logically.
- **Use of evidence:** Textual evidence used to buttress every point with at least one example. Excellent integration of quoted material into sentences (i.e., not simply bleeding chunks of text dropped onto the page, but evidence that is seamlessly integrated into the paper).
- **Analysis:** Author clearly relates evidence to thesis/argument; analysis is fresh and exciting, posing new ways to think of the material.
- **Logic and argumentation:** All ideas in the paper flow logically; the argument is identifiable, reasonable, and sound. Author anticipates and successfully defuses counter-arguments; makes insightful connections that illuminate thesis.
- **Mechanics:** Sentence structure, grammar, and diction excellent; correct use of punctuation and citation style; minimal to no spelling errors; absolutely no run-on sentences or comma splices.

The Good Paper (B range)

- **Thesis:** Promising, but may be slightly unclear, or lacking in insight or originality.
- **Structure:** Generally clear and appropriate, though may wander occasionally. May have a few unclear transitions, or a few paragraphs without strong topic sentences.
- **Use of evidence:** Examples used to support most points. Some evidence does not support point, or may appear where inappropriate. Quotes well integrated into sentences.
- **Analysis:** Evidence often related to argument/thesis, though links perhaps not always clear.
- **Logic and argumentation:** Argument of paper is clear, usually flows logically and makes sense. Some evidence that counter-arguments acknowledged, though perhaps not addressed. Occasional insightful connections to outside material made.
- **Mechanics:** Sentence structure, grammar, and diction strong; punctuation and citation style used correctly. Some (very minor) mechanical errors.

The Borderline Paper (C range)

- **Thesis:** May be unclear (contain many vague terms), appear unoriginal, or offer relatively little that is new; provides little around which to structure the paper.
- **Structure:** Generally unclear, often wanders or jumps around. Few or weak transitions, many paragraphs without topic sentences.
- **Use of evidence:** Examples used to support some points. Points often lack supporting evidence, or evidence used where inappropriate (often because there may be no clear point). Quotes may be poorly integrated into sentences.
- **Analysis:** Quotes appear often without analysis relating them to argument; or analysis offers nothing beyond the quote without any commentary.
- **Logic and argumentation:** Logic may often fail, or argument may often be unclear.

May not address counter-arguments or make any outside connections.

- **Mechanics:** Problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction, but not major ones. Errors in punctuation, citation style, and spelling. May have multiple run-on sentences or comma splices.

The Deficient Paper (D range)

- **Thesis:** Difficult to identify at all, may be bland restatement of obvious point.
- **Structure:** Unclear, often because thesis is weak or non-existent. Paragraph transitions confusing and unclear. Few topic sentences.
- **Use of evidence:** Very few or very weak examples. General failure to support statements, or evidence seems to support no statement. Quotes not integrated into sentences; "plopped in" in improper manner.
- **Analysis:** Very little or very weak attempt to relate evidence to argument; argument may be unidentifiable and/or unsupported by evidence
- **Logic and argumentation:** Ideas do not flow at all, usually because there is no argument to support. Simplistic view of topic; no effort to grasp possible alternative views.
- **Mechanics:** Major problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction. Frequent major errors in citation style, punctuation, and spelling. May have many run-on sentences and comma splices.

The Failing Paper (F)

- Shows obviously minimal lack of effort or comprehension of the assignment. Very difficult to understand, owing to major problems with mechanics, structure, and analysis. Has no identifiable, coherent thesis.