

A Preview of the Mid-Term Examination History 422

The exam will test your knowledge on both the lectures and the readings through World War I. There will be three parts to the exam (see below), all of which are guaranteed to be fun.* Please note that as I am providing you ahead of time with much of the information that will appear on the exam, I expect your answers to be somewhat more developed and accurate than if I were simply to test you "cold turkey." Take the opportunity to review the material thoughtfully and thoroughly. The point distribution indicated below is approximate and may change slightly (but only slightly) on the exam itself.

PART ONE: CHRONOLOGY (4 items at 4 points each = 16 points). This part of the exam is designed to ensure that you have a good grasp of the sequence of events with regard to a particular issue in Russian history. I will not ask you to know any exact dates, but rather that you be able to place a series of events in the proper order. Most likely, I will give you five or six sets of events and you will choose four to which you wish to respond. Partial credit will typically be granted even if events have not been arranged flawlessly.

EXAMPLE: A) Start of Crimean War
 B) Publication of the Emancipation Statutes
 C) Decision to emancipate serfs
 D) Reform of State peasants under Kiselev
 E) Death of Nicholas I

ANSWER: *D, A, E, C, B*

PART TWO: SHORT ANSWER (17 items @ 2 points each = 34 points). This part of the exam is designed to test basic factual knowledge about Russian history. In most cases you should be able to answer these questions with a few words or a phrase. There will be an element of choice in this section.

EXAMPLE: What were the names of the two factions into which the Russian Social Democratic Workers Party (the Social Democrats) split in 1903? Also name the most prominent individual associated with each faction.

ANSWER: *Bolsheviks (Vladimir Lenin) & Mensheviks (Iulii Martov)*

PART THREE: TRIADS (2 items @ 25 points each = 50 points). This is the major interpretive portion of the exam. A triad represents a list of three items (people, places, ideas, or concepts) that I propose are linked in a fundamental way in the context of the history we are studying. For each triad, I ask that you write a well-developed paragraph or mini-essay explaining the historical relationship among the three items. The idea is *to focus above all on the*

* The instructor's notion of "fun" has been known to differ substantially from that of students.

connections, rather than on addressing each item in isolation from the others: How are the items related to one another? In some cases the relationship will be causal (that is, some items caused the others). In some cases, one item may be a context in which the other two items occurred. In still other cases, one item may be an issue over which two people or ideologies disagreed. And so on. As you think about how to answer, keep in mind the following points:

- In each case, the best answer will state in the paragraph's first sentence the relationship involved, while the rest of the paragraph will then elaborate on that relationship, using specific evidence and detail from the materials at your disposal (notes, textbook, etc.). Try, therefore, to compose a sentence that includes all three items; this becomes your topic sentence and thesis.
- Although the three concepts can usually be put together in a variety of ways, make sure that you do not ignore important evidence in constructing your answer. Think broadly about the entire century and how information that might not immediately jump to mind may be relevant nonetheless. Remember that you are seeking to write the best possible answer.
- Students' handwriting and capacity to present information vary considerably, so it is difficult to say precisely how long an ideal triad essay should be. Nonetheless, a full written page would seem a good benchmark. An essay of this length will compel you to provide a fair amount of concrete evidence (specific names, events, concepts, ideas) to fortify your case – something that is absolutely critical to success.

Of the six triads offered below, probably four will appear on the exam. Of these, you will choose two.

Ivan Kireevsky Vissarion Belinsky Europe	autocracy serfowning nobility bureaucracy
Great Reforms populist terrorists Konstanin Pobedonostsev	Populism capitalism/industrialization Marxism
peasant commune Petr Stolypin Russian peasantry	autocracy Great Reforms Revolution of 1905

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS & ADVICE:

1. I ask that you bring your own paper for the exam. For the first two parts you may write directly on the exam, so have enough paper to cover your needs for the triads. It goes without saying that you should have a pen, and not one that writes in red, pink, purple, green, or any other strange color.
2. Make sure that the claims that you make in your essays are supported by evidence. This does not mean retelling everything that happened, but making reference to specific events, institutions, and people for the purposes of illustrating larger points. This is absolutely critical and the failure to do this represents the principal inadequacy of most student exams. Be sure to consider all the evidence that you have: textbook, lecture notes, web reader, Moon, and Turgenev.
3. In your triad essays, try to write your first sentence in such a way that it represents a thesis (a main argument) for the essay. Be sure that all three items actually appear in the first sentence.
4. In writing your essay, make sure that you do not ignore major pieces of evidence. Obviously there is no way that you can write about everything, but make sure that there is not some crucial issue that you leave out of your discussion.
5. For the purposes of the triads, it is acceptable if you use abbreviations like "Bols" for Bolsheviks, "Rus" for Russia, "KPP" for Pobedonostsev, as long as the referent is always clear and as long as you write out the word in question the first time that you use it.