

RUSSIAN 90A. Introduction to Russian Civilization

Instructor: Prof. Igor Pilshchikov
Email: pilshchikov@ucla.edu

Lectures: Zoom sessions. Links available via CCLE

Tue & Thu, 12:30–1:45pm

Instructor's and TAs' office hours will be emailed to the class.

Discussion Sections (Zoom meetings available via CCLE):

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|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 1.A (Vitaly Yefimenkov): | Thu, 4:00–4:50pm |
| 1.B (Vitaly Yefimenkov): | Tue, 4:00–4:50pm |
| 1.C (Katrin Gendova): | Mon, 10:00–10:50am |
| 1.D (Katrin Gendova): | Wed, 1:00–1:50pm |
| 1.E (Jack Friedman): | Wed, 2:00–2:50pm |
| 1.F (Jack Friedman): | Thu, 10:00–10:50am |

TA emails: Vitaly Yefimenkov (A&B): vyefim@ucla.edu
Katrin Gendova (C&D): katrin.gendova@gmail.com
Jack Friedman (E&F): jrf422555@gmail.com

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Russian 90A: Introduction to Russian Civilization is a survey of Russian culture, society, history and the arts from the tenth century to the early twentieth century. The course explores the interrelation between Russian society, its history and its cultural expression in painting, literature, music and architecture over the past thousand years. Particular emphasis is placed on the tensions, both creative and destructive, that propelled Russia on a course that would lead to the 1917 Revolution.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There will be one pre-midterm quiz, one midterm examination and one final examination. All exams will test knowledge (terms, history, concepts, chronology, etc.) and analytical skills (brief essay questions). A five-page (ca 1250 words) essay on one of several topics to be suggested in class, will be due on **June 9**. The quiz counts for 5%, midterm – for 20%, the final – 30%, the paper – 25%, and preparation for and participation in class discussion – 20%. Self-test quizzes on CCLE are non-graded but will give you extra credit (*more on extra credit on p. 7 below*).

Attendance for discussion sections is mandatory. One absence will be excused, any others must be arranged in advance for compelling reasons with your TA, and justified by medical or other compelling documentation indicating that you were unable to attend.

REQUIRED READING and VIEWING

1. Walter G. Moss, *A History of Russia*, Vol. I: To 1917 (any edition). Available at ASUCLA Bookstore. Limited online access: <https://catalog.library.ucla.edu/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=7805771>
2. Ivan Turgenev, *Fathers and Sons* (any edition). Available at ASUCLA Bookstore.
3. Assigned documents, essays, literary works, slides and videos included in this syllabus (either available in the Internet or posted on the course website).

SCHEDULE

Week 1. Russia and the Russian language

Tue, March 30. General introduction (5 min).

The Russian language among other Slavic and East/Central European languages (20 min).

Smart History of Russia, part 1 (Early Russia):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c5qugbz3moc> (5 min).

The Cyrillic script and the Russian alphabet (35 min).

Russian names: first names, patronymics, last names (10 min).

You may use the “Learn to Read Russian” section of the course website for revision:

<https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/21S-RUSSN90A-1?section=3>

Self-quiz (five attempts between March 30 and June 12) for your self-test and extra credit:

<https://ccle.ucla.edu/mod/quiz/view.php?id=3785024>

↓ *Assignment for Week 1: Moss, chapter 1 (pp. 1–14, and the maps, pp. 2–3 and 7).*

Thu, Apr 1. Russian geography and the main historical periods (20 min).

Smart History of Russia, part 2 (Medieval Russia):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=woIzqrqNsSs> (5 min).

The rise and fall of various Russian states, 10th–20th cc. (15 min).

Smart History of Russia, part 3 (Kievan Rus):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EqVrWcerIFs> (5 min).

Early medieval Russian history: Kiev (30 min).

You may use the “Geography” section of the course website for revision:

<https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/21S-RUSSN90A-1?section=4>

Self-quiz (five attempts between March 30 and June 12) for your self-test and extra credit:

<https://ccle.ucla.edu/mod/quiz/view.php?id=3785034>

Discussion sections: general issues; learn the alphabet; write short words; read names typed/written in Cyrillic; study maps.

↓ *Assignment for Week 2: Moss, chaps. 2 (pp. 15–32), 4 (pp. 54–64) and part of chap. 5 (pp. 67–73). Read two fairytales (Tsarevich Ivan and the Grey Wolf; Sister Alyonushka and Brother Ivanushka) and one epic song (Ilya of Murom and Nightingale the Robber). [Posted on the course website.](#)*

Week 2. 10th–12th centuries. Early medieval Russian history, folklore and architecture

Tue, Apr 6. Early medieval Russian history: The Mongol conquest (15 min).

Smart History of Russia, part 4 (Mongol Invasion):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9mcOdQXfcc> (5 min).

Russian folklore: epic songs and fairytales; the structure of a fairytale (50 min).

Thu, Apr 8. Review of early medieval Russian history (15 min).

Eastern Christian architecture in the 10th–12th centuries (50 min).

Discussion sections: close reading of fairytales: identify characters and their functions.

Try an additional quiz for your entertainment and extra credit:

Russian Cuisine (ten attempts between March 30 and June 10)

<https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/21S-RUSSN90A-1?section=6> (ppt and quiz)

↓ Assignment for Week 3: Moss, pp. 42–52 and 113–123.

Dmitry S. Likhachev, “Religion: Russian Orthodoxy” (19 pp.). *Posted on the course website.*

Read excerpts from the Primary Chronicle (pp. 51–55 and the first paragraph of p. 56, pp. 58–60):

<http://www.mgh-bibliothek.de/dokumente/a/a011458.pdf>

Prepare for the quiz on Apr 15.

Week 3. Orthodox Christianity and Eastern Christian iconography

Tue, Apr 13. Review of Weeks 1–2 (25 min).

Eastern Christianity (Orthodoxy): difference from Western Christianity: Vitaly Yefimenkov’s lecture (45 min).

Thu, Apr 15. Pre-midterm Quiz (25 min): questions based on lectures and Moss, pp. 1–32.

Eastern Christian iconography (Russia and Byzantium): Vitaly Yefimenkov’s lecture (45 min).

Discussion sections: analyzing the Primary Chronicle: history or myth?

↓ Assignment for Week 4: Moss, Part II, pp. 73–112 and Part III, pp. 217–220.

Viewing Sergei Eisenstein’s film *Ivan the Terrible*, part 1 (1945), music by Sergei Prokofiev.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i5EWgWEcoxM> (95 min).

Start reading Turgenev’s “Fathers and Sons”

Week 4. 13th-15th cc. Alexander Nevsky. Dmitri Donskoi. Ivan III the Great: politics and culture

Tue, Apr 20. Review of the Quiz (15 min).

Novgorod and Suzdalia-Vladimir. Alexander Nevsky (20 min).

Smart History of Russia, Part 5 (The Grand Duchy of Moscow):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YmkUTZcUye4> (5 min).

The rise of Moscow. Dmitri Donskoi and the Battle of Kulikovo (20 min).

Smart History of Russia, Part 6 (Ivan the Great):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dX9JK8lwKt8> (5 min).

Muscovite princes. Ivan III of Russia (10 min).

Thu, Apr 22. 13th-17th centuries. Old Russian literature and architecture

Old Russian literature (25 min).

The Kremlin under Ivan III. Russian architecture from the 15th to the 17th cc. (45 min).

Discussion sections: Eastern Christian iconography and architecture.

↓ Assignment for Week 5: Moss, Part III, pp. 129–43 (for Apr 28) and 146–83, 206–11 (for Apr 30).

Read excerpts from Alexander Pushkin’s historical drama “Boris Godunov” (1825), tr. by James E.

Falen, pp. 3–5 (Falen’s introduction), 6–7 (Characters), 9–12, 17, 44–47, 53–62, 72–73, 89–92 (Scenes 1, 4, 10, 12–13, 17, 22–23). *Posted on the course website.*

Week 5. 16th-17th cc. Turbulent years: Muscovy from Ivan the Terrible to the first Romanovs

Tue, Apr 27. Review of Weeks 3–4 (20 min).

Smart History of Russia, Part 7 (Tsardom of Russia):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LtwkDYLJfWg> (5 min).

Ivan IV the Terrible (45 min).

Smart History of Russia, Part 8 (Ivan the Terrible):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZg3hoj_lgY (5 min).

Thu, Apr 29. Boris Godunov. The Time of Troubles: Pseudo Dmitry and his doubles (15 min).

Smart History of Russia, Part 9 (Time of Troubles):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=06v1F8r2v_4 (5 min).

Selection of Mikhail Romanov and the myth about Ivan Susanin (15 min).

Smart History of Russia, Part 10 (The First Romanovs):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_vxUMpEPqY (5 min).

The reign of Alexei Mikhailovich and the schism in the church (25 min).

Midterm exam: Study Guide (10 min)

Discussion sections: the rulers, the people and the impostor(s) in the Time of Troubles and in Pushkin's historical drama; preparation for midterm.

↓ Assignment for Week 6: Moss, chap. 13, pp. 226–49 (for Feb 14). Prepare for midterm on Feb 12. You may use the “Russian History” section of the course website for revision (subsections 1 and 2):

<https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/21S-RUSSF90A-1?section=2>

Week 6.

Tue, May 4. Midterm exam.

Thu, May 6. 18th century, first half. Early Modern Russia. The rise of the Russian Empire

Review of Weeks 1–5:

Epic History. History of Russia, Part 1 (800–1612):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TU1N8KTxIJU> (10 min).

Peter the Great. Government, calendar and spelling reforms. Table of ranks:

Katrin Gendova's lecture (45 min)

Smart History of Russia, Part 11 (Peter the Great):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zt4D2QnhQPY> (5 min).

Smart History of Russia, Part 12 (Empire of Russia):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8M0o2GgTNSo> (5 min).

Discussion sections: pre-Petrine and Petrine Russia; paper topics.

Select your paper's topic. Consult your TA and the list of topics posted on the course website under Week 6.

↓ Assignment for Week 7:

Moss, chapters 15–16, pp. 267–311 (for May 12), and chapters 18–19, pp. 331–374 (for May 14).

Read Peter Chaadaev's “First Philosophical Letter” (1836) and Ivan Kireevsky's “On the Nature of European Culture and Its Relation to the Culture of Russia” (1852). *Posted on the course website.*

Viewing the documentary: “The Romanovs. The History of the Russian Dynasty. Episode 6” (Paul I and Alexander I): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HooDdn_cuZs (50 min).

Week 7.**Tue, May 11. 18th century, second half. The Age of Enlightenment**

Review of Midterm exam (10 min).

Catherine the Great: Enlightenment in Politics, Art and Literature (25 min).

Smart History of Russia, Part 14 (Catherine the Great):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mda4IbDaI4U> (5 min).

The Two capitals: Moscow and St. Petersburg. Baroque and Neoclassicism in architecture (30 min)

Thu, May 13. 19th century, first half. The reigns Alexander I and Nicholas I

Review of Weeks 5–6:

Epic History. History of Russia, Part 2 (1613–1762):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HNfSBCygXTg> (10 min).

Alexander I: Russia vs. Napoleon; the “Patriotic” War of 1812 (20 min).

Smart History of Russia, Part 15 (Alexander I)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WaUZISQ8drA> (5 min).

The Decembrist revolt of 1825 (15 min).

Smart History of Russia, Part 16 (Nicholas I)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUjLYfJXHHE> (5 min).

Nicholas I: The doctrine of “Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality” (20 min).

Discussion sections: Westernizers vs. Slavophiles — Chaadaev vs. Kireevsky.

↓ Assignment for Week 8: Moss, pp. 400–417 and 561–566.

Finish reading Turgenev’s “Fathers and Sons”.

Week 8.**Tue, May 18. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Russian literature**

Eighteenth-century Russian literature: from Neoclassicism to Sentimentalism (10 min).

Review of Week 7:

Epic History. History of Russia, Part 3 (1762–1825):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2QH9WWxLPNQ> (10 min)

Nineteenth-century Russian literature: from Romanticism to Realism:

Alexander Pushkin (20 min).

Mikhail Lermontov (10 min).

Nikolai Gogol (25 min).

Thu, May 20. 19th century, second half. The Reign of Alexander II

Review of Russian history:

Epic History. History of Russia, Part 4 (1825–1881):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y-pqgjsJ-g8> (10 min).

The Emancipator: Alexander II and the Great Reforms (10 min).

Abolition of serfdom in 1861 (15 min).

Smart History of Russia, Part 17 (Alexander II):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cqGBRn7oBEg> (5 min).

The Liberator: Alexander II’s wars (5 min).

Left-wing extremism and terrorism: the assassination of Alexander II (5 min).

Epic History. History of Russia, Part 5 (1881–1917).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQVjH4xFrdI> (15 min).

Discussion sections: Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*.

↓ Assignment for Week 9: Moss, Part V, chapters 22–24, pp. 422–488.

Viewing of Chekhov's play "The Cherry Orchard". Available in the "Videos and Movies" section:
<https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/21S-RUSSN90A-1?section=7>

Week 9. Late nineteenth-century Russian literature

Tue, May 25. Nineteenth-century Russian literature: the Great Realists.

Ivan Turgenev (20 min).

Fedor Dostoevsky (20 min).

Smart History of Russia, Part 18 (Alexander III):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGCzmjwfSSs> (5 min).

Lev Tolstoy (25 min).

Thu, May 27. *Fin du siècle* literature and drama:

A short literary quiz — non-graded (10 min).

Anton Chekhov (20 min).

The Cherry Orchard (30 min).

Discussion sections: *The Cherry Orchard*.

↓ Assignment for Week 10: Moss, Part V, chapter 25, pp. 491–514.

Viewing the documentary: "Epic History: The Russian Revolution 1917":
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cV9G1QUIm7w> (15 min)

Week 10.

Tue, Jun 1. The end of the Empire. Nicholas II and Russian Revolutions

Nicholas II and the Russian Revolution of 1905 (15 min).

Smart History of Russia, Part 19 (Nicholas II):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f209ZEtnhWE> (5 min).

Russia in World War I (10 min)

Smart History of Russia, Part 20 (Russia in World War I):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PAkyRyo07Hw> (5 min).

Smart History of Russia, Part 21 (Russian Revolution)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zp8h1bVKdek> (5 min).

Revolution in Russia, February 1917:

Smart History of Russia, Part 22 (February Revolution)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=287tFaZGOZg> (5 min).

The "Bolshevik" Revolution, October 1917:

Smart History of Russia, Part 24 (October Revolution)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WsvNdz6r-dQ> (5 min).

Lenin and Trotsky. The 1918 calendar and spelling reforms (20 min).

Thu, Jun 3.

Russian music in 75 minutes.

Discussion sections: varia. Discuss what you feel most needed for your paper and final exam.

When preparing for the final you may use the “History” section of the course website:

<https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/20S-RUSSN90A-1?section=2>,

as well as the “Reference” section:

<https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/20S-RUSSN90A-1?section=1>

Self-quiz for your self-test and extra credit: Glossary (ten attempts between March 30 and June 10)

<https://ccle.ucla.edu/mod/quiz/view.php?id=3785006>

Extra-credit projects

Extra credit opportunities you have include (I) self-test quizzes and (II) film reviews.

I. Self-test quizzes on CCLE:

1. “Learn to Read Russian” <https://ccle.ucla.edu/mod/quiz/view.php?id=3785024>
2. “Geography” <https://ccle.ucla.edu/mod/quiz/view.php?id=3785034>
3. “Russian Cuisine” <https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/21S-RUSSN90A-1?section=6> (ppt and quiz)
4. “Glossary” <https://ccle.ucla.edu/mod/quiz/view.php?id=3785006>

II. Movies:

1. S. Eisenstein’s *Alexander Nevsky*
2. S. Bondarchuk’s *Boris Godunov*
3. L. Gaidai’s *Ivan Vasilievich Changes Professions*
4. A. Tarkovsky’s *Andrei Rublev*

This is the link on CCLE where the movies can be found:

<https://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/21S-RUSSN90A-1?section=7> (“Videos and Movies” section).

To get extra credit, you should write a short summary of the movie along with your own commentary on a favorite scene/character in the movie. The paper needs to be about **1 page** long (12 point font, double spaced, and Times New Roman). If you choose *Andrei Rublev*, then **1.5 pages** is what you should aim for the minimum.

Each of the quizzes is worth **1%** as long as you score **90%** or higher (5–10 attempts; highest score). The movies will be worth **2%**, except *Andrei Rublev* by Tarkovsky. *Andrei Rublev* is a 3 hour movie, so we will ask for a longer paper (1.5 pages). Since the movie is so long (and not an easy viewing experience), it will be worth **4%**.

The maximum amount of extra credit you can earn will be **8%**.

FINAL EXAM: ONLINE, Mon, **June 7**, 11:30–2:30pm.

The **paper** is due on Wed, **June 9** (submit via CCLE).

Please email your scores for self-test quizzes to your TA no later than Fri, **June 11**