

May 2002

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY  
Department of History

Senior Comprehensive Exams

**RUSSIA**

Please answer each question separately. Your answer to each question must not exceed five double-spaced typewritten pages. On the cover of each answer be **certain to indicate your name, the appropriate comprehensive field (i.e., The United States, The United Kingdom), as well as the number of the question you have answered.** Your answer should be written in your own words and include the correct citations for any sources you use, as in any paper or final exercise. Be sure to include at the end of your essay the statement "This represents my own work in accordance with University regulations" and sign your name.

All answers must be turned in at the History Department office by **3:00 P.M. WEDNESDAY, MAY 15th.** **There will be no extensions.** For further explanation of the Grading of Departmental Comprehensive Exams, see page 5 of "Information for Majors."

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Answer **ONE** question from Part I and **ONE** question from Part II.

**Part I**

1. What were the principal institutions of the Russian empire? What was their relation to each other? What were they based upon? What threatened them most? How did they change (or not change) over time? Was Russia, institutionally, completely different from Western and Central Europe, partially different, mostly similar?

2. What was the Russian intelligentsia? When did it originate? Where did it come from? Who comprised it? What historical role, if any, did it play? How did the intelligentsia and its role change over time?

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## Part II

3. It has been said that the USSR built socialism in the cities and in the countryside. Is that true? What did they mean by socialism? How did socialism work in practice? What did it look like? What were its institutions? What were the differences between the urban and the rural?
  
4. Discuss the formation of the USSR as a multinational state. When, how, and why did the Russian empire become the Soviet Union? In what ways was the multinational character of the USSR expressed? How did that multinational character change over time? What impact did WWII have? What happened under Brezhnev? Was the multinational makeup of the USSR a strength or a weakness?
  
5. If one were to take a long-term view of imperial Russian and Soviet history, what would be the most important signposts and/or events that defined the subject? What were the main developments? What were the turning points, if any? Can we discern continuity or discontinuity over time? What, if anything, was special about the Russian/Soviet historical trajectory? What was the relation of Russia empire/USSR to the rest of the world?