Course Description: If you ever thought that Russia was no longer a significant force in world affairs, the last couple of years should have you reconsidering things. Russia is no longer the Soviet Union that your grandparents feared. It is no longer the country aspiring to democracy that your parents remember from the 1990s. So what is it? To answer that question, we need to examine Russia’s past. To fully comprehend Vladimir Putin’s Russia and its regional and global aspirations, we need to study the history not only of Russia but of the Russian Empire. By charting the history of the Russian and Soviet Empires since the 18th century, we will gain a better sense of the Russia of 2018.

Over the semester, we will examine what it means to be Russian. We will assess the political foundations of the Russian empire and the practical manifestations of the Russian state’s geopolitical aspirations. We will analyze large, political occurrences and assess how the decisions emanating from the Russian capital affected the daily lives of ordinary people living in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Central Asia, the Caucasus, Eastern Europe and various places in between. This course explores how the institutions and exercise of power affected individuals within the Russian Empire and their immediate neighbors. We will examine the role of ideology, religion, and nationality in Russian rule and assess how the state interacted with society. In the process, we will consciously consider questions of ethnicity, class and gender.

Course Objectives:

- To give students a foundational knowledge of major themes and developments in Russian history
- To give students insight into the interaction between the Russian state and society and into the relationship between various groups within the Russian and Soviet empires
- To give students an understanding of how Russia functioned as an imperial enterprise
- To give students an appreciation of how identity is constructed and the ways in which the construction of difference affects the exercise of power
- To teach students to use, evaluate, and analyze primary sources
- To strengthen students’ ability to construct a historical argument and support arguments with appropriate historical evidence.

This course fulfills the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences’ Core History Requirement
Course Format: This course is a combination of lectures and discussions. Your input is critical to the success of the class and to your individual learning. You are expected to complete the reading assignments prior to the class for which they are due and to actively engage the topics for discussion on a regular basis. Even when the class is not formally listed as a discussion on the syllabus, students will be asked to participate by offering comments and asking questions. Since student participation is instrumental, attendance will be taken daily.

Required Materials
Barker and Grant (BG), The Russian Reader (This is a wonderful collection of both primary source documents and scholarly essays)
Heda Margolius Kovaly, Under a Cruel Star: A Life in Prague, 1941-1968
Lev Tolstoy, Hadji Murad

Classroom Courtesy
In order to succeed in this course, students need to attend class and arrive promptly. Late arrivals, early departures, and other individual activities (such as texting, sleeping, tweeting, and conducting other business on phones or laptops) are distracting and rude and WILL NOT be tolerated. If you must leave the room during class, please be aware that you may not return during that class session.

Assignments and Grading
Final grades will be calculated according to the following percentages:
- Attendance 10%
- Participation 10%
- In class exercises and reflections 5%
- Hadji Murad Crimean Thistle Paper 10%
- Crimean Annexation in Historical Context Paper 25%
- Midterm Examination 20%
- Final Examination 20%

Grading Scale:
A: 93-100  A-: 90-92  B+: 87-89  B: 83-86  B-: 80-82  C+: 77-79  

Please keep in mind that according to the Villanova University grading system, an “A” is “reserved for accomplishment that is truly distinctive and demonstrably outstanding. It represents a superior mastery of course material and is a grade that demands a very high degree of understanding as well as originality or creativity as appropriate to the nature of the course.” A full description of all grades can be found at https://www1.villanova.edu/villanova/enroll/registrar/policies.html#question_faq_5

Description of Assignments
❖ Attendance (10%): You are permitted two absences, no excuse needed. But every unexcused absence after that will result in a lowering of your attendance grade. Please keep in mind that if you are a first-year student more than 4 absences will result in a grade of Y for the course.
Participation in Class Discussions (10%): Readings must be completed prior to the class for which they have been assigned. You will be asked to contribute to the class discussion every day, not just on scheduled discussion days. To earn a good participation grade, it is not enough just to show up or just to say something. You need to contribute thoughtfully to the discussion at hand. Quality rather than quantity is what matters. In addition, you can adversely affect your participation grade by being disruptive or distracting to the other members of the class. Cell phones must be turned off before class starts. Research shows that students retain more when taking notes by hand rather than on a computer. As a result, I urge students to leave their laptops in their bags and write by hand. If there is a reason why a student needs to use a laptop, please let me know. Discussion grades will be computed as follows:

   A range (90-100%): student participates daily, shows that he/she reads all of the assigned readings, makes several comments and poses questions that are insightful and help guide discussion
   B range (80-89%): student participates regularly, shows that he/she reads most of the readings, makes some comments/questions
   C range (70-79%): student participates on occasion, may read some of the readings, makes few or no comments
   D range (60-69%): student rarely participates and/or is disruptive in class
   F (0%): student never participates in class.

In class exercises and reflections (5%): These exercises will be graded with a check, check-plus, or check-minus. A check means that you have satisfied the basic expectations of the question or prompt but no more. A check-minus means that your response lacked specificity, detail, or thoughtfulness. A check-plus means that your reflection demonstrates insight, specificity, and thoughtfulness. At the end of the semester if you received all checks, your grade for these reflections with be a B (calculated as an 85). For every check-plus you receive, your grade will increase 2 points. For every check-minus you receive, your grade will decrease 2 points for this part of your overall grade.

Hadji Murad Crimean Thistle Paper (10%): Due October 2. This is a 750-word essay that explores Leo Tolstoy’s description of a Crimean Thistle in Hadji Murad and its relevance to other historical sources. You will write a short essay that explores Tolstoy’s intent in the passages discussing the thistle and the degree to which Tolstoy’s perspective either complements or challenges other sources describing Russia’s expansionary efforts assigned to be read by this point in the course. More details will be distributed in class during the second week of class.

Crimean Annexation in Historical Context Paper (25%): Due December 4. This paper is a 1250-1500 word-paper that explores Vladimir Putin’s justification for the 2014 annexation of Ukraine (https://www.praguepost.com/eu-news/37854-full-text-of-putin-s-speech-on-crimea) and relates it to the policy statements and justifications of Russian expansion in the past. All citations must conform to the Chicago Manual of Style described at http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html. More details will be distributed after the midterm.

In-Class Midterm Examination: A combination of short answer and essay questions based on lectures, discussions, and assigned readings. October 9
Final Examination: A combination of short answer and essay questions based on lectures, discussions, and assigned readings. **Given on December 15 from 1:30 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. You must arrange to take the final examination at this time unless you have a conflict with other class exams. Early flights and/or rides home are not acceptable reasons for missing the scheduled final examination. Travel plans should be made in accordance with your exam schedule, not the other way around.**

**Make-up Exam Policy**
Exams are given on the date indicated in the course syllabus. The only exceptions are

1. If a student is on a Villanova sports team and is scheduled for an away game. In that case, the student must contact me before the exam. You will also need to provide me with documentation from the Athletic Department. Any papers due for the course during the absence must be submitted prior to the absence.

2. If you are ill and are unable to take an exam, you must contact me before the exam. Upon your return, you will need to provide me with documentation of the illness from one of the following: a physician, the Villanova Health Center, the Office of the Dean of Students, or the Office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences.

3. A death in your immediate family or other family emergency is treated the same way as an illness. If you are faced with a family emergency and are unable to take an exam, you must contact me before the exam. Upon your return, you will have to provide me with documentation of your absence from one of the following: the Counseling Center, the Office of the Dean of Students, or the Office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences.

**Office of Disabilities and Learning Support Services:**
It is the policy of Villanova to make reasonable academic accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities. You must present verification and register with the Learning Support Office by contacting 610-519-5176 or at learning.support.services@villanova.edu or for physical access or temporary disabling conditions, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 610-519-4095 or email Stephen.mcwilliams@villanova.edu Registration is needed in order to receive accommodations.

**Academic Integrity**
All students are expected to uphold Villanova’s Academic Integrity Policy and Code. Any incident of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for disciplinary action. For the College’s statement on Academic Integrity, you should consult the *Enchiridion*. You may view the university’s Academic Integrity Policy and Code, as well as other useful information related to writing papers, at the Academic Integrity Gateway web site: [http://library.villanova.edu/Help/AcademicIntegrity](http://library.villanova.edu/Help/AcademicIntegrity)

**Citation:** We will be using the University of Chicago citation style for all assignments (it is the standard citation style for history essays and papers). The library’s link to the guide is here: [https://library.villanova.edu/files/5513/6322/2957/Getting_STARTED_With_Chicago-Style.pdf](https://library.villanova.edu/files/5513/6322/2957/Getting_STARTED_With_Chicago-Style.pdf) See also: [https://library.villanova.edu/help/faqs/citeresources/](https://library.villanova.edu/help/faqs/citeresources/)
## Class Schedule

### Week One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 28</td>
<td>Introduction to the Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 30</td>
<td>The Russian Empire: Continuity and Change</td>
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</tbody>
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**Assignment:** Bring in a news article about Russia. Be prepared to discuss it and the readings listed below.


### Week Two

**Russian Greats Create an Empire**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 4</td>
<td>Russian Greats create an Empire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 6</td>
<td>Russian Greats create an Empire</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**“Catherine’s Instructions to the Legislative Commission” at [http://academic.shu.edu/russianhistory/index.php/Catherine_the_Great%207s_Instructions_to_the_Legislative_Commission%2C_1767](http://academic.shu.edu/russianhistory/index.php/Catherine_the_Great%207s_Instructions_to_the_Legislative_Commission%2C_1767)**

“Russia Annexes Crimea” (Class Handout)


### Week Three

**War, Peace, and Empires**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 11</td>
<td>Alexander I, Napoleon, and the Invasion of Russia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 13</td>
<td>Building an Empire in the Wake of War with Napoleon</td>
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**Readings:** In BG, “The War of 1812,” pp. 115-120

### Week Four

**Empire of Serfs**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 18</td>
<td>Serfdom and the Great Reforms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 20</td>
<td>Official Nationality and Expansion</td>
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### Week Five

**Autocracy, Orthodoxy, and Nationality in Action**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 25</td>
<td>Discussion of <em>Hadji Murad</em></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Readings: Tolstoy, *Hadji Murad* in its entirety
In-class reflection

September 27
Limits of Reform

**Week Six**

**Imperial Crises and Identity**

October 2
Russian Radicals and Revolutionaries
Reading: Excerpt from Vera Figner Trial Testimony (BB)

**Short Paper on Tolstoy and Crimean Thistle Metaphor Due**

October 4
Imperial Russia in Crisis

**Week Seven**

**Midterm Examination and New Century**

October 9
Midterm Examination

October 11
Industrializing Russia
Readings: In BG, “The Communist Manifesto,” pp. 305-309 and “What is to be Done,” at http://academic.shu.edu/russianhistory/index.php/Table_of_Contents#Nineteenth_Century_Russia

**Week Eight**

Semester Break
No Classes

**Week Nine**

**Revolution**

October 23
The Russian Revolution

October 25
The Russian Revolution

**Week Ten**

**The Soviet State and the Culture of Revolution**

October 30
Culture of Revolution and Civil War
Revelations from the Russian Archives site at http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/archives/trans-ad2kulak.html

November 1
The Soviets go Stalinist

Week Eleven
The Stalinist Soviet Union
November 6
The Stalinist State

In-class reflection

November 7
4:30 pm - 6:00 pm: Required Co-curricular Event: “The Brief Life of Socialism with a Human Face: The 1968 Prague Spring and the Soviet Invasion”

November 8
Invasion and War

Week Twelve
The Great Patriotic War and The Move to Recovery
November 13
The Great Patriotic War

November 15
The Post-War Period and Cold War

In-class reflection
**Week Thirteen**

**The Thaw, Destalinization and the Soviet Bloc**
November 20

Destalinization and the Thaw

November 22

No Class - Happy Thanksgiving

**Week Fourteen**

**Cold War Empire and the Soviet Bloc**
November 27

Life in the Soviet Bloc and the Cold War

**Discussion of Under a Cruel Star**
Readings: Under a Cruel Star in its entirety
In-class reflection

November 29

A Reformer in the Kremlin

**Week Fifteen**

**Crisis and Collapse**

December 4

Crimean Annexation in Historical Context Papers due
The Collapse of the Soviet Empire

December 6

1988-1999

Week Sixteen  |  Putin’s Russia  
|----------------|-----------------|
| December 11    | Friday Class Schedule – No class  
| December 13    | Vladimir Putin and the New Russian Empire  
|                | In-class reflection  

Week Seventeen  | Final Examination (1:30 p.m.-4:00 p.m.)  
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 15</td>
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