

History 445 The Mid-Term Exam: A Preview

The principal purpose of the exam is to ascertain that you have assimilated certain basic factual information and you can begin to apply the information that you have learned in analyzing historical problems. The exam also clarifies to me areas on which we may need to focus more in order to be proficient in the study Russian religious history.

The exam will consist of three basic parts: chronology, short answer, and triads. The first part is designed to ensure that students have grasped basic chronological parameters of Russian religious history; the second assesses students' grasp of basic factual information; and the third part investigates students' analytical abilities. The point distribution indicated below is approximate and may be somewhat different on the exam itself.

PART I: Chronology (20 points). For this part I do not require that you know specific dates, but instead assess whether you have understood the basic temporal relationships between specific historical events and processes. I will provide you with several groups of events. In the case of each group, you will put the events in their proper chronological order. There will be some element of choice in this portion of the exam. Example:

- A) The conversion of Rus' to Christianity
- B) The conversion of Roman Emperor Constantine to Christianity
- C) The Great Schism (division of the church into eastern & western)
- D) The Ecumenical Councils

ANSWER: *B, D, A, C*

PART II: Short Answer (30 points). Here you will encounter a series of questions, to which you will simply provide the answer in a word or a phrase. These will be largely factual (as far as anything in early Russian history can be considered so) and will be carefully worded to elicit a specific answer. The main thing is simply to read the question attentively to be sure that the answer you provide is actually appropriate. There will be some element of choice in this portion of the exam. Example:

Question: Name the act of 1596 whereby a portion of the Orthodox community in Poland-Lithuania accepted the authority of the Pope in Rome while retaining the Eastern rite and liturgy.

Answer: *Union of Brest*

PART III: Triads (50 points). This is the major interpretive portion of the exam and undoubtedly the most amusing part. Triads should already be generally familiar to you, but to recap I offer the following explanation: A triad is a group of three items (people, places, ideas, abstract concepts, or events) 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 *connections*, rather than on addressing each item in isolation from the others. In each case, the best answer will state in the paragraph's first sentence the relationship involved; the rest of the paragraph will then elaborate on that relationship, using evidence and detail from the materials at your disposal. *The inclusion of specific evidence is absolutely critical to the success of your triad essay.* (That last sentence is important. Read it again.) In contemplating each triad, I would first of all ask which texts for the course are essential in analyzing the named issues, and then consider which people, events, and processes would have to be included in order for your analysis to make sense and be convincing. Please do not adopt a minimalist approach to this exercise, since minimalist efforts will receive minimalist grades. All of the triads on the exam will come from the list below. A smaller number will appear on the exam, and from among those you will be asked to write on either two or three. Thus there will be some element of choice in this part of the exam as well.

Jesus Christ Emperor Constantine Ecumenical Councils	Byzantium Cyril & Methodius Conversion of Rus'	Great Schism of 1054 Union of Florence Union of Brest
Russia* Poland-Lithuania Orthodoxy	Kiev Reforms of Patriarch Nikon Old Believers	Patriarch Nikon <i>The Spiritual Regulation</i> Conciliar administration
Muscovite & Imperial state Holy Synod <i>The Spiritual Regulation</i>	Conversion Violence Russian Orthodox Church	Orthodoxy Empire Loyalty

General advice. Reviewing your reading notes obviously makes a good deal of sense. Careful attention to the triads will also help to prepare for the other parts of the exam as well. For this reason it would be wise to devote at least *some* thinking to each of them. Mercilessly exploit the lecture & reading guides that I have posted on the web site (note the chronologies & terms I have identified there). Finally, be sure to follow up with me if any issue in the course remains unclear to you. I will be happy to clarify things as best I can.

* For this purpose, the term "Russia" can be taken to include both Muscovy and the Russian Empire.