**Russian History** (Minor Field)

PLEASE ANSWER THREE OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

Read through the questions carefully and decide how you wish to answer them. Take a deep breath. Relax. Good luck. Enjoy.

1. **Civil society and the state.**
   Antonio Gramsci famously said (and has been endlessly quoted) that “in Russia the state is everything and civil society is primordial and gelatinous.” Discuss the development of civil society (though you may also contest this term) from the time of Catherine the Great into the early Soviet era. Describe and analyze the social changes, institutions, and ideas that have been said to comprise Russia’s developing civil society. Interpret their historical significance in relationship to a larger argument about Russia’s social and political development.

2. **Gender and work.**
   Explore the histories of women and gender in relation to the histories of laboring people (peasants and workers) in Russia during two periods of rapid industrialization in Russia: 1895-1905 and 1928-1931. Among the questions you might consider are migration, gender norms, cultural values and fashions, and village and workplace relations.

3. **Revolutionary modernities.**
   Scholars often argue that Russia entered the “modern world” as a result of the massive changes stimulated by the Great Reforms in the mid-nineteenth century. The Bolshevik and Stalinist revolutions produced another epoch of dramatic “modernization.” Compare the periods 1861-1914 and 1917-1939 in terms of their modernizing visions (and the conceptualization of “modernity”), orientations toward social change, the groups affected, the mechanisms (engines) of change, and the outcomes.

4. **Empire.**
   What is the meaning of “empire” in Russian and Soviet history? What categories are most useful for interpreting the relations between the Russian center and the multiple ethnicities and nations that constituted Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union: empire, nation(s), colonialism, Orientalism, ethnicity, race. Focusing on the 18th through the 20th centuries, what were the key principles (or ideologies) and forms of Russian relations with non-Russians within the borders of the Russian and Soviet states?

5. **Peasant Society.**
   The subjects of the Russian state were overwhelmingly rural in location and economy well into the second half of the twentieth century. How did the “peasantness” of Russia shape political, economic, cultural, and social relations and traditions? Drawing examples from at least three different periods of Russian history (however you define them), discuss the Russian peasant as object and as agent in the context of state power.