

THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND, GALWAY  
OLLSCOIL na hÉIREANN, GAILLIMH

B.A. EXAMINATIONS 1999-2000  
SEMESTER II, SUMMER 2000

HISTORY

HI 265 RUSSIA & POLAND 1533-1796

Mr. O. Dudley Edwards  
Professor N. Canny  
Mr. W. O'Reilly

TIME ALLOWED: TWO HOURS  
ANSWER: THREE QUESTIONS. AT LEAST ONE MUST BE FROM  
SECTION A

SECTION A

- 1 *"A fine balance of timing and skill was needed for the formation of strong states in early modern Europe. The skill to incorporate acquired territories slowly and deliberately insured Russia's success, and the opposite, Poland's failure."* (Paul Dukes) Discuss.
- 2 *"Its meaning is best sought in the realms of psychology".*  
Discuss this verdict on the reign of Ivan IV ('the Terrible') of Muscovy.
- 3 How useful is Sergi G. Platanov's periodisation of the years 1598-1613 in understanding the 'Time of Troubles'?

*Please turn over...*

- 4     *"He [the King] has the free nomination of all ecclesiastical benefices, of all secular employments, as well as military and civil throughout the whole extent of his dominions; without speaking of a great number of royal demesnes, which together with state dignities he confers on those that have deserved them. He can bestow as considerable preferments as any prince in Europe, and oblige and raise the fortunes of whom he pleases... He can call, prorogue and dissolve the diet [Seym] at pleasure. In a word, the Poles term him, the Protector of their laws and privileges; the Distributor of honours; the Supreme head of their Republic [Commonwealth]; and Supreme General of their forces."*

Bernard O'Connor, *The History of Poland in Several Letters*, 1698.

How did the power of the Polish King change, vis-à-vis the *Seym*, *Szlachta* and *Liberum veto*, 1573-1725?

- 5     *"The Tsar is a long way away and God a long way up."*     (Russian proverb)

How, during the reign of Tsars Michael I Romanov, Alexis I Romanov and Fedor II Romanov, was government extended throughout Russia?

- 6     *"He was your Samson, O Russia! He found you with little strength and left you strong as a rock, as a diamond...Russia, he was your first Japhet! He carried out an enterprise hitherto unheard of in Russia - the building and launching of ships, of a fleet new born but yielding in nothing to old-established ones...He was your Moses, O Russia! Are not his laws like the strong visor of justice and the unbreakable chains repressing crime? O Russia! He was your Solomon, receiving from the Lord abundance of wisdom and reason. ...He was your David and your Constantine, O Russian Church! Drawn from the paths of ignorance, our hearts give forth a sigh of relief."*

Archbishop of Novogrod at Peter I's funeral, January 1725

How reliable do you judge the Archbishop's speech to be as evidence of the attitudes of Russians generally towards the work of Peter the Great?

## Section B

- 7 Account for political and domestic instability in Russia from the reign of Catherine I (1725) to the abdication of Peter III (1762).
- 8 Why might rule in Russia in the eighteenth-century be described as "a socio-political amalgam rather than the rule of one" ?(Paul Dukes)
- 9 *"A state can sometimes create a nation, but for a nation to create a state is going against nature."* (Lord Acton)  
Consider the above statement in the context of Polish history to 1791.
- 10 Can Stanislas II Augustus (Stanislaw Antoni Poniatowski), King of Poland, be fairly termed a 'Russian Puppet King'?
- 11 How did Catherine the Great's crushing of the Pugachev Revolt (1772-1774) highlight the merging of interests between the nobility and the monarchy?
- 12 Why was Poland partitioned, 1772, 1793, 1795?