

Nicholas Riasanovsky, author of the course textbook, **A History of Russia**. Some of his other books:

Russia and the West in the Teaching of the Slavophiles: A Study of Romantic Ideology (1952).

Nicholas I and Official Nationality in Russia, 1825-1855 (1959)

A History of Russia (1963)

The Teaching of Charles Fourier (1969)

A Parting of Ways: Government and the Educated Public in Russia; 1801-1855 (1976)

The Image of Peter the Great in Russian History and Thought (1985)

The Emergence of Romanticism (1992)

1. Why did you choose to study Russian history?

Both of my parents were Russian in origin and training, both were professors, father an eminent legal scholar of Chinese, Mongol and other oriental laws together with Russian law, as well as the author of a four-book history of Russian culture; mother also a successful novelist under the pen-name of Nina Fedorova. Nothing seems more natural than a basic interest in Russian history until you or someone else raises the question.

2. What do you enjoy about teaching/studying Russian history?

Learning and learning a lot. Time and again I found my presentation fuzzy or one-sided until I had to put it precisely and economically on paper.

3. Why did you choose to focus on the reign of Nicholas I for much of your work?

The reign of Nicholas I is probably the most neglected and perhaps the most misunderstood reign in modern Russian history. The issue was not at all its rehabilitation but rather an attempt to get to its true nature and frequently nefarious significance. My book is still the only one on Official Nationality

4. Anything about your very successful History of Russia textbook?

As to A History of Russia I must confess that I love long and “complete” histories (consider, for example, their value for the history of France.) The problem is not with other books which are almost always welcome, but with what and how much they have to contribute. I wrote originally for my immediate students, un-forewarned for all the reviews (almost one hundred), translations (even a pirated Korean edition), editions, etc. I managed to stay in control of editions in English—left to the Oxford Press you would have had a greater number of them, but I would not have time to write other books.