

Russia: Empires and Enduring Legacies

Spring Term 2003

Faculty: Patricia Krafcik (x6491) krafcikp @evergreen.edu
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Schedule: Tues, 9:00 – 12:30 Pat: L2103 Language (optional)
 Rob L2130 Pat: M & F, 10:00-12:00, SE3151
 Rob: T & Th, 4:00-6:00, L2220
Wed, 10:00 – 1:00 All LH4
Thur, 9:00 – 11:00 Pat L2219
 Rob L2220
Thur, 11:30 – 1:30 All LH4

The Russia Program in spring term welcomes new students who are interested in exploring some selected topics in a workshop format and who also wish to engage in a limited research project of their own. Within the program, faculty members Pat Krafcik and Rob Smurr will each run two 3-week workshops separately, followed by a 2-week workshop together, a down week to finish up research papers, and a final week of research presentation. Students will have a choice of taking two of the four workshops, perhaps one by Pat and one by Rob; both by Pat; or both by Rob. These six weeks will be followed by a down week as students complete their own research projects. Finally, weeks eight and nine will find the students engaged in a single workshop together to examine the fall of the Soviet Union and the demise of Communism there. Week 10 will give students an opportunity to present their own research to the entire program in creative ways.

Students may work on any kind of research connected with Russian history, literature, and culture from any historical period. They may choose single issues as the focus of their work, but are also encouraged to undertake projects of a comparative nature, especially if they come into our spring quarter from another discipline. Someone with a biology background might like to explore the infamous "Lysenko Affair"; someone from music might find the 19th-century drive to create Russian national music more to the liking; others who have an interest in American history might desire to compare the abolition of slavery in the U.S. with the emancipation of the serfs in Russia in 1861, or to explore the Cold War or the Space Race; students strong in visual art will similarly find abundant comparative topics.

Pat's workshops: (1) "Dostoevsky's *Brothers Karamazov*" and (2) "Russian Folklore"

1) During my first workshop we will immerse ourselves in a close reading of one of the world's greatest novels, *The Brothers Karamazov*, by the Russian writer Fyodor Dostoevsky. The writer draws us into this epic of a tortured and twisted family, and through their experience we journey into a world rich in spiritual meaning. Dostoevsky invites us to explore the psychology of abuse and to confront head-on the questions of freewill and responsibility, bondage and liberation, death and resurrection. Critical articles will help guide our reading and discussions. We'll come away from this workshop with a deep grasp of Dostoevsky's Russian spirituality, an understanding of the

issues of Dostoevsky's Russia which he addresses in the book, and an intimate acquaintance with one of the world's finest writers.

2) My second 3-week workshop will introduce students to the fascinating world of Russian folklore. We will read epic songs about the adventures of Russian folk heroes in James Bailey's *Anthology of Russian Folk Epics*, lyric songs about love, and folktales about a whole cast of familiar, magical, and sometimes unsavory characters in Aleksandr Afans'ev's *Russian Fairy Tales*. In addition, we will read Jack Haney's *Introduction to the Russian Folktale* and Linda Ivanits' *Russian Folk Belief* about Russia's pagan past, belief in the spirits of animate nature, and sorcery.

Rob's workshops: (1) "WWII and the USSR" and (2) "The Cold War"

1) This three-week workshop will examine the origins and consequences of Germany's attack on Russia, an invasion whose scale and brutality are unparalleled in history. We will examine the war from both sides. Books by Sajer (*The Forgotten Soldier*) and Browning (*Ordinary Men*) will provide us a greater understanding of how the Holocaust could have arisen, and why it was carried to the territory of the USSR. Winchester's *Ostfront: Hitler's War on Russia, 1941-1945*, will provide a critical overview of the conflict from both sides. The personal accounts of Cottam (*On the Road to Stalingrad: Memoirs of a Woman Machine Gunner*) and Wayne (*Shurik: A WWII Saga of the Siege of Leningrad*) will show us the war from Soviet perspectives. We will also view documentaries and films as well as hold regular discussions in order to help us gain a greater understanding of this horrific clash of vicious ideologies.

2) We will examine the political, cultural and, to a limited extent, economic aspects of the Cold War (or The Long Peace) between the US and the USSR in this three-week workshop. Our main focus will be on these two key protagonists, but we will investigate the impact that their mutually antagonistic policies had on other nations and states. Our aim will be to explore the historical causes and legacy of this "War," as well as to introduce some of the debates that are still raging about its cause(s), significance, and meaning. Our readings will give us a view of the conflict from the perspective of the US and the USSR. Zubok & Pleshakov's *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev* will take us into recently declassified Kremlin files, and Djilas' classic work *Conversations with Stalin* will help us gain greater insight to the psychology of one of the twentieth century's greatest mass murderers. Both LaFeber's *America, Russia, and the Cold War* and Levering's *Debating the Origins of the Cold War: American and Russian Perspectives* will give us recent and balanced interpretations about the Cold War's long-term impact.

The two-week workshop together: The Fall of the USSR

This two-week workshop will investigate the questions of why, how, and in what manner the largest contiguous empire in modern history collapsed. Remnick's Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *Lenin's Tomb: The Last Days of the Soviet Empire*, supplementary readings, and documentary films will help us explore these perplexing issues.