

Russian culture essay



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Russian culture has a long history. “ In fact early Russia was not exactly ‘ Russia,’ but a collection of cities that gradually coalesced into an empire. In the early part of the ninth century, a Scandanavian people known as the Varangians and their leader Rurik invested in one of these first cities, Novgorod.

Rurik’s successor, Oleg extended the power of the city southward and established Kievan Rus, which is now Ukraine” (Ancient). Russians are known to be very proud of their country and traditions. Russia is a large and extremely culturally diverse country, with dozens of ethnic groups, each with their own forms of folk music, languages and religions. This contributes to a country of great cultural diversity, a country where there is always something to be learned or discovered. “ Moscow with the Tretyakov Gallery that features some of the most famous Russian icons, Saint Petersburg on the river of Neva with it’s famous ‘ white nights’, art collections of the Heritage Museum and the Russian Museum, and the countryside with it’s many little towns, each with its own old cloisters and castles-all rich in culture” (Discover). Russians consider themselves a well educated nation with an appreciation for the finer things in life.

They read often (more than any other country,) they are fond of live operas, musicals, ballets and drama performances at theatres. “ Many an amazing relic of bygone generations will be found in the North Russian domain of Kareilia, its wooden architecture represents an entire epoch in the cultural history of Russia. Where, with so many stretching forests, wood served as the natural medium not only to put up churches but also to erect large, capacious dwellings, build boats, make furniture, household utensils and

children's toys, and finally heat houses. (Gippenreiter). During Soviet times there was a well developed system of community and work in Russian society and people who did community work were rewarded and given benefits. There was no private property until the Perestroika reform established by Gorbachev, everything belonged to the state, which was controlling distribution and would award the most active citizens.

Unfortunately, the system of volunteering was broken down with Perestroika, but today Russians still have a great sense of community spirit and most of all an enormous work ethic. Russian culture is non-individualistic. The power of an individual in Russia is much less than in the west and most deals are pushed through family and friends. A majority of Russians consider themselves as Christians and belong to the Russian Orthodox Church. This is a great achievement for a country whose forced state religion was atheism for more than 70 years. There are also three other legally practiced religions in Russia; Buddhism, Islam, and Judaism.

These are the only four legal religions, but there are many other religions practiced by the people who live in Russia. Medical aid and education in Russia are free but are not quality or sufficient. Since Perestroika, the system of higher education is slowly deteriorating as well as the medical aid system. Russians are very smart. They have gone through so many difficulties and problems in life, that they can easily find a roundabout way for anything. They don't have a deep respect towards any law, including traffic rules.

Russians are some of the most reckless drivers and the most careless pedestrians in the world. Stealing or lying is not considered to be a big deal

as long as you have not been caught or you haven't stolen from your family or friends. There is no such term as "private property", that's why Russians don't care about intellectual property either. Before Perestroika, when Russian's had absolutely no freedoms, they were extremely oppressed, impoverished, and ultimately "held as prisoners" of their own country, tortured, and stripped of all of their basic human rights. This caused many of Russia's people to speak out against the Russian government.

These people were ostracized and exiled, tortured and many times killed. One of the most famous Russian's known for his human rights activism, inventing the h-bomb, development of thermonuclear fusion as a source of energy, and many other wonderful achievements was the beloved Andrei Sakharov. He unfortunately was ultimately exiled and tortured for speaking against the Russian government and died of controversial causes on December 14, 1989. "Sakharov had already transformed Russian history. Had he lived, he would have transformed it again.

For near the end of his life, almost overnight, he developed into a brilliant, committed politician, not only leading tough battles in Congress, but meeting with industrial workers, and drafting a new constitution...The only public figure acceptable to all parts of his too vast country, Sakharov had become just the person to lead a decaying nation exhausted with itself, yet still capable of responding to great honesty, great professional achievement, great suffering, and great precision of thought" (qtd. in Lourie 409). Russian women are not treated as equals and are considered to be "nothing" unless they are married or accompanied by a man. Often times when American's marry Russian's, the American spouse seems to almost always find that their

Russian counterpart has a very negative and pessimistic attitude towards almost everything. " A Russian expects thing to go badly.

A corollary to this negativism is the conviction that the world is a fairly rotten place populated primarily by rotten individuals who are out to cheat you. The paranoiac legacy of Stalinism decrees that everyone is guilty until proven innocent, and many Russians who reject the tenets of Soviet Marxism continue to view the world through the lenses of its dogma" (Visson 193). Russians are used to situations where everything is unpredictable and unstable. They have to adapt to new rules and laws quickly, and they manage successfully with these changes. Currently the economical situation of Russia is stably improving. Nowadays people have lost those advantages of the socialist state, and they have yet to have the full advantages of Western capitalism.

Generally Russians love their country and are very proud of their culture and heritage. They are citizens of the largest country in the world, which has rich history and deep cultural roots and they are proud of it! Works Cited " Ancient Russia. " Retrieved 25 October 2007

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