

How Russian Culture Has Changed And Evolved Over The Years

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Culture entails a system of norms and values that exist and are shared by a group of people. In most cases, this group of individuals shares values that later develop into moral attitudes as time passes. With the help of these values, people are in a position to make ethical decisions that are seen to take control of the individuals within the society. Ideas are also shared within the community, which helps in establishing a bar for differentiating right from wrong. Depending on where one comes from, the culture varies from place to place. The principle objective of this paper is to offer a comprehensive discussion of Russian culture, keeping in mind how it has changed and evolved over the years, bringing about diversity.

Noplace Like Home uses four masterpieces of Russian literature – Nikolai Gogol’s *Dead Souls*, Ivan Goncharov’s *Oblomov*, Evgenii Zamiatin’s *We*, and Mikhail Bulgakov’s *The Master and Margarita* – to show the successes and failings in Russia’s search for home and self. Interdisciplinary in spirit, Noplace Like Home introduces Russian culture for the first time to the field of “home studies,” which explores human identity in terms of man’s relationship with domestic space. This broad social context, together with general cultural patterns expressed in the novels, encourages readers to consider even the most current events in Russian society – where identity and stability are again key issues – in terms of “home,” “homelessness,” and “noplace.”

Russia is a state geographically positioned in Northern Eurasia, covering more than a seventh of the globe’s land mass. With this in mind, Russia is considered the largest nation in the world, harbouring more than fifty million people, and this is why its culture is of interest (Singleton). When it comes to natural resources, Russia is of great interest to many investors as it has the biggest mineral reserves in the world and has become the largest oil producer in the world. The Russian population is divided into more than a hundred ethnic groups that differ in their culture and social norms. The country’s language is commonly used as a means of coding and storing information. The country’s tourism sector has always been characterized by natural variety and cultural heritage. Their culture and traditions have made people move from all walks of life to come and have a sneak peek of what it entails. With this in mind, Russia has numerous museums and theatres that help tourists understand the nation’s traditions.

Culture exists and grows in a place where a large group of people resides, and Russia is among the most populated countries in the world. Many historians have argued that Russian culture is diverse, considering it has gained traditions and influences from the East and West due to its geographical position. The East is commonly characterized by family social orders, religion and diverse traditions, while individualism and rationality mark the West. One Russian historian by the name of Vladimir

Lamanskii argues that Russia is a different Eurasiatic continent that came into being after three worlds, namely Greek-Slavic, Romano-Germanic, and Asia, confronted one another. From these worlds, Russia has been able to attain and gain heritage and customs that govern the state (Singleton). For one to understand Russian culture and how it has evolved over the years, it is paramount to go to the country's antiquity since the ninth century. The 9th century was the time when some of the Russian culture was deeply rooted in the nation's social psyche.

Religion

One of the most prominent cultures that were adopted was the Orthodox Christianity. It represented an element of legacy from the Eastern traits and the Western Roman Empire. The result of this integration was the establishment of a healthy relationship between Rus and Byzantium and the belief in a higher divine unity. The public belief in the existence of a divine power offered support to the autocratic rule, which was an unchecked system. It is believed that the Russian Orthodoxy originated from Byzantium. The Russian religion is often expressed through architecture. A good example is the St. Basil Cathedral. The cathedral has a decorative and structural structure that has no connection with Byzantine and Muscovite architecture.

However, Russia has always been a Christian community for quite a while, as most of the Russians follow the Christian religion and its doctrine. There exist two theories that have tried to understand how religion came into being in Russia. One theory argues that Russia began as an Orthodox community, while the other believes Russia began as a Catholic community. The conflict between these two groups has been present for quite some time, but the Orthodox community has dominated most of Russia.

Russian Culture Perception Regarding Home

When it comes to homes, the Russian people view their homes as holy dwellings, as their opinion is spiritual. According to Russian culture, a home should be respected and shouldn't be constructed in places where tragic events happen, near cemeteries or in wet areas. Russians also put decorations in homes as symbols in accordance with spiritual decorum. They believe a table acts as a metaphor for favour and thus should be covered with a white cloth. They trust that people should not eat on a table that has not been covered as it is unholy. The Russian culture allows people to relax and bond with family members at home, and this is the place for doing so.

The Effects Of Western Culture

After the war, the youth were isolated, and this affected the pace by which young people of the West lifestyle and their culture spread in Russia (Singleton). The Russian lifestyle began to change under the leadership of Khrushchev, and the Western style was adopted. As time went by, the Russian youth

adopted the culture as they followed the culture of the West, and this diminished the Russian culture. The imitation of the Western culture had a lot of change to the Russian culture. Initially, the Russian culture allowed people to relax during leisure and nothing else, but the culture of the West brought about combining learning and recreational activities. The type of music that came with the Western culture was entirely different from the Soviet way. This is because the Russian culture regarded music as an element of the soul, while the culture of the West perceived it as an element of the body.

How Fyodor Dostoyevsky Influenced The Russian Culture

Fyodor always inspired Russians to maintain their traditions. However, he was interested in European literature, and this led to him creating a relationship between Russia and Europe. He urged his fellow Russians to ignore the Western culture. Being the patriot he was, Fyodor emphasized the importance of people taking Russia seriously, and this led to him influencing the Russian people to preserve their cultural heritage. While in Europe, he viewed Russia as nobler than the European community. Through Fyodor, the Russian community learned about European culture while still preserving its culture and traditions.

Russia has had a thing for cultural heritage and traditions for a long time. They understood the importance of establishing an identity that would be inviting and stable from one generation to the next. Russians have proven to be people who are willing to learn and grow while maintaining their identity. To them, culture is everything and should be preserved by all means.

Work Cited

Singleton, Amy C. *Noplace Like Home: The Literary Artist And Russia's Search For Cultural Identity (No Place Like Home)*. State University of New York Press, 1997. Print.