The Global Scholars Program Summer Research Workshop

Columbia University Global Center Beijing
National University of Mongolia, Ulan Bator
Moscow School of Journalism
Center for Metropolitan Studies, Berlin

EALAC/SLAV W4XXX
Contemporary Cities of Eurasia: Berlin, Moscow, Ulan Bator, Beijing

Professors Catharine Nepomnyashchy and Charles Armstrong

Summer 2014

Introduction

The second half of a two-course sequence that begins with EALAC/Slav 4XXX, “Socialist and Post-Socialist Cities of Eurasia” (Spring 2014), this month-long workshop introduces students to the histories, cultures, built environments and lived spaces in the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, Mongolia and China through travel and site visits to major cities of the “Eastern Bloc.” Bringing together Cold War history, literary and cultural studies, and urban studies, the course explores issues of urbanization under state socialist regimes and their successor states. Through a combination of lectures, on-site exploration, directed reading and discussion, the workshop investigates how the common problems of urban life in the twentieth century were addressed in the USSR and societies influenced by the Soviet model, and how the collapse of state socialism in the Soviet bloc and its transformation in China have shaped the development of cities there in the twenty-first century.

The themes covered in the course include the role and effects of state planning in urban life; the impact of the Cold War on societies behind the “Iron Curtain”; the transformations of late socialist and post-socialist cities by the free market; the subjective experience of urban transformation as expressed in literature, painting, music, and other cultural forms; and the place of cities in the imperial projects of Russia and China in modern times. Both the USSR/Russia and China were and are heirs to great empires, and an important goal of the course is for the students to gain an appreciation of the imperial spaces of Russia and China, as well as the complex historical relationship between the two. Eastern Europe during the Cold War was dominated by the Soviet Union; Mongolia was and remains a buffer between Russia and China. Therefore, rather than move between two discrete sites of teaching and research, the course will travel across the space of the former Eastern bloc largely by land: beginning in Berlin, the students will fly to Moscow, then travel by trans-Siberian express train to Ulan Bator, and finally take an overnight train to Beijing, where the course will conclude. The train ride itself will be a pedagogical site in two senses: directed reading, film screening, and small-group discussion led by the instructors and TA will take place on the train; and the rides will give the students the opportunity to observe the changing physical and cultural geography of Eurasia and help them to understand the challenges of maintaining coherent empires and nation-states over such vast distances – one of the most important instruments for cohesion in modern times being the railroad. A central conceptual principle that will organize the intellectual flow of the workshop is continual interrogation of the multiple meanings of “West” and “East” as perceived by the people who inhabit the scholars, artists, and political figures who have played and continue to play key roles in fashioning these perceptions. Most important, in this context, will be the examination of “East” and “West” (as we literally travel from west to east) as these constructions intersect with the evolution of the socialist and post-socialist city.
Statement on Academic Integrity
Plagiarism, which is commonly understood as using another's words or ideas as one's own, will result in an 'F' and will be reported to the Associate Dean of Judicial Affairs/Community Standards in charge of academic integrity.

Instructors
The two instructors and one graduate teaching assistant will accompany the students through the entirety of the workshop. Catharine Nepomnyashchy, Ann Whitney Olin Professor of Russian Literature and Culture and Chair of the Slavic Department at Barnard College, is a specialist in the literature and popular culture of modern Russia. Charles Armstrong, Professor of History at Columbia, works on modern East Asian history and the history of the Cold War.

During the course of the summer workshop, the faculty and TA will meet at least once a day to compare notes, address concerns, and discuss students’ progress.

Each student will be assigned a professor or TA as his or her advisor for the duration of the workshop; advisors will monitor the progress of their students’ coursework — notably work towards their final presentation and paper — and offer assistance and advice as needed. The professors will make themselves available during office hours scheduled at regular intervals during the trip, and students will be required to attend office hours with their advisor at least once prior to giving their final presentation.

Requirements
Full participation in all program activities, including readings, discussions, guest lectures, field visits, and workshops is expected of all students. Students are required to keep a daily journal that will be read and discussed during the small-group discussion sessions (each consisting of approximately five students, or 1/3 of the class) held on the train rides between the main destination cities and toward the end of the Beijing leg. Each student must give an oral presentation of 15—20 minutes on the final comparative project in the last week of the workshop, and hand in a paper of approximately 5,000 words (20 pages). Grades will be assigned on basis of class participation, satisfactory completion of reading assignments, journal writing, oral presentation and final paper. The final paper will be due one week after the conclusion of the summer workshop.

Pre-departure orientation:
All students are required to complete a pre-departure orientation session covering course content and expectations, logistics, health, safety, and cultural awareness. Prior to the session, students are required to complete the online human subject training course “Course TC0087: Human Subjects Protection Training,” as part of their general training in fieldwork methods and research ethics.

Schedule
Berlin, June 14 - 19. Host institution: Center for Metropolitan Studies
June 14: Orientation, meet with students and instructors at the Center for Metropolitan Studies, guest lecture on the history of Berlin (4 contact hours)
June 15: Tour of Berlin with accompanying lecture by faculty or guest speaker; lecture by Professor Florian Urban on East Berlin history and architecture, screening of film “Goodbye, Lenin!” (Walter Becker, 2003), dinner with John Kornblum, former US Ambassador to German and head of security for the Berlin Wall (4 contact hours)

June 16: Tour of East Berlin and the Berlin Wall (onsite lecture), guest lecture on life in divided Berlin, attendance of theatre or concert performance (4 contact hours)

June 17: Bauhaus Archive visit, Museum of Design, tour of Bauhaus buildings, lecture on site, small group discussions (4 contact hours).

June 18: Meeting with planning expert on post-unification Berlin, guest lecture on the socialist city in Eastern Europe, afternoon free (3.5 contact hours)

Readings for Berlin:


**Moscow, June 19 – 25. Host institution: Moscow State University School of Journalism**

June 19: Flight from Berlin to Moscow. Orientation meeting with faculty and students of the Moscow State University School of Journalism, walking tour of Red Square, GUM department store, and Lubyanka (1 contact hour)

June 20: Morning: Walking tour of Kremlin and environs. Lunch at Hotel Moscow. Afternoon: Lecture on transformation of Manezh Square. Walk to Cathedral of Christ the Savior to Lenin library to the Old Arbat. Discussion focus of day will be incorporation of Old Moscow into socialist and post-socialist Moscow. Guest lecture on Soviet city planning (2 contact hours)

June 21: Morning: Bus tour of Moscow, including Soviet-era architecture (Stalin skyscrapers, VDNKh “khrushchevki, with guest lecture by architect Zh. Asse on Soviet city planning on bus). Afternoon: visit to living spaces - apartment in House on the Embankment, communal apartment, “euro-remont” apartment in new Soviet skyscraper. Cathedral of Christ the Savior; Performance at Bolshoi Theater. (5 contact hours)

June 22: Trip to Olympic complex at Izmailovsky Park, Dinner at Central House of Writers with Vladimir Voinovich as invited guest, dinner lecture on how Moscow has changed since he wrote his novel *Moscow 2042* (2 contact hours).

June 23: Tour of Moscow metro. (with stop at Pushkin Square) Late afternoon/evening trip to the elite Soviet writers’ colony of Peredelkino on the outskirts of Moscow, visit to Pasternak Museum, discussion of dependence of concept of city on the countryside and on the encroachment of the post-socialist city on
the Moscow suburbs, evening barbecue at writer’s dacha with prominent writers as invited guests (2 contact hours)

June 24: Visit to Journalism School and meeting with members of Russian Journalists’ Union, roundtable discussion on covering the city in the Soviet and post-Soviet press and the evolution of new media as an urban phenomenon, meeting with former Moscow Mayor G. Popov. Dinner at Russian Journalists’ Union. (5 contact hours)

June 25: Bus to World War II memorial at Poklonnaya Gora and to sculpture garden of toppled Soviet monuments at the New Tretyakov; discussion of how post-socialist city (re)constructs usable past through monuments. Depart Moscow 9:35 P.M. (4 contact hours)

Readings for Moscow:

Viktor Pelevin, Generation P

Vladimir Voinovich, Moscow 2042 (Mariner 1990 [1986])

Excerpts from Olga Shevchenko, Crisis and the Everyday in Postsocialist Moscow (Indiana 2008)

Ilya Kabakov, Ten Characters

Golomstock, Totalitarian Art, chapters 4 - 6

Moscow-Ulan Bator Trans-Siberian train, June 25 – June 30

June 26: (Novgorod) Small-group discussions (3 contact hours)

June 27: (Perm, Ekaterinburg) Film: “Siberiade, Part I” (Andrei Konchalovsky, 1979), small-group discussions (3 contact hours)

June 28: (Omsk, Novosibirsk, Krasnoyarsk) Small-group discussions (3 contact hours)

June 29: (Irkutsk) Film: “Cave of the Yellow Dog” (Byambasuren Davaa, 2005), small-group discussion (3 contact hours)

Readings for the Trans-Siberian train:

Valentin Kataev, Time, Forward! (Northwestern 1995 [1965])

Steve Kotkin, Steeltown, USSR (selection)


Published by: Architectural Association School of Architecture

Article Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/29544781

Barbara Engel, “Public Space in the ‘Blue Cities’ of Russia, The Post-Socialist City: Urban Form and Space Transformations in Central and Eastern Europe after Socialism (GeoJournal Library)
Kiril Stanilov (Editor)

Valentin Rasputin, “The Fire” (1985)

Excerpts from Stephen Kotkin and Bruce A. Elleman, eds. Mongolia in the Twentieth Century: Landlocked Cosmopolitanism (M.E. Sharpe, 2000)

_Ulan Bator, June 30 – July 2. Host institution: National University of Mongolia_

June 30: Tour of Ulaan Baatar, guest lecture on modern Mongolian history (2 contact hours)

July 1: Day trip to Terelj National Park, lecture on post-socialist Mongolia, dinner with US ambassador (2 contact hours)

Reading for Mongolia:

Morris Rossabi, Modern Mongolia: From Khans to Commissars to Capitalists (California 2005)

**July 2 – 3: Depart Ulan Bator, Overnight Train to Beijing**

July 2: Small group discussion (2 contact hours)

Film, “The World” (Jia Zhengke, 2004), small-group discussion

**Beijing, July 3 – 13. Host institution: Columbia Global Center/Beijing University**

July 3: Tour of Tiananmen Square with on-site lecture; guest lecture on Beijing history (2 contact hours)

July 4: Beijing city tour, guest lecture by Chinese urban planner, evening reception/lecture at Studio X OR Independence Day Reception at U.S. Embassy (2 contact hours)

July 5: Free day, optional tour to Great Wall

July 6: Free day

July 7: Visit to Beijing Film Studio (4 contact hours) Film: “Big Shot’s Funeral” (2001)

July 8: Visit to media outlets (CCTV, newspaper office), guest lecture by journalists (4 contact hours)

July 9: Morning: Visit to Beijing Olympic Park with on-site lecture, meeting with Beijing mayor (3 contact hours) Afternoon: Student presentations
July 10: Student presentations

July 11: Student presentations

July 12: Student presentations, closing discussion, farewell dinner (1.5 contact hours)

Readings for Beijing:

Golomstock, *Totalitarian Art*, epilogue and postscript


Xiaolu Guo, *Twenty Fragments of a Ravenous Youth* (Anchor 2009)

**Depart Beijing, July 13**

**Total contact hours: 75**