Name of Student

Name of Professor

Name of Class

Day Month Year

PART 2: SOCIALIST PAST, POSTSOCIALIST PRESENT

**Russian Revolution**

The Revolution of Russia in the year 1917 was one of the most violent political events during the 20th century. As a result of the fierce revolution, the Romanov dynasty came to an end which was associated with the Imperial rule for centuries. Vladimir Lenin played a significant role in the revolution, he was a leftist, and he led the Bolsheviks. Later, Bolsheviks went on to become the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Under the leadership of Lenin, Bolsheviks grabbed power and defeated czarist rule. In the year 1917, the Soviet Union witnessed the revolution which put an end the imperial rule in the country. This was the time when the country was ready for the social change that led to the establishment of the Soviet Union (Brooke, Caroline, 2006). Russia saw two revolutionary events in the span of a few months, and social unrest had been evident for decades. During the early 20th century, the economic condition of Russia was not good, and it was considered one of the poorest countries in Europe. There were a large number of peasants in the city who were struggling to meet their daily expenses. Also, the population of impoverished industrial workers was growing.

Most parts of Western Europe did not like Russia because of its economic condition and the poor class. Russian Empire employed peasant in a way that they were bound to serve the nation. In Western Europe, the practice of serfdom was no longer in place. In 1861, the Russian. In this context, the liberation of serfs led the foundation of events to the Russian revolution. Due to the revolution, the peasants were given more right and free as they were underprivileged people in society. The industrial revolution in Russia came many years after the United States and West European countries. However, when Russia was industrialized, it almost in the 20th century, it yielded a massive social and political change in the country. From 1890 to 1910, the population of major cities in Russia increased significantly. The population of main cites of the country doubled, and as a result, the cities especially Moscow became overcrowded, and this situation was alarming to the country. The resources were already less, and the burden of more people was affecting Moscow and other cities.

The issues in the country got severe by the end of the 19th century, and due to the growing population the country was affected by the shortage of food in many areas. The working class of the country was not happy with the monarchy, and they began protests in many parts of the country. The government had to react against the protests led by poor Russian workers, and hundreds of unarmed protestors were beaten to death, killed or injured. This tragic event was known as the Sunday massacre of 1905. Meanwhile, the angry workers kept protesting for their rights, and their efforts paved the way for a revolution in the country which changed the social infrastructure of the country.

**Soviet Moscow**

After the success of the Russian Revolution, Lenin was under the threat of foreign intervention or attack. In order to be safe, he shifted capital from St. Petersburg back to Moscow in the first quarter of the year 1918. Moscow became the hub to demonstrate the power of the Soviet Union. Once again, the seat of power was with Kremlin, and Moscow became the capital city of the new state. Communist ideology was prevailing in the city as well as other parts of the country. The news values were being enforced by the communist party; they wanted the capital and other parts of the country to embrace secularism. In this regard, many people were not happy with the overall ideology of the country (Brooke, Caroline, 2006). In the year 1929, the anti-religious campaign was launched which was overlapped by the collectivization of peasants; many churches were vandalized in Moscow and other major cities. The situation worsened in 1932.

Furthermore, in 1937 so many letters were written to the main Committee of the Communist Party of the country to rename Moscow to Stalinodar or Stalindar. The request came from one of the elderly prisoners who intensely desired to live in Stalindar. The dar referred to a gift from Stalin (Brooke, Caroline, 2006). However, the proposal to change the name of Moscow was rejected by Stalin. Later, Stalin received same suggestion again, and again, he turned down this suggestion, which was a clear indication that he did not want to name Moscow after his name despite the insistence of many people who were his diehard fans.

During the Second World War, the general staff of the Red Army, and the Soviet Committee of Defense were situated in Moscow. Moreover, sixteen divisions comprised volunteer citizens who were in excess of 160,000 alongside twenty-five battalion (almost 18,000 individuals) and four regiments based on engineers were established among the Muscovites. In November of 1941, German Army group center was trapped in the surrounding area of Moscow and subsequently, were forcibly taken to the “Battle of Moscow.” In this respect, many factories were evacuated, and until October, the city of Moscow was declared under siege.

The population of the city constructed manned anti-tank defense mechanism; meanwhile, the city went through bombardment. In addition, in the year 1944, a medal “For the defense of Moscow," and in 1947 medal in remembrance of the 800th anniversary of Moscow were introduced officially. In this way, the city has a special significance. Finally, Moscow remained the capital of the Soviet Union until its dissolution in the year 1991.

**Social Stratification in Russia**

The structure of social stratification of Russian community saw important changes over the years as a result of the transition from socialism to capitalism. In this regard, a number of theoretical frameworks were developed over the years to explain the process of transition and its overall impact on transition in post-socialist societies. For any society, ideology is a key element, whereas, in Russia's case the ideology no longer remained determinant of social status. In the Soviet era, membership in the Community and Public Sector union was a way to career development and status.

Although Soviet society was inspired by Marxist-Leninist ideology of classless culture, the Soviet Union was ruled by a strong ruling class, the *nomenklatura*, which comprised officials of party and key personalities in the regime (Larina, Arto Mustajoki, and Protassova). The class enjoyed all the luxuries of life, which was not affordable by a common man or an industry worker. In this context, the actual practice on the ground was in contrast to the apparent ideology of the nation. Furthermore, the social status and the influence of the nomenklatura multiplied as they got a promotion to higher ranks within the party. In other words, the social structure of the Soviet Union was attributed by self-preservation and limited motion.

Access to higher education, a compulsion for political and social progress was consistently restricted in the decades after the war. This was the time when the nation was not on the path of development rather it was stagnation that overlapped with the long term of the CPSU head Leonid I. The unstable economy of the country hindered social mobility, thus, widening the gaps among various social classes and groups (Johnson, Janet Elise). Also, the differences between nomenklatura and other society were huge, and it seemed as if the ruling elite did not make any attempt to bridge that huge gap. Furthermore, the agriculture workers and community were at the bottom in terms of social status in the society. They got the least pays, and they did not have enough opportunities to make advancement in society; in this way, the situation was very frustrating and depressing for them and their families. Also, they had very less representation in the CPSU leadership. When a common man is under the impression that my concerns are not addressed, he is driven by the sense of deprivation which is not good for mental and physical health.

**Urban Planning**

Urban planning in the Soviet era was influenced by ideological, social, and political objectives. In contrast to the urban planning and development in the western countries, the Soviet-style planning and development mostly focused on total restructuring and redesigning of the cities. The overall approach of Soviet authorities was visible in other communist countries as well. Soviet-style urban areas are often outlined to the contemporary ideas in architecture, for example, Corbusier and his ideas of Paris. In this regard, housing development authorities normally keep tower blocks in the structure such as parks, the standard and the mass-produced employing structural panels in a short time period. During the 1940s the USSR built a unique type of high-rise.

The buildings of this kind were first constructed in Moscow which includes Moscow State University, Hilton Moscow Leningradskaya Hotel, Hotel Ukarina, Ministry of Heavy Industries, and other buildings. These all are examples of different type of high rise during that time, and it fascinated many. Construction of these buildings required the demolition of the already constructed building which was situated on their sites. The undesired demolition in this context was of the Cathedral of Christ, which was built in Moscow in memory of Napoleon's defeat. The location was needed to build the Palace of Soviets which was never constructed.

The demolition of memorable and historical places particularly churches, to clear the way for the new communist structure was a common characteristic of communist urbanism. The industries in the urban areas brought many people from the village to cities. After the war, some housing units were constructed. Therefore, in Moscow and other parts of the Soviet Union has shortages of houses, and people were looking for shelter for their families. As a result, the city of Moscow was overcrowded and more people were accommodated in small spaces which led to other problems.

Part 3: Literature and Art

**Russian Literature**

In Russian literature, the most vibrant and cherished part was the 19th century which produced undisputed masterpieces from some of the great literary figures. In this regard, the 19th century is considered the most memorable part of Russian literature. Also, it has been often debated that most of the Russian literary work of high-class was created in the lifetime of one individual named Leo Tolstoy who was born in the year 1828 and died in 1910. The masterpiece of the literature was written in two decades from the 1860s and 1870s. This was the golden period for Russia concerning literature. The uncommon form of Russian literature has been the way of certain controversies (Brooke, Caroline). Three main and unexpected breaks split it into four eras- pre-Petrine (Old Russia), Imperial, post-Revolutionary, and the post-Soviet. Peter, I brought western culture to the country; he created a rift with the past that it was evident in 19th century’s critics.

In Russia, the revolution of 1917, and the subsequent coup by Bolshevik made another gap, thus, converting pure Russian literature to propaganda and fabricated stories in favor of a communist state. In the golden period of Russia, it had the blend of radicalism and the preoccupation with generic philosophical concerns form the recognizable impression of Russian classics. In the 19th century, there was a touch of Romanticism in Russian poetry (Brooke, Caroline, 2006). The first notable Russian novelist was Nikolai Goal who was followed by Ivan Turgenev, who was an expert in short story and novel. However, the end of the 20th century was a tough era of for Russian literature, with some unique voices. The prominent authors of the late 20th century were Victor Pelevin, who got popularity for short tales and novel. In the 21st century, the new blood of Russian authors came to prominence.

**Russian Art; Past and Present**

Russian is versatile which demonstrates diversity in subjects and methods. There have been some significant movements in Russian art from the last few centuries.

Early Russian ArtIn the 10th century, Russians changed their belief; they embraced Christianity from pagan belief, and its artists became expert in the form called icon. Religious icons are portraits of Jesus Christ, the Christian Saints, and other holy figures (Sydney Schultze, 2000). In this regard, some of the icons represented events like Christ coming to this world, or the miracles demonstrated by saints. Icons were famous in Eastern Orthodox Christianity (the origin of Russian church) depict portraits in style. In this context, the work of Russian icon painters Andrei Rubley is praiseworthy. For centuries, religious art has been the focal point (Alexander Glezer). The prominent figures rejected secular concept in art. However, Simon Ushakoy offered some resistance and created work influenced by the non-religious concept. Things began to change when Tsar Peter launched a plan to westernize Russia’s culture to develop terms with Europe. Therefore, many Russian works during the 18th and 19th centuries have these features.

Furthermore, historical, religious, and classical subjects were popular during that time. During the nineteenth century, writers started getting bored with the particular strict guidelines regarding artwork. A group of artists known as Wanders presented the artwork with common and familiar issues prevalent in Russia at the time. The twentieth century witnessed many changes in which the most significant one was 1917; the artwork that was produced thereafter had the reflection of those events. In the 21st century, Russia has produced talented artists who present romance, beauty, tragedy, and other emotions of life through their paintings. Stanislav Plutenko, Alexey Chernin, and others are the notable artists of this century. Alexey uses oil colors to make an impression through her paintings. Today's artists have the freedom to express themselves through artwork.

**Women and Body Politics**

Since the 19th century, there have been more commercial and artistic opportunities for Russian women. Female population in Russia have proved themselves, and they worked hard to come in the limelight. They performed in different industries and made their impression. Women in Russia educated themselves as they realized that it was the proper way to move forward. The European concept of equality was embraced by Russian society by the mid-nineteenth century, and women began to be aware of their rights (Olga Vainshtein). St. Petersburg University enabled women to edit its courses in the year 1959; however, the policy was revoked four years later. In 1860, the feminist movement was launched, and more women began to raise voice for their rights. The group formed organizations to facilitate more women who wanted to self-sufficient (Turbine, Vikki).

With time, some men began to realize that women should be given their rights. The movement created the Bestuzhey courses, and as a result, women in Russia got access to higher education (Turbine, Vikki). Until the beginning of the 20th century, more women entered the professional field. The overall literacy rate in the country slightly got better as women became doctors, engineers, nurses, and teachers (Nadezhda Azhgikhina & Helena Goscilo). Apart from doing jobs, women started considering doing their businesses. In this respect, they opened beauty salons and became self-sufficient. In 1917, women got rights to vote, and it was a major breakthrough. During the Soviet era, women's role became more vital and complex (Olga Vainshtein). Women became more mobile, and they joined the workforce with men. However, women faced exploitation at the hands of a male, which was unfortunate. Women continued their journey of success and hard work. Women have gone through different phases, and today's' women are much more independent and hardworking.

**Sexuality**

Some surveys suggest that in the early 1990s, most of the Russians felt that romantic love is prerequisite to marriage or the intimate relationship. However, there were some differences in beliefs, behavior and overall pattern of young and old individuals. Also, the difference was evident in the urban and rural population. In different studies, men expressed more pleasure while performing intimate activities, and women said that they found more pleasure in sexual activities when they were in love with someone (Stella, Francesca, et al.). These studies suggest that women have been more love oriented. People in Russia have access to sexual material from a number of public sources. Parents show concern about the sexual development of their child, and some of them are in favor of sex education at school, college and university level (Mark Banting). Marriage is a valuable relationship for sexual activities.

The ideas regarding sexual activities are diverse, and a particular sexual behavior depends upon the approach of an individual. There is a strong concept of boyfriend and girlfriend among young student, and when boys and girls sometimes spend with each other, often they experience intimate relationship (Stella, Francesca, et al.). Some get married while some prefer to stay partners. Tourists who visit Russia from different parts of the world like Russian women as they consider them beautiful with strong sex appeal.

According to a study conducted by British Condom maker international Group,overall, in the world, Russia is ranked second after the Untied States in sexual activities but is ranked 12th as far as the use of protection is concerned.

**Post-Soviet Body**

Out of the fifteen republics, the Russian Federation was the largest, which accounted for 60% of the total GDP, and half of the Soviet population ((Suny, Ronald)). Russians also dominated the Soviet army as most of the soldiers were from the Russia Federation. Throughout the world, the Russian Federation was widely acknowledged as the successor state of USSR. Russia inherited the membership of the United States and veto power in the UN Security Council. After the collapse of USSR, the Russian armed forces were almost disintegrated in the span of one year (Suny, Ronald). The credibility of military forces was at stake.

Also, Under Russian leadership, the disarmament of nuclear weapons of former Soviet states was ensured because the powers of the world suggested that former Soviet states were a potential threat to the whole world. The former Soviet states developed strategic relationships with each other, although some had conflicts on different grounds. The transformation of the world's largest state-controlled economy to a market-based economy was an extremely difficult phase, although policies had already been decided. Policies adopted by Russia were: (1) Liberalization, steadiness, and privatization.

The policies were derived from, the liberal Washington Consensus, World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF). The policies regarding liberalization were launched by Deputy Prime Minister of Yeltsin named Yegor Gaidar. By profession Gaider was a liberal economist who was passionate to bring radical reforms in the country; he was widely recognized as a supporter of “shock therapy.” The term shock therapy was first used in Bolivia by renowned economist Jeffery Sachs to counter inflation in the '80s. As a result of liberalization in the society, the citizens of Russia faced difficulties in the form of hyperinflation because the policy lifted price control. Depending upon the industry, some business saw success while some struggled. However, many industries, different social groups, classes, and areas got onto the right track. Some business got an advantage of competition, while others faced hard times. The new class of businessmen in Russia were successful. Black marketers also flourished under the leadership of Gorbachev.

The prices of liberalization indicated that old population and others having limited income suffered drastically in terms of their overall living standards. Some people had to spend their life saving to meet the expenses. The country continued to be hit by the hyperinflation. The macroeconomic stabilization policy was introduced to combat the trend of hyperinflation. Most of the prices were floated as a result of the macroeconomic stabilization program. Stabilization was also known as the structural adjustments, was a stiff austerity plan for the economy.

Furthermore, the interest rates hit a record high, and new taxes were levied to cover govt. expenses. All this was done to stabilize the economy, but masses were at the receiving end, and poverty was on the rise in the country. The subsidies of the government were also cut, which further increased the prices of the commodities causing more burden for the poor people of the country. The cut on subsidies was the major shock for many government enterprises found themselves under a shortage of money and without orders. State’s welfare spending also suffered. The country underwent a credit crunch which saw the closure of many industries. The overall indicators were not positive for the country. The country needed strengthening of institutions, but things were not going in the right direction for many industries. The economic progress and democracy both got affected as a result of hyperinflation. There has been the debate in politics that probably country could get some stability if the regime disassociates itself from

Soviet planned economy.

There were voices of newly capitalist Russia totally free from all the policies from the Soviet. On the other hand, the former Soviet Union had to face different hurdles as far as their rebuilding phase was concerned. Economic restructuring was the major challenge for all the former Soviet states. The states towards the western side of the former USSR such as Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic have slightly performed better as compared to eastern states. However, Russia itself and the countries to the east of Russia faced an economic crisis. They really struggled after the dissolution, and unfortunately, people were suffering the most. The reasons behind the hardships of Russia was that it had to do the institution building right from scratch, and they have to make a new economic system as well.

All these things were not as easy as the country was in a transition phase after the collapse of Russia. The major problems faced by Russia was the huge commitment of USSR to the Cold War. The institution-building was a challenge to Russia was because the USSR mainly focused on armed forces as it had a major threat from the U.S. during the cold war. In the '80s, almost 25% of the budget was allocated to the military forces as the USSR wanted to make its defense formidable. In some parts of Russia, nearly half of the population was in the military forces, and they could not think to join any other institution or profession. The second hurdle in the progress of Russia was its vast area and the diverse geographical area. The huge area sometimes becomes difficult to manage. There were a considerable number of the mono-industrial regional complex with the concept of a single industrial employer. All this was transferred to Russia from the Soviet Union. The production was limited in a few big state enterprises implied that several local governments were depending upon the economic policy of a single employer.

After the disintegration of USSR, there was disengagement among many states, as the central force of USSR was no longer there. As a result, in many states, the production level dropped, and the industries suffered. This was a tough time. Almost fifty percent of the Russian cities were relying on one big industrial enterprise, while seventy-five percent did not have in excess of four. The decline in production caused unemployment and poverty. Post-Soviet Russia did not get a social security system of the state. Instead of organizations, mostly large industrial companies were traditionally accountable for a variety of social welfare tasks; construing homes for their employees, and administrating health and educational functions. The towns lacked proper funding to provide patients with adequate health care. As a result, many people lost their lives, and several were at risk. The employees were entirely dependent on their firms. Therefore, economic stability and transformation became extremely difficult for the country.

Moreover, there was the human capital aspect of the unsuccessful post-Soviet reforms in Russia. The former Soviet population was fairly educated, and the overall literacy rate was high in the country. The people were equipped with modern education in the fields of Science, engineering, and other modern subjects, but after the debacle of USSR, the university system of Russia collapsed. There were major problems in the state university, and the educational system of the country that is why addressing other issues became more difficult, and the institutions continued to struggle. In the Soviet systems there were planned targets, but there was no concept of performance-based incentive and reward system. All the workers were used to work under the Soviet system; therefore, they could not develop skills of decision making and taking ownership in difficult situations. On the other hand, the system demanded individuals to take ownership of things and take some decisions to mitigate the challenges in different walks of life.

There were so many problems in Russia; poverty was increasing as people had less opportunities for getting jobs, and also, they were not getting any benefits from the state. Also, there was a sharp decline in public health. All the former Soviet states experienced the downfall in birthrate, but the problem in Russia was severe. By the year 1999, the total population of the country declined by almost 750,000. Similarly, the law and order situation was not very healthy in the country, and people were becoming victims of rape, murder, frauds, and exploitation. As the health indicators were not encouraging in the country, life expectancy also reduced, and people were suffering from many diseases.

Unfortunately, many people lost their lives due to excessive consumption of alcohol. Youth got addicted because they did not have a constructive activity to perform, and unemployment led to serious problems in youth. The death rate was a record high in the country, and they reached 60% during the '90s. In addition, the deaths due to diseases increased as health sector was suffering, so people did not have many options to receive adequate treatment for their diseases.

Among all the negative elements, there was one positive sign for the economic development of the country, and that was the imports. Russia had not faced any shortage of consumer products. Since the 1980's the production in the USSR was quite healthy, and even after the collapse, it remained steady. As a result of good production, the markets opened. Gradually, Russia was on the path of improvement. After 2000, the things started getting better for the country, and by the year 2011, the average income in the county rose, and it reached $700 per month, indicating the recovery for the country.

In Russia, there is huge income disparity, and almost it is equivalent to that of Brazil. Also, there are regional differences in the country that result in poverty and more problems for the people of Russia (Epstein et al.). Democracy in the country enables people to express their anger and frustration as they were living in a state of uncertainty (Anikin et al.). Many people in the country were not in favor of any reform because in the name of reforms they had suffered. Therefore, in the 1990s an anti-reformist group was also formed which raised its voice over govt. policies (Epstein et al.). The group got popularity among masses. Russian history during the '90s was full of the disputes among supporters of capitalist economy and anti-reformers. The society was heading towards polarization, and many people were radicalized and were involved in robberies and other crimes. However, the radical reforms kept facing some political barriers.

Different institutions of the country were not integrated as they had some ideological differences as some were supporting capitalism, while others have rejected that system and they were against reforms. At every stage of society, the differences were evident, which created a rift among many people in society. On the other hand, the nation needed to be united in mitigating the challenges they were facing. However, for political leaders, it was difficult to bring people on one platform. The struggle to grab power after the disintegration of the Soviet Union triggered the economic crisis which also caused bloodshed in the country. Finally, a new constitution was approved in 1993. In Russia, the strong Presidential System was introduced. The policy of privatization was already in place, and the government was sticking to its policies effectively. Some leaders were arrested after the collapse of the Soviet Union who was the loyalists of the former government. However, they were set free without being tried in the year 1994.

After a lot of ups and downs and struggle, the country progressed, the democratic system brought the country on track, and things improved a great deal. Although still there are problems in the country, Russia is an important international player. The country is still in conflict in different parts of the world. America and Russia are fighting an indirect war in Syria. Russian govt. is supporting Bashar ul Asad’s regime, while the U.S. is fighting against it. In the process, so many citizens have lost their lives, and bloodshed is still going on in Syria, which is not good for international peace and stability of the region (Khalilzada, Javadbay).

Finally, the transition period was tough for Russia, but they have passed that stage, and the overall situation is way better as compared to that of the '90s after the dissolution of USSR. Transformation to a new system is always challenging as was the case with Russia when it embraced capitalism (Brooke, Caroline).

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