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ИНСТИТУТ УПРАВЛЕНИЯ**
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ВОЛГОГРАДСКИЙ ИНСТИТУТ УПРАВЛЕНИЯ

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RUSSIAN STUDIES: Historical, Social and Cultural Foundations and Current Trends

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Пособие составлено на английском языке и состоит из 6 разделов, посвященных широкому кругу тем по вопросам россиеведения, истории, культуры, права, экономики, геополитики. Разделы могут изучаться в предлагаемой последовательности или выборочно, в зависимости от целей, задач и уровня подготовки обучающихся.

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Introduction

The textbook “Russian Studies: Historical, Social and Cultural Foundations and Modern Trends” is aimed at international students studying at Russian universities, students of pre-university training courses, as well as Russian students studying in the following areas of training: 03.38.04 “Public and Municipal Administration”, 03.37.01 “Psychology”, 03.38.01 “Economics”, 03.39.01 “Sociology”, 05.37.02 “Work and Organization Psychology”, 03.40.01 “Law”, 05.38.01 “Economic Security”. The textbook is focused on the synthesis of ideas about Russian civilization and Russian culture, natural science and humanitarian knowledge about it, geopolitical role of Russia, as well as the development of professional competencies in the English language. The textbook is designed for individuals who master Standard English grammar and have a vocabulary of 2000 lexical units.

The purpose of this textbook is to teach students regional studies, culture, history, social and legal structure, economy of Russia, professional communication in English, as well as the development of intercultural communication skills. Mandatory steps to complete the task are the development of general cultural competencies and communication skills in students (linguistic, sociocultural, communicational, educational and cognitive areas).

The subject of the course “Russian Studies: Historical, Social and Cultural Foundations and Modern Trends” for international and Russian students is the training of cultural and foreign language communicative competence as the basis of professional activity in a foreign language, historical, practical and encyclopedic competencies necessary for professional communication in the country of residence and training, which involves solving the following learning tasks: mastery of language material, including the expansion of vocabulary through professional vocabulary; improving the skills of reading literature in the specialty in English in order to obtain professionally high-quality information; development of skills in working with professional information in a foreign language.

Structurally, this textbook is a series of chapters organized thematically. The subject matter and nature of the educational materials presented in the textbook allow students to learn about Russian civilization and Russian spiritual culture, philosophy, history, political and state structure, global economic and political position of Russia as well as reading skills within the framework of Russian studies.

The lecture course “Russian Studies: Historical, Social and Cultural Foundations and Current Trends” is publicly available on YouTube. The final part of the textbook includes tests and essays assignment.

Chapter 1

RUSSIAN DIVERSITY

Natural, climatic, national and religious diversity of Russia

Russia is a country with a long history, rich cultural heritage and generous nature. However, modern Russia is primarily characterized by its achievements and glorified by its heroes. This chapter will be devoted to figures, facts, achievements and famous Russians.

A few facts about Russia: it is located in the northern part of the Eurasian continent. It occupies about 40 % of the area of Europe and 30 % of the area of Asia. Russia is the largest state in terms of its total surface area (17.1 million square kilometers); the length of Russia from west to east is 9,000 km and from north to south is 4,000 km. Russia spreads over 11 time zones.



Fig. 1. Nature of Russia

Russia has access to the waters of three oceans: the Pacific, the Arctic and the Atlantic. Its coastline totals 37,000 km. Rivers of Russia drain into the basins of all the oceans except the Indian. Russia has international borders on 18 countries (land borders with 16 countries: Norway, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia, Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, China, Mongolia and North Korea, and maritime boundaries with the USA and Japan).

Russia is a permanent member of the UN Security Council with the power to veto any resolution or decision, and is also a member of the most influential international organizations – the UN, G20, the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Russia is a nuclear power and one of the leading space powers in the world. Natural resource potential accounts for over 40 % of world reserves, estimated at more than \$350 trillion. More than 190 ethnic groups, speaking some 300 languages live within Russia's borders.

Russia is the birthplace of some of the greatest scientific discoveries, achievements in culture, art, sports, etc.

The history of the Russian state goes back 1161 years.

Milestones the Russian history:

1. Kievan Rus. The history of the state begins with the calling of the Varangians (Vikings) to reign in Novgorod. Prince Rurik, grandson of Gostomysl, becomes the Prince of Novgorod (862–879) and the legendary progenitor (founder) of the first Russian royal Rurik dynasty. The period was marked by the introduction of Christianity, which became a significant cultural and religious event.

2. Feudal fragmentation of 11th – 12th centuries. These were Chernigov, Smolensk, Polotsk, Pereyaslavl, Galician, Volyn, Ryazan, Rostov-Suzdal, Kiev principalities and Novgorod land. Each of the principalities not only had its own internal order, but also pursued an independent international policy.

3. The Mongol-Tatar invasion of Rus of 13th – 14th centuries (“Dark Times”). The Mongol Yoke lasted about two and a half centuries, and this greatly influenced the formation of Russian identity and statehood.

4. The Principality of Moscow of mid-15 – late 17 centuries. This period marks unification of the Russian lands around Moscow.

5. Russian Empire starts in late the 17th and lasts up to the early 20th century. The countdown starts from Peter 1. For 200 years, the Russian Empire experienced many important moments and events that had an impact on the state and people (reforms, numerous wars, the Decembrist uprising, the First World War, February and October revolutions).

6. The Soviet State – from February 1917 to December 1991. Created by the Bolsheviks, Soviet Russia became the Soviet Union, and in the course of the 20th century Russia became one of the two global superpowers.

7. The Russian Federation, from December 1991 up to the present moment.

What is unique about the Russian state? The historical path of Russia is undoubtedly unique, marked by numerous glorious moments of bravery of the Russian people and countless attempts on the part of our enemies to deprive the Russian state of its sovereignty, which never succeeded.

Natural and Climatic Uniqueness of Russia

The natural conditions and geography of the Russian (East European) Plain became the major factor in the development of the Russian people and the state. The same conditions, only in an even more extreme version, occur in the later integrated Siberia, which, together with the Russian Plain, makes up the bulk of Russian territory.

Natural and geographical factors still have a huge impact on the development of Russia, even though the development of economics and technology over the past 1000 years has significantly transformed the nature of many regions of Russia and reduced the influence of a number of natural factors.



Fig. 2. Russian Geography

Huge size and remoteness of natural boundaries

- The seas are geographically far from the center of the country.
- Relatively low population density has both its pros and cons. Disadvantages include high transport and infrastructure costs, difficulties in economic exchange; however, there are some advantages: lower mortality as a result of epidemics, fewer social conflicts over resources and land, safe development of large cities, economic centers, etc.
- It is difficult to conquer such a vast territory. Firstly, autumn and spring season of bad roads in muddy condition which makes travel on unpaved roads problematic and even impossible. Secondly, Russia has a huge territory which makes it difficult not just to pass its 11 time zones, but to keep troops well-fed, safe and sound while doing so.

Furthermore, winter in most of Russia is harsh. Another important factor is the terrain itself: thick forests and swamps make it difficult to hinder military advance.

The absence of significant natural barriers in the center of the Russian Plain, the comparative monotony of its landscape and relief, the similarity of climate and economic activity in most of the territory contributed to the constant interaction and unification of various tribes into a single Russian people.

Branched rivers network. Almost the entire territory of the Russian Plain is covered with a network of river systems. The rivers became the basis for the settlement of the Slavs and the political division of Rus. Later, principalities and domains were formed along the rivers and confluents.

Russia's position between Europe and Asia. Russia's relation to Occident and Orient has led to the fact that the history of Russia has always been influenced by various European and Asian peoples, traditions, and technologies. Russia rightfully perceives itself as a Eurasian power which participated both in European and Asian affairs.

Distance from the main centers of civilization in Eurasia. Unlike most European countries, which received at their disposal the infrastructure of the ancient empires – buildings, aqueducts, Roman roads – the Russian state was formed at a comparative distance from the ancient centers of civilization, and had to create everything practically from scratch. However, the Greek cities of the Northern Black Sea region were relatively close to the lands of the Slavs, from where such achievements of civilization as Christianity, system of writing and a number of technologies were introduced.

Subsequently, Russia's location far from the main cultural and economic centers of Europe contributed to the formation of a separate Russian civilization.

Multinational Demographics of Russia

The Russian Plain and Siberia are vast and have always been inhabited by many nationalities and ethnicities. No single ethnic group could dominate the entire territory of Russia. There was enough space for everyone. The main internal conflicts either had no ethnic basis at all, or were between the agricultural population and the nomadic peoples practicing raiding farming. Since ancient times, Finno-Ugric, Baltic, Slavic tribes and immigrants from Scandinavia lived in the north of Ancient Rus. Before the adoption of Christianity, Jews lived in Ancient Kyiv; from the late 10th century, many Greeks came to Rus; in the 11th century, the borders of the Russian state were guarded by Turkic tribes, driven out of the steppe by the Polovtsians. Russian princes married both the daughters of European monarchs and Polovtsian princesses. The population was united by the Russian language, but other languages had a great impact too. Similarly, there has been significant genetic, cultural, and technological influence from different nationalities and ethnical groups of Russia.



Fig. 3. Nations of Russia

Russians are almost three fourth towns' people. There are more rural residents in the south, where there is a lot of fertile land and a favorable climate for agriculture. Almost 1/7 of the coun-

try's population lives in the Moscow metropolitan area, the largest in Europe (only the Istanbul metropolitan area rivals in size). The second city of the country, which also has a capital status, is St. Petersburg, which is almost 4 times less populous than Moscow, and is the world's northernmost millionaire city. Cities in the country are rarely located, especially to the east of the Urals – you can travel around Siberia by train for days without encountering large cities. Half of large cities are located in the Ural-Volga region on an area of less than 10 % of the total Russian.

Dense and Extensive Forest. Russian forest, being a natural defense line, served as a dependable refuge from external enemies. Forest provided abundance of wood material for housing construction as well as served as material for shoes, utensils, writing on birch bark, architecture, carving, etc. Firewood was an important energy source. Abundance of iron ore in forest swamps “Marsh iron” (limonite) was mined in peat bogs, swamps located in mighty forests of Russia. Thus, metallurgy could be developed. Forests are as an additional source of food: hundreds of forest food species and medicinal plants grow in Russian woods. Forest is a source of export goods (honey, wax, furs, resin).

Grasslands and Steppes. Grasslands are often referred to as all-Russian breadbasket due to the efficient agriculture, rich grain, cattle breeding and trade in livestock products.

Russia traditionally produced grain in the steppes of the Northern Black Sea region in best conditions for harvesting cereals, however later, peasants learned to harvest grain on northern soils. Mass grain exports started in the 19th century.

Nomadic threat. Economic development suffered from nomadic peoples' raids, as reliable defense could not be organized; many people migrated north, but the nomads learned to raid deep into the forests; The Golden Horde and Crimean Tatars reached Moscow more than once. The situation was reversed in the 14th – 15th centuries when Russian lands were united and we could repel the attacks of the nomads.

Relatively harsh climate of Russia. With the conquest of Siberia, new territories became available for sable and other fur-bearing animals hunting.

Low and unstable crop yield, crop failure, famines were quite notorious in Russia. Throughout Russian history, droughts and crop failures resulting famines occurred on more or less regular basis. Because of short growing season in Russia, extra effort is required in the summer, and during the other seasons different crafts, household chores were practiced. There is an opinion that climate-driven agriculture even influenced the formation of the Russian character – the ability to perform labor feats during deadline pressure times and a certain relaxation, loss of energy in the rest of the time.

Nature of Russia

The natural geography of Russia is diverse and has its own unique features in different parts of the country.

The territory of Russia consists of various *natural zones*. Arctic deserts are part of the Arctic geographical zone. Russia's vast stretch of land along the Arctic Ocean and the Russian Arctic islands has a polar climate. This is the northernmost of the natural zones. The spaces are covered with glaciers, rubble and fragments of rocks and mountains. The flora and fauna of this area are quite scarce.

The tundra stretches for many kilometers along the snow-covered shores of the Arctic Ocean. The Russian Tundra ecoregion contains distinctive vegetation known as Beringian woodland, low Siberian dwarf-pine forest and pockets of tundra rich with lichen.

Russian boreal forests, known in Russia as the taiga, represent the largest forested region on Earth, around 12 million km² which is larger than the Amazon. The taiga runs throughout Russia from west to east with a wide belt of evergreen conifers that easily tolerate cold and a variety of highly-specialized and adapted animals, due to the harshness of the climate.

Mixed and deciduous forests are typical for the southern taiga, where coniferous and deciduous tree species grow. Here oaks, birches, maples and lindens coexist with spruce and pine trees.

Grasslands or steppes are full of fertile lands with rich black soils.

Deserts on the territory of Russia are widespread in the desert part of the Caspian lowland, semi-deserts in the regions of Volgograd, Rostov have their own unique flora in an arid climate. The most common types of vegetation in Russia are tundra, forest, steppe, meadows, and swamps with a specific climate for each natural zone.

In different natural zones, the animal world of Russia is even more diverse when moving from north to south and from plains to mountains, where the number of endemic and relict species of animals predominates.

Rarity of destructive natural disasters. Climatic and agricultural disasters quite often occur on the Russian Plain and include droughts, rainy summers, cold winters and springs. However, destructive natural disasters such as earthquakes, tornadoes, floods are rare in most of Russia (before the Caucasus and Siberia became part of Russia, these phenomena had almost never affected this country). The remoteness of the country's historical center from mountains and active seismic zones has spared Russian history from catastrophic earthquakes with dangerous consequences for the state.

Multinational identity of Russia

Russia is a multinational state, which is reflected in its Constitution. More than 190 peoples live on the territory of Russia, which include large peoples of several million representatives (Russians, Tatars, Bashkirs, Chechens, etc.), and small indigenous peoples ranging from 4 to 40,000 representatives (Abazas, Aleuts, Kamchadals, Mansi, etc.).

The Russian state was initially created as a unity of peoples where the Russians play a strategic role: all-Russian civil identity is based on the preservation of the Russian culture inherent in all the peoples inhabiting the Russian Federation.

Ethnic Diversity of the Russian Federation. The culture of each people living in Russia is unique, interesting and has its own temperament and national features. Even the smallest indigenous peoples have their own culture. This is primarily language, folklore (fairy tales, songs, dances, etc.), customs, rituals, national cuisine, clothing, household items, and so on. Linguists count approximately 270 languages and dialects in our country. Russian is spoken by more than 97 % of the population.

The multinational culture of Russia is sometimes compared to a mosaic, where each element, each people and each culture has its place and is a brick in the formation of one large, unified picture.

Thus, folk culture plays an important role in the multinational culture of Russia, preserving and passing on traditions, helping people save their national identity and uniting the peoples of the country in a single cultural space.

Religious Identity of Russia. Russia is not only a multinational, but also a multi-religious state. However, part 1 of Art. 14 of the Constitution establishes that the Russian Federation shall be a secular state. No religion may be established as the State religion or as obligatory.

Back in 988, Vladimir the Great adopted Christianity in the Byzantine form and began to actively attract new followers of this faith throughout the country. This was the beginning of the Christianization of ancient Russia and the strengthening of its position.

The influence of Islam became noticeable in connection with the expansion of the territory of the Russian state and the conquest of new lands in Central Asia and the Caucasus. A large number of the Tatar-Muslim population joined Russia, creating a multinational and multi-religious state. In addition to Christianity and Islam, many other religious movements and denominations are present in Russia. Judaism has been practiced since ancient times, when Jews came to the territory of Rus from the Middle East. Traditional Buddhism is represented by the regions of Buryatia, Kalmykia and Tuva.

Today, in Russia there is a wide range of religious organizations and denominations. Orthodoxy is the main religious movement in the country; according to surveys, over 70 % of the population identifies themselves as Orthodox. Islam is the second largest religion, and other faiths are also present, including Catholicism, Protestantism, Judaism and Buddhism.

State Symbols of the Russian Federation

State symbols are an integral part of any independent country. The coat of arms, anthem and flag express the idea of sovereignty and carry deep cultural meaning. Symbols unite the people and turn them into a single nation. Studying the state symbols of the Russian Federation allows you to better understand history, which reveals the language of signs and the evolution of ideas and values.

In accordance with the Federal Constitutional Law on the State Coat of Arms of the Russian Federation, the Russian coat of arms is described as “a gold two-headed eagle with raised extended wings set against a four-cornered red heraldic shield with rounded lower corners. Two small crowns top the eagle’s heads, with one large crown above them. The three crowns are linked by a ribbon. The eagle holds a sceptre in its right claw and an orb in its left claw. The eagle bears a red shield on its breast depicting a silver horseman in a blue cape, mounted upon a silver horse and slaying a black serpent with a silver spear”.

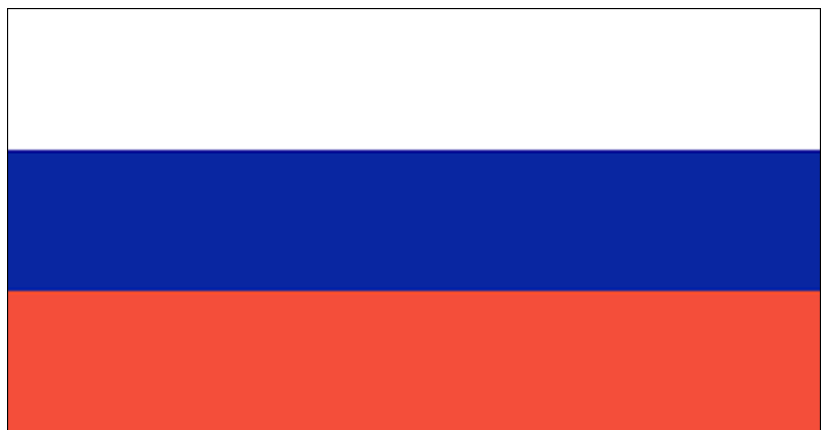


Fig. 4. State Symbols of the Russian Federation

The golden double-headed eagle on a red field preserves historical continuity in the colors of the coats of arms of the late 15th – 17th centuries. The eagle design goes back to images on monuments from the era of Peter the Great. Above the heads of the eagle are depicted three historical crowns of Peter the Great, symbolizing in the new conditions the sovereignty of both the entire Russian Federation and its subjects. The silver horseman is one of the ancient symbols of the struggle between good and evil, light and darkness, and the defense of the Fatherland. The restoration of the double-headed eagle as the State Emblem of Russia personifies the continuity of Russian history. Today's coat of arms of Russia is a new coat of arms, but its components are deeply traditional; it reflects different stages of Russian history.

At present, most often unofficially, the interpretation of the flag colors of Russia is: the color white means peace, purity and perfection; the blue is the color of faith and fidelity, constancy; the red color symbolizes energy, strength, blood shed for the Fatherland.

The National Anthem. The lyrics by Sergei Mikhalkov and music by A. Alexandrov of the national anthem create a ceremonial composition intended as a symbol of state unity reflecting feelings of patriotism and respect for the country's history.

Outstanding Personalities and Achievements of Russia

One of the equally important sections of this chapter is the study of outstanding individuals throughout Russian history who contributed to its development: statesmen, scientists, cultural activists, travelers, athletes, etc. At the same time, one should be aware that it is impossible to name everyone; Russia has given so many famous names to the world.

Great Political and Statesmen.

Yaroslav the Wise (978–1054) – compiled a set of laws the *Russkaya Pravda* “Russian Justice”. The period of Yaroslav's reign was an era of enlightenment and the development of ancient Russian culture.

Ivan IV (1530–1584). In historical literature we know him as Ivan the Terrible. The first crowned Tsar of all Rus. He became famous for his military and judicial reforms. The Tsar went down in history as the conqueror of Siberia, the Kazan and Astrakhan principalities (he pursued an active policy to expand the country's territories).

Peter I (1672–1725) was one of his country's greatest statesmen, organizers, and reformers. The number of his reforms and merits in administration, industry, commerce, technology, and culture can be listed and analyzed in more than one lecture. The Table of Ranks was introduced, and an administrative reform was carried out, as a result the country was divided into provinces. Peter established a regular army on completely modern lines for Russia and through recruitment (113 thousand people). Peter's reign saw the powerful Baltic fleet brought into being, within a few years, 52 battleships, hundreds of galleys and other craft were constructed. He subjected the Orthodox Church of Russia to the state. Newspapers, museums, and educational institutions were opened. A system of state-owned production was organized. Peter I declared Russia an empire and elevated the country to the rank of a great European power.

Catherine II (1729–1796) – a separate court was introduced for each class in the society and the highest court – the Senate appeared. The number of provinces was increased, cities received self-government rights. Paper money was introduced and the foundation of free enterprise was laid. At Catherine's reign, Russia had expanded westward and southward over an area of more than

200,000 square miles (the Crimea, Novorossiya, and Poland). She built more than 14 cities. Russia has become the largest European country.

Alexander II (1818–1881) conducted domestic reforms, the most important being the emancipation of the serfs (1861) or the abolition of serfdom. The emperor went down in history under the name Alexander the Liberator. At his reign, a public jury trial appeared, zemstvo self-government was introduced, the financial system was reformed. The army statute introduced conscription for the first time, making young men of all classes liable to military service. Alexander II conducted reforms of higher and secondary education; Russian society liberalizes and modernizes: expansion of population rights, humanitarian progress, and economic development.

Vladimir Lenin (1870–1924) is the greatest revolutionary leader, thinker and revolutionary statesman in history, founder of the Bolshevik Party, Soviet statesman and political figure, main organizer and leader of the October Revolution of 1917. Lenin's administration redistributed land among the peasantry and nationalized banks and large-scale industry. His views and works left a serious mark on world history. He is also known for the fact that after his death, his body was later mummified and placed in the Mausoleum on Red Square in Moscow.

Joseph Stalin (1879–1953) is a most controversial leader in the entire history of our country. To this day, numerous disputes among historians and scientists take place on the assessment of Joseph Stalin's policy. He was a Soviet political, state, military and party leader, a Russian revolutionary. The de facto leader of the USSR, who for a quarter of a century dictatorially ruled the Soviet Union, transformed it into a major world power, contributed to defeat of Nazi Germany in the WW2, created a mighty military-industrial complex and led the Soviet Union into the nuclear age.

Vladimir Putin is the current President of the Russian Federation. Russian citizens supported Putin's candidacy for the highest government post 4 times. He and his team, despite criticism from the opposition, have managed to have support among the population of the Russian Federation for almost two decades. During Putin's presidential tenure, economy grew and the industrial sector strengthened driven by economic reforms and oil prices, Russia became the energy superpower; Putin solved the bloodiest Chechen crisis.

Outstanding scientists.

Russia is the birthplace of many famous scientists. They not only made discoveries in various fields of science from physics to ophthalmology, but also found practical applications for their scientific theories. Their inventions are used by people all over the world.

Mikhail Lomonosov made many discoveries in various fields of natural science and was the first great Russian linguistics reformer, the first major Russian natural scientist. The founder of scientific navigation and physical chemistry, laid the foundations of the science of glass, astronomer, instrument maker, geographer, metallurgist, geologist, artist, genealogist, historiographer, poet, reformer of the Russian language, founded the Moscow State University one of the leading universities today.

Major discoveries made by Mikhail Lomonosov:

- developed the atomic-corpuscular theory (molecule – atom);
- discovered the existence of an atmosphere on the surface of Venus;
- developed new instruments for conducting experiments and measurements;
- improved the telescope;
- designed a prototype of a helicopter-type lifting aircraft, etc.

Nikolai Lobachevsky created Lobachevsky geometry (1829), later recognized as a full-fledged alternative to Euclidian geometry.

Alexey Krylov (1863–1945) is an outstanding mathematician, mechanic, engineer and inventor, teacher and science promoter, shipbuilder. He developed the theory of pitching, the theory of unsinkability, and the theory of raising sunken ships. Alexey Krylov was a general of the Russian Imperial Navy, Academician of the Imperial Academy of Sciences and the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, without him there would be no Russian fleet.

Nikolai Pirogov (1810–1881) is an outstanding Russian surgeon, anatomist, creator of the first atlas of topographic anatomy, founder of military field surgery, founder of the Russian school of anesthesia and the science of tissue orientation. He was the first in the world to document anesthesia in the field.

Konstantin Tsiolkovsky (1857–1935) is a founder of the theory of interplanetary communications. He was the first to study the issue of a space rocket construction, expressed the idea of creating near-Earth stations, and considered medical and biological problems that arise during long-term space flights. Konstantin Tsiolkovsky developed a theory of jet aircraft flight in the stratosphere and invented his own gas turbine engine design.

Dmitry Mendeleev (1834–1907) is a chemist, metrologist, economist, technologist, geologist, meteorologist, oil worker, teacher, aeronaut and instrument maker. He made a fundamental contribution to chemistry by announcing the principle of periodicity of properties in the chemical elements (periodic table). He invented controlled balloon, discovered the absolute boiling point of liquids, and opened the main chamber of weights and measures. He put forward a hypothesis about the origin of oil, the idea of underground gasification of coal, and developed the principle of continuous crushed distillation of oil.

Outstanding discoverers and travelers.

Vitus Bering (1681–1741) is the organizer of the Great Northern Expedition, during which the map of the entire Arctic coast of Siberia, northeastern coast of Eurasia was created. He founded Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, discovered Southern Alaska, the Aleutian and Commander Islands.

Faldey Bellingshausen (1778–1852) is a participant in the first Russian circumnavigation of the world (over 92 thousand km), commander of a round-the-world expedition that discovered Antarctica and 29 islands in the Southern Ocean. He was the first to conclude that Antarctica is a continent.

N. Miklouho-Maclay (1846–1888) is a Russian explorer, ethnologist, anthropologist of the peoples of Southeast Asia and Oceania, including indigenous people of New Guinea.

Onisim Pankratov (1888–1916) circumnavigated the globe on a bicycle; V. Chkalov is a commander of the first landing transcontinental unmanned airplane flight across the Northern Belt from Moscow to the USA; Fyodor Konyukhov is the first Russian man to visit all the Seven Summits of the World and both poles. For the first time in the world, he circumnavigated Antarctica alone.

Yuri Gagarin is the first cosmonaut to orbit the Earth on the Vostok spacecraft on April 12, 1961. The flight lasted about two hours.

Outstanding individuals in culture.

Among the outstanding Russian cultural figures there are Pushkin, Tolstoy, Aivazovsky, Tchaikovsky, Stanislavsky. These and many other great names have become a kind of password, as a result of which people all over the world are formed when it comes to Russian culture.

During his lifetime, Leo Tolstoy was recognized as a classic of Russian and world literature. It is with this name that people all over the world often associate Russian literature. Leo Tolstoy is known not only as a classic of Russian writer, but also as a thinker who influenced the course of history. The main principles of his teaching were non-resistance to received evil, universal love and moral self-improvement of the individual.

The greatest Russian composer is Pyotr Tchaikovsky. He glorified the heroic past of Russia and the beauty of its nature, created a gallery of wonderful images of Russian people. At the same time, music and dance melodies of other peoples of the world are introduced into Tchaikovsky's works of art. Even during the composer's lifetime, his creative heritage became part of world art. The popularity of Tchaikovsky's music is enormous even today: his works are performed all over the planet, and his ballets (for example "Swan Lake") are performed every year all over the globe by almost every ballet company.

Konstantin S. Stanislavsky (1863–1938) is a theater reformer, actor and director. His principal fame rests on his "system" of actor training, preparation, and rehearsal technique.

Ilya E. Repin (1844–1930) is one of the most renowned artists of the 19th century. His major works include Barge Haulers on the Volga (1873), Ivan the Terrible and His Son Ivan (1885), numerous revealing portraits.

Feodor I. Chaliapin (1873–1938) is a Russian opera singer, possessing a deep and expressive bass voice, he established the tradition of naturalistic acting.

Dmitri D. Shostakovich is a Russian composer and pianist who became internationally known after the premiere of his First Symphony and is regarded as a major composer.

D. L. Matsuev is a Russian virtuoso pianist and public figure of our time.

Outstanding athletes.

Lev Yashin is football player, goalkeeper, Olympic champion. The best goalkeeper of the 20th century according to the International Federation of Football History and Statistics and the International Football Federation.

Larisa Latynina is a gymnast, 9-time Olympic champion. The absolute record holder for the number of gold medals won at the Olympic Games in artistic gymnastics.

Dmitry Sautin is a diver, the only one in the history of 8 Olympic medals in diving.

Alexander Ovechkin is an outstanding athlete who in 2017 was included in the list of the 100 greatest hockey players in the history of the NHL.

Alexander Popov is a swimmer. He has 48 medals, 31 of which are of the highest value. Multiple European and world champion, winner of the Olympic Games.

Outstanding achievements of the Past and Present

Russian surgeon Nikolay I. Pirogov was the first to use plaster casts to fix limb fractures.

The first electromagnetic telegraph was created by the Russian scientist Pavel L. Schilling in 1832.

The inventor of the modern parachute is Gleb E. Kotelnikov, an engineer from St. Petersburg, who was the first in the world to create a backpack parachute, receiving a patent for this invention in Russia, France, Germany and the USA in 1912. For the first time, he divided all the suspension lines into two groups, placed the device in a backpack attached to the pilot; a pole hole was used in the center of the dome to allow air to escape.

1954 Under the leadership of the Soviet physicist Igor V. Kurchatov (Institute of Atomic Energy), the Obninsk Nuclear Power Plant, the world's first nuclear power plant was built. He also owns a series of global discoveries in the field of nuclear physics. These included the creation of Europe's first atomic reactor, the first atomic bomb in the USSR, and the world's first thermonuclear bomb.

In 1973, Soviet ophthalmologist Svyatoslav N. Fedorov developed and performed the world's first operation to treat glaucoma in the early stages. He also developed and widely introduced radial keratotomy into ophthalmological practice, and developed actual intraocular lenses (artificial lens of the eye).

On May 7, 1895, Russian physicist Alexander C. Popov carried out the world's first radio communication session using a radio receiver he created.

Igor I. Sikorsky (1889–1972) became the developer of the world's first aircraft with four engines, the Russian Knight, and the first seaplanes and helicopters. It was he who created the helicopter in 1931, which consisted of two propellers: the first at the top of the machine and the second at its tail. He personally tested the new model, as well as 15 new types of aircraft.

Boris Rosing was involved in the discovery of television broadcasting who in July 1907 patented the invention of a "Method for electrically transmitting images over distances". Boris Rosing managed to successfully transmit and receive an accurate image on the screen of what was still a simple device, which was a prototype of the kinescope of a modern television.

Russia was the first in the world to register a vaccine against coronavirus. Sputnik V, which became the first vaccine against COVID-19 in Russia and the world, was registered on August 11, 2020. At the end of 2021, this domestic vaccine was already saving people in 71 countries. Data from Hungary shows Sputnik is the best of the country's five leading vaccines in protecting against COVID-19 deaths.

Doctors from Russia were the first in the world to remove a tumor in the brain, disconnecting it from the general blood supply. In 2021, Russian doctors were the first in the world to perform isolated perfusion of the human brain.

Russia has the world's only nuclear icebreaker fleet, created on the basis of the use of advanced nuclear achievements.

Russia's nuclear weapons are the most powerful and long-range in the world. Today Russia has completely modernized its nuclear arsenal, and new strategic developments are being introduced. Russian new strategic nuclear weapons – Sarmat missile systems and Avangard warheads – are already on combat duty. The main part of our "mobile" nuclear shield, the Topol-M and Yars missile systems, are considered the most effective weapons compared to foreign models. It is impossible to find the Yars mobile missile system before launch. During the final leg of the flight, the warhead begins to maneuver, and any air defense system becomes meaningless.

Scientists from the Institute of Thermophysics SB RAS (Novosibirsk) have invented a unique installation for processing medical masks into electricity and building materials. The researchers from the Institute of Thermophysics of the Siberian Branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences have created a unit that can be used to process disposable personal protective equipment into useful raw materials – fuel and construction materials. With the support of the Ministry of Education and Science, scientists launched an experimental installation based on a plasmatron. In one hour, a plasma oven is capable of recycling about 20 kilograms of waste. This is almost 6,000 medical masks. At the same time, no harmful emissions occur into the atmosphere. In the future, the in-

stallation can be used for high-temperature processing of any organic raw material. Not only Russian but also Chinese factories became interested in the technology.

In Russia, ***unique sapphire glass is produced, or rather grown***, which is used all over the world. Sapphire is the second hardest material after diamond, which has good optical properties, therefore it is used in the LEDs production and lighting, as well as in watch industry and in mobile electronics production. Stavropol “Monocrystal” has 35 years of experience in producing sapphire using the Kyropoulos method using its own technology, which allows it to grow sapphire single crystals weighing more than 100 kg. In July 2015, the Stavropol plant grew the largest sapphire crystal in the world, weighing 300 kg. The share of the Russian Monocrystal plant in the production of LEDs substrates in 2021 amounted to 50 % of the global total.

Russia’s achievements, based on facts, can be continued endlessly.

Chapter 2

ORDEALS AND VICTORIES OF RUSSIA

Throughout its history, Russia has repeatedly experienced challenging times, societal polarization, riot of wars, revolutions and civil conflicts. However, some uncompromising distinguished personalities appeared, for example, the first Russian rulers who fought with external enemies, secured their lands and contributed to national unification. Their actions were imbued with true national pride, passion and determination

Kievan Rus, the first East Slavic state in North-Eastern Europe was formed in the 9th century as a result of the unification of East Slavic and Finno-Ugric tribes.

The greatest flowering of the Old Russian state came at the beginning of the 11th century

1. Creation of a single Russian state. The subjugation of individual tribes under the authority of the Kyiv prince and the formation of a single state. During this period, there were frequent conflicts with local tribal princes who did not want to lose power. Conflicts also flared up between representatives of the Rurik dynasty, who exercised control in different areas of the state. (Rurik is the first Viking prince invited to Russian soil. He became the founder of a dynasty that ruled for almost 7 centuries). The greatest flowering of the Old Russian state came at the beginning of the 11th century.

2. At the same time, Rus found itself under the constant raid threat from the east, carried out by various nomadic tribes and peoples, such as the Cumans (the Polovtsy: end of the 11th beginning of the 12th centuries) and the Pechenegs (10th century). These raids caused significant damage to trade, crafts and agriculture and the economy and also contributed to instability in the region.

The famous Russian historian Sergei Soloviov created the concept of “the struggle between the forest and the steppe” as an important factor in the development of the Russian state. Soloviev suggested that the peculiarity of the historical development of the Old Russian state was determined by the division of the East European plain into forest and steppe zones. The forest belt contributed to the formation of a sedentary lifestyle and agriculture. The steppe strip contributed to the development of the nomadic lifestyle of Asian peoples. During the formation of the state, its territory expanded to the south and southeast. Colonization necessitated the need to protect the state from nomads.

3. Another important factor back then was the beginning of contacts with the West: the 10th century saw the development of the trade route from the Baltic to the Black Sea, which established the basis of the economic life of Rus and determined its political and cultural development. People got acquainted with new cultural values determined by Christianity. For the pagan culture of Rus, this meant the presence of cultural and social and political contradictions in relations with European states. To a large extent, these contradictions were resolved after the adoption of Christianity in the Orthodox version, which came from Byzantium.

4. Byzantine influence on Kievan Rus was connected with Byzantium conducted through various alliances and political connections. Byzantine influence had a significant impact on the culture, religion and politics of the Rus, but also caused conflicts with other nations such as Poland and Lithuania.

5. Christianization of Rus (adoption of Orthodox Christianity) was an important event in the history of Rus, a crucial step in the development of Russian civilization, which firmly allied Rus with the Byzantine Empire, the Greek learning and book culture was adopted. But it also caused resistance and conflicts from pagan tribes.

All these trials and challenges had an impact on the formation of Rus, its historical and cultural appearance. They also required great efforts on the part of the Russian people and rulers to achieve stability and prosperity.

The period of *Partition* (from the end of the 11th century to the end of the 14th century) is a time when the territory of Rus was divided into many independent principalities, which waged constant wars and conflicts among themselves.

1. Appanage wars between the principalities of Rus were the most common ordeal when princes competed for power and territory using forces. Princes treated appanage holdings as private property. They conveyed them to their heirs by wills which contributed to increasing fragmentation of the lands in each generation. This led to constant instability and destruction in the region. So, the principalities were weakened by internal conflicts which escalated even further due to external attacks.

2. External invasions. During this period, Rus found itself under constant threat of invasions from the east and west. The Mongol hordes, led by Genghis Khan and his heirs, carried out an invasion of Rus, which led to the destruction and depletion of the land. At the same time, Poland, Sweden and Lithuania also sought to expand their possessions and entered into conflicts with the Russian principalities.

3. Khan's rule: After the Mongol invasion, Rus came under the khan's rule of the Golden Horde. The Mongols demanded payment (or tribute). Russian princes became politically dependent on the Mongol khans and had to agree with them on their right to power and control in the principalities. This complicated the political situation and limited the independence of the Russian princes.

4. Economic difficulties: Constant wars and destruction led to economic decline of Kiev from the mid-twelfth century. Trade and agriculture suffered, and the region lost its place on international trade routes. This affected the well-being of the population and created additional problems for an already difficult political situation.

There is a new interpretation of this period suggesting 11 or 12 appanages rationally divided labor and authority delegation within the Rurikid dynasty between 1150 and 1240. So, this general economic and political expansion was designed as a component of a dynastic realm.

5. Spread of Islam: During this period, Islam began to spread into Russian territory through the Mongols, establishing Muslim khanates' influence. This created religious conflicts and disputes between Christianity and Islam.

However, despite various ordeals in the appanage era, Rus was able to preserve its culture, religion and national unity and, ultimately, unite under the rule of Muscovy.

Moscow principality at the beginning of the 16th century.

Throughout the 16th-17th centuries, the power of the king was strengthened. As well as the expansion of the territory of the state. At the end of the 15th century, the Russian state finally got rid of dependence on the Tatar-Mongol khans and was even able to subjugate disparate parts of the once powerful Golden Horde - the Kazan Khanate and the Astrakhan Khanate. When developing Siberia, Russian military detachments will encounter the army of the Siberian Khanate. However, they will win a series of victories, which will lead to the establishment of Moscow's control over Siberia, and then the final entry of Siberia and local peoples into the Moscow state.

A serious test of this period will be such important domestic and foreign political events as the struggle of Tsar Ivan the Terrible with the boyars (will go down in history as the oprichnina). A protracted war with a number of European states over the Baltic coast (Livonian War).

In the 17th century, the main test of the Russian state would be a political crisis, which would almost lead to the collapse of the state (the Time of Troubles). In the 17th century, the result of overcoming the crisis would be the choice of a representative of the new ruling dynasty - Mikhail Romanov. From this time on, the Romanov dynasty will rule in Russia for 300 years.

The 17th century in Russian history is called the “rebellious century” due to the significant number of uprisings and riots that swept the country at different times.

One of the most significant, which had a serious impact on social, economic and political processes in the country, was the revolt of the Don Cossack Stepan Razin.

At the beginning of the 18th century, the Russian state would reach a new level of development. Under Tsar Peter I, Russia will in many ways become a European country, but will retain its cultural identity. Its borders will significantly expand, Russia will turn into an empire with a vast territory rich in resources.

The *Russian Empire* stretched from the Baltic Sea and Eastern Europe to the Pacific Ocean and during its nearly two-hundred-year history from 1721 to 1917 also faced numerous glorious moments and various challenges.

1. Expansion of borders. Most of Russia's historical territories became part of Russia during Russian Empire period. However, this resulted in the need to manage and assimilate different ethnic and cultural groups. Ruling such a vast and multinational state was a complicated task.

2. Wars and conflicts. The Russian Empire was involved in many wars and conflicts throughout its history. Some of the most significant wars included the Northern War, the Crimean War, the Napoleon war, the Russo-Turkish War, the Russo-Japanese War, Russo-Turkish wars and the First World War. Wars required enormous resources and claimed millions of lives.

3. Political protests and revolutions: During its existence, the Russian Empire faced several waves of political protests and revolutions. The most famous are the Decembrist Uprising of 1825, the Revolution of 1905 and the February Revolution of 1917, which led to the fall of the empire.

4. Differences within the country: The Russian Empire was characterized by significant differences in the social structure and economic development of various regions. The Russian Empire had a royal ruling class; nobles that held land or served as officers in the military and the Clergy at the top, comprising about 13% of the population. Peasants or serfs were the lowest class representing over 80% of the population. High inequality led to social conflicts and tensions.

5. Modernization and Reforms based on Western European models was a necessary solution due to the crisis of the landlord economy, the poverty of the peasants and the low purchasing power of the population, held back development of the domestic market.

So, the Russian Empire faced the challenges of modernization, transformation of the political system and the need to implement reforms to successfully compete with Western European powers. Peter the Great brought significant changes to the political system, economy and culture of Russia.

In Russia, Peter the Great's reforms are generally viewed as quite brutal but very much needed to bring Russia into the modern age; that is why reforms were often met with resistance and caused social and political instability.

All these challenges presented the Russian Empire with serious problems and difficult decisions. In some cases they led to change and reform, in others to social and political conflicts.

The Soviet period (1917–1991) in Russian history was also a time of serious trials.

1. The Russian Civil War: After the February Revolution when the Russian monarchy ended with the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II and after the October Revolution of 1917 and the establishment of Soviet power, a civil war broke out in Russia between the Bolsheviks and the social-democratic provisional government. The war lasted from 1917 to 1922 and resulted in economic collapse, famine and widespread violence. The Russian Civil War had a huge impact on the formation and course of Soviet history.

2. New economic system and social and economic crises of the 1920s – 1930s. Overcoming the devastation caused by the civil war was difficult. In 1921, as a result of crop failure, a terrible famine broke out in the country, which claimed the lives of several million people. The peasantry found itself in the most difficult situation. The agricultural crisis led to a change in the internal policy of the Bolsheviks and a weakening of the dictatorship.

From the second half of the 1920s, the government is developing a policy of modernizing the country. This required a strong strain of all resources, including human ones. Modernization was determined by two key factors – industrialization (accelerated construction of heavy industry) and collectivization (creation of large agricultural production based on the principle of cooperation). Collectivization was accompanied by such negative aspects as dispossession (the confiscation of land and outbuildings from peasants who were considered rich), the eviction of peasants to sparsely populated areas, and the confiscation of grain from peasants above the norm. As a result of such actions in 1932-1933, the Volga region, Kazakhstan, Kuban and Ukraine were gripped by famine. During which several million people also died. The result of industrialization and collectivization was the creation of advanced industry and efficient agriculture in the USSR making it independent. However, the price that the Soviet people paid for this was very high: As a result of the modernization policy, the USSR as a whole was ready for the trials of World War II.

3. World War II: The USSR played a key role in defeating Nazi Germany in World War II where 61 states with a population of 1 billion 700 million people, about 80% of the total number of people living on the planet, took part in the war, it lasted 6 years on the territory of 40 countries. The price of war and victory was extremely high. The war devastated many states. The human losses were enormous.



Fig. 5. Great Patriotic War

The Soviet Union suffered the most: the country's irretrievable human losses amounted to 26.6 million people. Of these, 8.6 million soldiers of the Red Army and Navy died at the fronts. About 4.5 million were captured. Our country also paid a considerable price for the liberation of 13 countries in Europe and Asia. More than 1 million Soviet soldiers died in battles in Eastern and Central Europe, the Balkans, China and Korea. Of these, 600 thousand Soviet soldiers died liberating Poland, 140 thousand died liberating in Czechoslovakia, the same number died liberating Hungary, and more than 100 thousand in Germany. 13.7 million Soviet citizens died from bombings, as a result of mass forced deportation to Germany, and were destroyed by invaders in the occupied territory of the USSR. In Nazi-occupied Europe, the following number of people were killed: 4.1 million people in Poland, 1,7 million in Yugoslavia, 450 thousand in Greece. Millions of people died in Asian countries occupied by Japan.

Just to compare, irreversible human losses of other countries of the Anti-Hitler coalition amounted to: 405 thousand in the USA, 375 thousand in Great Britain, 600 thousand in France. China lost 35 million people during the war with Japan.

In Russia, the war caused enormous loss of life and destruction. Millions of lives were lost, many cities and towns were severely destroyed.



Fig. 6. Victory in the Great Patriotic War

4. Cultural restrictions and political repression. The Soviet severe restrictions on freedom of speech, mass repression and political persecution were notorious. The power of the Soviet regime suppressed any manifestations of political and cultural opposition, which led to mass arrests, forced labor camps and death sentences.

From my family experience, I can tell you about the different attitude in the society towards the restrictions. On my father's side, my great-grand father was sent to gulag for just one political statement he made in front of his colleagues, he never returned. So my great-grand mother had to raise her 2 children (including my grandma) in very harsh after war conditions, with no food, they

ate acorns to survive. At the same time, my other great-grandmother on my mom`s side were very understanding, admired what our country achieved under Stalin`s leadership including industrialization of economy, victory in the Great Patriotic War, universal literacy, they understood the difficulty to rule such a vast country under difficult circumstances. So, even within one family, there were different attitudes.

5. Economic problems. During the Soviet period, Russia had a planned economy, which had both serious advantages and disadvantages. An obvious advantage was the almost complete absence of unemployment, the ability to quickly create new industries and develop new territories through the centralized distribution of resources, absence of considerable stratification of society, no crises of overproduction, and a very powerful social welfare system. On the other side, due to lack of real market competition, imperfect labor relations, low mobility of the system as a whole, the planned economy often led to shortages of goods, low quality products and inefficient use of resources. All these challenges greatly affected Soviet Russia and its people. At the same time, they also contributed to the formation of the Soviet state and its strengthening in domestic and foreign policy.

The significance of turning points in Russian history

Russia was undaunted in the person of Alexander Nevsky, who proclaimed freedom of Russian land from the danger of nomads` raids. Russia was stormy and cheerful in the person of Peter the Great, who opened the gates to the East for and brought Western ideas and technologies. And Russia was the strongest and unwavering when the Russian people defeated the Nazi Germany in the great and terrible Great Patriotic War.

Victory in the Battle of the Neva (1240). In this battle, the Novgorod army under the leadership of *Alexander Nevsky* defeated the Swedes and the knights from Estonia on the ice of the Neva River. Calculating that the Mongol conquest of Russia (1240) had deprived Novgorod of military support from other Russian cities, the Swedes, led by Earl Birger, landed at the Neva`s mouth and attempted to block Novgorod`s approach to the Baltic Sea. Alexander led an army against them and destroyed most of the Swedish force. He demonstrated tactical and leadership abilities, which ensured his status as a defender and hero of the Russian land.

Alexander Nevsky`s glorious victory over the Teutonic Order which sought to expand east into the Principality of Novgorod in the early 13th century, but it underestimated the will of the northern Russians. It was an attempt by the Teutonic Order to expand into the Principality of Novgorod and convert Orthodox Russians to Catholicism. In the Battle of Lake Peipus (1242), Russian Prince Alexander Nevsky was able to win a decisive victory over the Swedish troops, thus preventing the Swedish invasion and protecting the Russian land from foreign aggression. This became a symbol of the strength and courage of the Russian people.

Signing of a peace treaty with the Golden Horde (1252). Alexander Nevsky signed a peace treaty with the Mongolian Golden Horde, which made it possible to maintain the independence and autonomy of the Russian land from the Mongol yoke. This action helped strengthen the central government in Russia and maintain relative calm during this difficult period. Alexander Nevsky implemented the policy of compromise with the Horde. Considering open opposition to the Mongols disastrous, he hoped to use their power to fight the Western Catholic danger, which in the minds of the people of that era was perceived as a more serious threat to the Orthodox faith (the Horde was still pagan).

The victories of *Peter the Great* were of great importance for the history of Russia and its further development.

1. Battle of Poltava (1709) was the decisive victory of Peter I the Great of Russia over Charles XII of Sweden and its allies in the Great Northern War. The battle ended Sweden's status as a major power and marked the beginning of Russian supremacy in Eastern Europe. In this battle, bringing Russia important territorial gains and strengthening its role as a European power. After this victory, Russia became one of the great empires of Europe.

2. Azov campaigns (1695–1696). Peter the Great carried out this campaign to capture the city of Azov, which was controlled by the Ottoman Empire. Azov campaigns were aimed at getting access to the Azov Sea and the Black Sea. The victory in these campaigns marked the beginning of Russia's turning into a maritime power and showed that Russia is ready to compete with the great world powers and expand its territories.

3. Battle of Gangut (or Hango) (1714): The Swedish Empire, trying to recover its losses from the Battle of Poltava, attacked Russia in the Southern Baltic. However, Peter the Great managed to win this battle and strengthen Russia's control over the Baltic Sea which became an important step in its strategic development.

4. Recognition of Peter the Great as Emperor (1721): After numerous military successes and reforms, Peter the Great declared himself Emperor of Russia, which helped strengthen centralized government and transform Russia into a strong and modern empire.

The victories of Peter the Great allowed Russia to play an important role on the world stage and become one of the great powers. He made significant changes in the country's politics, culture and economy, reshaping its appearance and leading Russia into an era of modernization and progress. Therefore, the victories of Peter the Great are important for the formation of the historical identity of Russia.



Fig. 6. Peter the Great

Victory in the *Great Patriotic War* is of great importance for Russia and the entire world community.

1. Preservation of the independence and territorial integrity of Russia: Victory in the Great Patriotic War helped Russia maintain its independence and prevent the occupation of the country by Nazi Germany. Moreover, the victory led to the liberation of a number of European countries from the Nazi regime and enabled them to restore their sovereignty.

2. Victory over Nazism and Fascism. The Second World War was a confrontation between the ideology of Nazism and Fascism, which brought a lot of suffering and destruction. Victory in the Great Patriotic War played a decisive role in defeating these dangerous and destructive ideas and helped establish the principles of democracy, human rights and international law.

3. Feats of Soviet soldiers and residents of the country. The victory of the war was achieved thanks to the courage, perseverance and self-sacrifice of Soviet soldiers, as well as the contribution of civilians to the defense of the country. The exploits and sacrifices made by the Soviet people became a symbol of courage and national unity.

4. Contribution to Global peace. Victory in the Great Patriotic War changed the course of the world history. It had a huge impact on the geopolitical map of the world and determined the further development of global events and international relations, contributing to the creation of a system of collective security.

Victory in the Great Patriotic War became a symbol of the nation's strength and national pride. It left an indelible mark on the history of Russia and confirmed its role as an important global player.

Hardships Russia today and how the country is dealing with them

In the modern period, Russia is facing a number of hardships and challenges.

1. Economic problems. Sanctions, instable oil and gas prices, corruption, low efficiency of resource orientation, demographic crisis, insufficient development of innovative technologies – all pose a challenge to the Russian economy. Russia is trying to overcome these challenges and develop a more diverse, sustainable, sovereign and competitive economy.

In 2022, the Russian economy shrank by 2.1 % amid sanctions; the decline was weaker than during the pandemic. The stability was influenced by government incentives, military industry development and the reorientation of trade to Asian countries. In 2023, the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank expect a transition to economic growth of 2 % or higher. The Russian government is actively working to create a favorable investment environment and attract international investments. Economic reforms are also being carried out and the development of certain industries, such as innovative technologies and the digital economy.

2. Geopolitical Tensions. Russia has found itself in opposition to many Western countries such as the United States and the European Union over a range of issues, including Ukraine, Syria and interference in the internal affairs of other countries. This is causing geopolitical and diplomatic tensions. Diplomatic efforts are being taken: Russian authorities continue to strive for dialogue and cooperation with western partners, despite geopolitical tensions. Negotiations and peace settlements are ongoing in various controversial issues, such as the conflict in Ukraine and the Syrian civil war. However, Russia is strengthening its position in the Middle East, Asia and Africa, and is participating in a number of important alliances such as BRICS.

3. Demographic problem. Low birth rate, high mortality and problems with population migration – all this makes the demographic situation in Russia difficult. The authorities are taking steps to stimulate the birth rate and improve the standard of living of the population using national projects policy. Demographic measures are taken Russia to stimulate birth rate and improve living conditions. State programs have been introduced aimed at supporting families and motherhood, as well as creating a favorable environment for raising children. For example, there are programmes implemented for assistance to families which provide for an allowance for the first child, so that the government grant is paid monthly to the child for 18 months.

4. Terrorism and Security. Russia faces threats from terrorism and extremism. In the past, events such as terrorist attacks on the subway and Russian airports shocked the nation. Russian authorities are actively combating these threats and improving their security system.

Combating terrorism and extremist threats is conducted by strengthening security services and developing systems for preventing and countering terrorism. Joint operations are underway with other countries to combat transnational terrorism.

5. Climate Change. Like much of the world, Russia is facing the effects of climate change, including melting glaciers, an increase in the frequency of severe weather events and threats to the ecosystem. The country is committed to taking action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and combat climate change.

All these tests require efforts and development of strategies on the part of the Russian government and people to achieve sustainable development and ensure the well-being of the country and its citizens. Russia is taking measures to protect the environment and combat climate change. Work is underway to improve energy efficiency, develop renewable energy sources and protect nature.

These trends are aimed at eliminating modern challenges and ensuring stable and sustainable development of Russia. They require constant effort and cooperation of Russia and other countries.

Chapter 3

RUSSIAN PHILOSOPHY AND VALUES

Worldview is unconscious but generally coherent set of presuppositions, ideas and beliefs about the world as a whole and about the place of an individual in it, his attitude to this world, as well as beliefs, feelings and ideals based on these views that determine a person's mentality, principles of behavior and values. Worldview is formed under the influence of various factors: firstly, internal which are needs, interests, personal experience, level of education, etc. Secondly, external which include state policy, family practices, educational background, society values, social environment, media, language, geographical or territorial location, etc.

Today it is becoming increasingly clear that without a support of values, the world finds itself in a state of turbulence. Many nations and regions of the world understand this quite well. The global mainstream today is to search for civilizationally identical values foundations that determine the positioning of states and civilizations in a new coordinate system.

Development of Russian philosophy

When did Russian philosophy begin? There are two diametrically opposed views. Some researchers believe that Russian philosophy begins in ancient times, when the Russian Slavs started to translate ancient Greek texts with Christian content. Others believe that Russian philosophy begins with the reign of Peter I, from the moment when Russia became more involved in European processes. If we consider the first point of view, then the first monuments of ancient Russian literature can be attributed to Russian philosophy, such as "The Tale of Law and Grace", "The Tale of Igor's Campaign". The genre "Tale" provided a wide field for the author's activities, and in most cases the identity of the author of the work is still unknown. For example, we still don't know the author of "The Tale of Igor's Campaign." But what is important for us is that the authors thought about the fate of the Fatherland, about the fate of the nation, this is precisely the distinctive feature of ancient Russian philosophy.

Moscow, third Rome. If we talk about the medieval school Russian philosophical school and adhere to the point of view that there was philosophy in ancient Rus, then we can recall the monk Philotheus, the author of the famous concept "Moscow, third Rome" dating back to the early 16th century.



Fig. 7. Moscow, third Rome

By and large, this concept is an ideology of philosophical content. Moscow cannot be any Rome, neither the first, nor the second, nor even the third. But, Philotheus in a truly philosophical sense designates Moscow as a Christian state. He explains this by saying that the first two Romes fell, and explains why (because they stopped observing the precepts of the Christian faith and stuck in sins). As a result, these great powers were broken, and Moscow, having adopted the light of Christ's teaching, took it in the correct Orthodox direction. Based on this, Moscow became genuine Rome.

This is a distinctive feature of Russian philosophy. All Western European philosophy grew out of antiquity, where the transition was harmonious and natural. This can be explained by the fact that during that period one civilization replaced another, the problems of general theoretical knowledge of the world were equally characteristic of all Western European philosophy. And in Russia, philosophy was primarily perceived as a social and ethical teaching, as a worldview.

Anarchism. The activities of Mikhail Bakunin and Petr Kropotkin can be considered a unique phenomenon of Russian philosophy, which has become global. They introduced such a concept as anarchism; they believed that the state oppresses the people. There is some misperception of anarchism as lack of order, which is absolutely false. The idea of anarchism is the idea of a society where every citizen understands that he should not engage in illegal actions, because he is a free person, and everyone is able to limit himself, and the state is not needed for any restriction or control. This idea by its nature is an absolutely idealistic utopia.

The ideology of *Narodnichestvo* (Russian populism) was based on a system of views about a special, "original" path of Russia's development towards socialism, bypassing capitalism. The ob-

jective conditions for the emergence of such an idea in Russia were the weak development of capitalism and the presence of a peasant land community. The foundations of this “Russian socialism” were formulated in the 1840s and 1850s by Alexander Herzen. The defeat of the revolutions of 1848–1849 in the countries of Western Europe impressed Herzen deeply. It gave him disbelief in European socialism and disillusionment with it. Comparing the fates of Russia and the West, Herzen concluded that socialism must first establish itself in Russia and the peasant land commune would become its main “cell”. According to Herzen, peasant communal land tenure, the peasant idea of the right to land and secular self-government were going to be the basis for building a socialist society. This is how Herzen’s Russian (or communal) socialism arose.

Herzen’s “Russian socialism” was oriented towards the peasantry as its social base, therefore it was also called “peasant socialism”. Its main goals were the emancipation of the peasants with land without any redemption, the elimination of landlord ownership, the introduction of peasant communal self-government, independent of the local authorities, and the democratization of the country. “To preserve the community and liberate the individual, to extend rural and volost self-government to cities, to the state as a whole, while maintaining national unity, to develop private rights and preserve the indivisibility of the land – these are the main issues of the revolution”, Herzen wrote. The Narodniks subsequently adopted these ideas of Herzen, therefore he is called the founder, the “forerunner” of Narodnichestvo.

The idea of communal socialism formulated by Herzen was developed by Nikolay Gavrilovich Chernyshevsky. But unlike Herzen Chernyshevsky looked at the peasant commune differently. For him the commune was a patriarchal institution of Russian life which was first to play the role of a “comradely form of production” alongside capitalist production. Then it should oust the capitalist economy and finally establish collective production and consumption. After that, the community was to disappear as a form of industrial association.

Russian life is significantly different from the life of Western European countries. *Petr Chaadaev* noticed this back in the 18th century in his “Philosophical Letters”. For this work several years later he was placed in a psychiatric asylum, due to the fact that the authorities could not put him in prison, since he did not break a single law, the poet openly declares that “...Orthodoxy is a brake on social development, and Catholicism, on the contrary, has formed a free-thinking person...”. According to the philosopher, this is why Western European civilization is significantly ahead of us in technical and social development. At the same time, Petr Chaadaev did not believe that the entire structure of the Western world could be transferred to Russia.

Slavophiles. For almost the entire 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, there was a main dispute among the Russian thinkers, between so called Slavophiles and Westerners. Slavophiles include Konstantin S. Aksakov, Ivan S. Aksakov, Alexander A. Kireev, Alexei S. Khomyakov. Slavophiles believed that Russia has an objective advantage, because the Orthodox people are spiritually richer than the peoples of Western European civilization. Russia has a fraternal love of peace, in contrast to domination and slavery, money which permeate the West. They had a negative attitude towards the revolution and advocated the abolition of serfdom “from above” with the provision of land plots to peasant communities for ransom.

New religious consciousness. New religious consciousness is primarily associated with the activities of such philosophers as Nikplai A. Berdyaev, Dmitriy S. Merezhkovsky, Vasilii V. Rozanov. These philosophers said that the world is changing; therefore, everything around us has cate-

gorically changed. This means that a person's idea of what Christianity should be like in an ideal world has also changed.

Nikplai A. Berdyaev and Dmitriy Merezhkovsky say that a person needs to change something in his consciousness. He must realize that he cannot give up faith, because the idea of God is the basis of human civilization. For example, if there is no God, then in this case nothing restrains a person: he or she can commit any illegal actions when law enforcement agencies do not see it.



Fig. 8. Sobornost`

What can stop a person in such a situation? The answer is simple: the idea of God. But it must be applied to new conditions. It is necessary for religion to understand that a new person requires new religious approaches. It was the new Russian religious philosophy that tried to find God. Therefore, according to the Slavophiles, Russia has its own, independent and promising path.

The main philosophical category that Slavophiles introduce into circulation is the category of Sobornost` (conciliarity – “spiritual community of many jointly-living people”). In their opinion, the unity of individuals is a unique phenomenon for Russian society. On the one hand, people do a common cause, have a common faith, have the same worldview, which means that in this collective unity a morally mature personality is developed.

Westerners. In opposition to the Slavophiles were figures such as Vissarion G. Belinsky, Nikolai P. Ogarev, Alexander I. Herzen, who believed that there was no Russian path – they were called Westerners. These philosophers believed that the problem was that Russia was lagging behind developed Western countries in its growth. Reduction of technological gap between Russia and Western European countries was the way out of this situation.

As Alexander Herzen said: “We were like a two-faced Janus, looking in different directions. Westerners looked to the West, Slavophiles to the East, but the body was common and the heart was the same for all”. Because both Westerners and Slavophiles wanted one thing: Russia to be a free country, where an individual could be prosperous and form the worldview independently.

Marxist-Leninist philosophy. After the revolution of 1917, radical changes took place in Russian philosophy. After the Bolsheviks came to power, Marxist-Leninist philosophical school was established. All other philosophical ideas were recognized as bourgeois or hostile. In contrast, Marxist-Leninist ideology was developing and gaining power. Marxist-Leninists reject anarchism and left communism, as well as reformist socialism and social democracy. They oppose fascism and liberal democracy, and are anti-imperialists.

Marxism-Leninism holds that a communist revolution is needed to replace capitalism. A vanguard party, through democratic centralism, would seize power on behalf of the proletariat and establish a one-party socialist state, called the dictatorship of the proletariat. The state shall control the means of production; suppress opposition, counter-revolution and the bourgeoisie. The state shall promote Soviet collectivism; pave the way for an eventual communist society that would be classless.

After the collapse of the USSR, the Russian Federation moved for some time in the direction of *abandoning its own axiological philosophy*. The obtained results of this decision in the economy, social sphere, culture, and demography showed the strategic fault of this course. Today Russia is raising the question of civilizationally common values both at the level of society and the highest state authorities. We should say that strengthening of state policy for the preservation of traditional values was initiated only in 2020 by a nationwide vote to amend the Constitution of Russia.

Traditional Russian Values

So, the new text of the Basic Law of Russia aims at strengthening the traditional values. On November 9, 2022, the President of the Russian Federation signed the Decree “On approval of the Fundamentals of State Policy to Preserve and Strengthen Traditional Russian Spiritual and Moral Values,” according to which the list of Russian values was approved and it includes: Life, Dignity, Human rights and freedoms, Patriotism, Service to the Fatherland, High moral ideals, Close-knit family, Constructive labour, Human rights and freedoms, Priority of spiritual over the material, Humanism, Mercifulness, Justice, Collectivism, Mutual assistance and mutual respect, Historical memory and continuity of generations, Unity of the peoples of Russia.

Also listed are such valuable ideas for our state as Understanding and Consensus, the Russian language, a guardian state status, and the status of a protector state.

This is a strategic planning document that defines the goals and objectives of the state in the field of protecting traditional values, culture and historical memory. The Decree lists the measures that the country must take in response to existing threats. Traditional values are moral guidelines that shape the worldview of Russian citizens. They are passed on from generation to generation, underlying the all-Russian civic identity and a single cultural space. They are aimed at strengthening civil unity; manifest themselves in the spiritual, historical and cultural development of the multinational people of Russia.

Unity. More than 190 nationalities live in Russia and speak more than 300 languages, united by a history that became common to everyone (internal unrest, coups d'état, harsh climatic conditions, etc.). A common destiny has led and is leading Russian people forward and has allowed to create a common idea, common future, since only in the unity of its people does Russia gain true power.

The significance of this idea was confirmed by the inclusion of *National Unity Day* in the list of public holidays, which has been celebrated in Russia since 2005. November 4. Why this particular date? On November 4, 1612, the people's militia led by the zemstvo elder Kuzma Minin and Prince Dmitry Pozharsky liberated Moscow from Polish invaders. With this, the long period of the Time of Troubles in Russia ended. The soldiers of the people's militia demonstrated an example of heroism and unity of the entire people, regardless of origin, religion and position in society. Russian people have always united when a threat loomed over the state. It is enough to recall such key events in the history of our state as: Battle of the Ice 1242, Battle of Kulikovo 1380, the First and Second People's Militia in the fight against Polish intervention during the Time of Troubles 1611–1612, Patriotic War of 1812 with Napoleon Bonaparte, and Great Patriotic War 1941–1945. The united contribution of all the peoples of Russia ensured the Victory.

The very way Russia grew, naturally, and not through destructive conquests like the colonial countries, made it possible to initially lay the foundations for the unity of the Russian people. Fate itself predetermined a great civilizational, educational, liberation mission for Russia. Dozens of countries gained statehood and independence thanks to Russian weapons, Russian political art, and Russian generosity.

Historical memory. One of the traditional values is historical memory, so we always remember and honor our heroes. Common memory, a common value attitude towards history makes us united. For example Victory Day, May 9, Immortal Regiment procession takes place in all Russian cities to commemorate relatives who fought in World War II.

The memory of the difficult but great past of our Motherland, the awareness of its great present and the desire for an even greater future allow us today to accept the challenges of fate with dignity, and with common efforts to forge new glorious pages in the history of the state.



Fig. 9. Immortal Regiment

Mercifulness, Justice. For a Russian person, the distinctive character traits are compassion, empathy, desire to help, a heightened sense of justice, and generosity. Russia has always provided and continues to provide assistance to those who need it. The same unity of human souls manifests itself at the interpersonal level (“Volunteers of Russia”, Search and Rescue Team “Lisa Alert”, “Search Movement of Russia” are commonly known and are becoming more and more popular with Russian people participating in them).

Constructive Labour. Constructive Labour is an important concept for the people of Russia as creators. This value is associated with the development of new things, with the great discoverers and trailblazers of Motherland, with great science, with the selfless work of Russian people, with the amazing tenacity of the people in achieving their goals, with the ability to “catch up and surpass”. Some examples of constructive labour include discoveries of Siberia and the Far East by Khabarov, Dezhnev, Atlasov, Bering; great northern expedition to map the territories of Siberia and the Far East; Trans-Siberian Railway which took 25 years to build; Stakhanov movement (Stakhanov produced 10 times more coal per day than the norm); the Baikal-Amur Mainline of more than 4000 km; the White Sea-Baltic Canal; hydroelectric power stations and nuclear power plants; oil and gas industrial complexes; the Crimean Bridge; aviation and fleet (including icebreakers); the Olympics of 1980, 2014; wide subway network; space exploration.

Close-knit family. The key to a close-knit family is commitment to family values, i.e. what is important, respected by all family members is passed down from generation to generation. Examples of family values are communication, respect, confidence, feeling of importance, ability to forgive, traditions, responsibility. The Constitution of the Russian Federation enshrines the provision of marriage as a union of a man and a woman, support for motherhood, childhood, paternity and family.

A strong family is a symbol of consensus. Among the attributive characteristics of consensus one can highlight mercy, unity of views, goodness, high moral ideals, and humanism. Examples of consensus in Russian society are: religious tolerance, respect for views and beliefs; the relationship between the state and society where the people as the only source of power; conciliar traditions of the Russian people; the “Russian soul” is expressed in hospitality, generosity, altruism; traditions and rituals common to society.

Priority of the spiritual over the material. Recognition of the priority of the spiritual over the material as a value is a change in the nature of the Russian state itself. State recognizes the primacy of certain higher meanings, strives to achieve them, and therefore has a goal, a mission, a huge moral choice. This means that the state is focused on serving the Fatherland, nobility, love, friendship, compassion, mercy. So, culture, education, economics, politics, media, and even defense and security should now be based on this entire totality. A state that has chosen such a mission for itself becomes sacred.

What is Russia’s mission? According to Russian President Vladimir Putin, “Russia’s global mission is to strengthen and develop the Russian world. It is so many-sided – the Russian world is huge. We didn’t create it. Our mission is to strengthen it, develop it and make it attractive for our citizens, for the whole world”.

Russia as one of active players of international security for the world and for itself, as a new source of stability based on peacekeeping, mutually beneficial cooperation, and respect. The spiritual mission of Russia is service to an idea. The idea of justice for one and all, the idea of protect-

ing the weak and oppressed, the idea of harmonious development with nature and the surrounding world, the idea of enlightenment, the idea of humanism and philanthropy.

Sovereignty. The Russian Federation considers traditional values as the basis of Russian society, allowing it to protect and strengthen Russia's sovereignty (internal and external). "Sovereignty is a very expensive thing, and today, one might say, it is exclusive in the world. For Russia, sovereignty is not a political luxury, not a source of pride, but a condition for survival in this world. Russia is a country that cannot exist without protecting its sovereignty. It will either be independent, or most likely it will not exist at all" (Vladimir Putin, Valdai Forum, 2017). The history of Russia from the very beginning of statehood is a history of struggle, winning and defending one's sovereignty, the right to be independent in choosing one's destiny, faith, and path.

Today Russia is doing precisely that: protecting its sovereignty and building a solid foundation for its stability in the future. Fundamentals of state policy for the preservation and strengthening of traditional Russian values. On November 9, 2022, the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin signed Decree No. 809, which approved the *Fundamentals of State Policy for the preservation and strengthening of traditional Russian spiritual and moral values*.

These Fundamentals are designated as a "strategic planning document in the field of ensuring national security", based on the National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation, the Information Security Doctrine of the Russian Federation, the Strategy for Combating Extremism in the Russian Federation until 2025, the Strategy of the State National Policy of the Russian Federation for the period until 2025, Fundamentals of state cultural policy, Strategy for the development of the information society in the Russian Federation for 2017–2030 and "May decrees" of 2018.

According to the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation, *traditional values are threatened* by:

- activities of extremist and terrorist organizations, individual media of mass communication;
- actions of the United States of America and other unfriendly foreign states, a number of transnational corporations and NGOs;
- activities of some organizations and individuals in Russia.

The destructive ideological influence on Russians, which leads to the "implantation of an alien and destructive system of ideas and values," includes:

- cult of selfishness, permissiveness, immorality;
- denial of the ideals of patriotism, service to the Fatherland, the natural continuation of life, the value of a close-knit family, marriage, large families, constructive labour, Russia's positive contribution to world history and culture;
- destruction of the traditional family through the promotion of non-traditional sexual relationships.

The spread of destructive ideology entails the following risks:

- a) creating conditions for self-destruction of society, weakening family, friendly and other social ties;
- b) increasing social and cultural stratification of the society, reducing the role of social partnership, devaluing the ideas of creative work and mutual assistance;
- c) harm to the moral health of people, imposing ideas that imply the denial of human dignity and the value of human life;

- d) introduction of antisocial stereotypes of behavior, spread of an immoral lifestyle, permissiveness and violence, an increase in the use of alcohol and drugs;
- e) formation of a society that neglects spiritual and moral values;
- f) distortion of historical truth, historical memory;
- g) denial of Russian identity, weakening of the all-Russian civic identity and unity of the multinational people of Russia, creating conditions for ethnic and religious conflicts;
- h) undermining trust in state institutions, discrediting the idea of serving the Fatherland, creating a negative attitude towards military service and public service in general.

Solving problems in the field of preserving and strengthening traditional values should be carried out in the following main areas.

1. Adjustment of strategic planning documents in order to more effectively solve problems of preserving and strengthening traditional values, determining guidelines for choosing goals and the most effective mechanisms for ensuring national interests in this area.
2. Guaranteeing interdepartmental coordination of activities to protect traditional values.
3. Improving the system of state support for projects in the field of culture and education, taking into account the goals of state policy to preserve and strengthen traditional values.
4. Development and improvement of forms and methods of countering risks associated with the spread of destructive ideology in media.
5. Improving the forms and methods of upbringing and education of children and youth in accordance with the goals of state policy to preserve and strengthen traditional values.
6. Increase the effectiveness of the activities of scientific, educational, and cultural organizations to protect historical truth, preserve historical memory, and counter the falsification of history.
7. Improve the activities of law enforcement agencies to prevent and suppress illegal actions aimed at spreading destructive ideology.

The first practical steps towards preserving traditional values and preventing the development of destructive ideology have already been taken. For example, in 2022, an article was included in the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation establishing criminal liability for desecration of symbols of Russia's military glory, insulting the memory of defenders of the Fatherland, or humiliation of the honor and dignity of a veteran of the Great Patriotic War, committed publicly. In 2023, a law banning LGBT propaganda was adopted. In 2023, administrative liability for the promotion of pedophilia was adopted. 2024 was declared the National Year of the Family.

Chapter 4

POLITICAL AND STATE STRUCTURE OF RUSSIA

In the social sciences, the term *State Structure* is used in a broad and narrow sense. The State structure in a broad sense is understood as the entire structure of the state – the organization of power, including the system of government bodies, legal status of the individuals, etc.; in a narrow sense, this is its territorial organization. The Russian Federation differs significantly from all known modern federal states. From the very beginning of its formation, the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic was characterized by the fact that it was a constitutional, national-territorial, asymmetrical and decentralized federation.

Government System. Power always means, on the one hand, the imposition of someone's will, and on the other, submission to it. The state dictates its will to citizens and, accordingly, to society as a whole. Therefore, according to Max Weber, the State Power is defined as the leadership of society with the help of the state apparatus, relying on special detachments of armed people, and special institutions. State power is a type of political power, because the latter is exercised not only by the state, but also by other parts of the political system of society: local governments, political parties, social and civil society movements, etc.

The State power applies to the entire society; is of a public-political nature (designed to perform public functions, solve general problems; relies on state coercion; carried out by special persons (officials, politicians, etc.); establishes a tax system; organizes the population on a territory; is characterized by legitimacy and legality. The legitimacy of state power is of great importance, i.e. its formation on the basis of the law and taking into account the expression of public will.

Political power and state power differ. Political power occurs in a society divided into classes; is implemented through political institutions such as states, parties, political elites; can operate outside of one state. State Power is carried out on a state scale, and it extends to its entire territory and its entire population.

Fundamentals of the Constitutional System of Russia

The Constitution is the entire system of law in Russia and it determines the meaning and content of other laws. The current Constitution was adopted 30 years ago on December 12, 1993, but this is not the first one. The years of adoption of constitutions reflect the stages of the nation's development and historical processes. In the more than 1000-year history of its existence, our state first received a constitution only in 1918. (Constitution of the RSFSR – Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic). During the Soviet period, three constitutions were adopted replacing each other (in 1925, 1937 and 1978).

As mentioned above, on *December 12, 1993*, the current Constitution of the Russian Federation was adopted by popular vote (referendum), which is in force to this day.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation is a single political and legal act that emerged with supreme legal force, direct action and supremacy throughout the territory of the Russian Federation, on the basis of which the people approved the principles of the structure and state of society, determine the main subjects of state power, mechanism for its implementation, and secured protected economic rights, freedom and responsibilities of a person and citizen.

The Constitution provisions are primary, initial and fundamental. So, all other legal acts in force in Russia must fully comply with the Constitution.



Fig. 10. The Constitution of the Russian Federation

Compared to the constitutions of European states, the Constitution of the Russian Federation is a relatively short – about nine and a half thousand words. Structurally, it consists of a preamble and two sections: the Constitution itself and the second section “Final and transitional provisions”. Section 1 includes 9 chapters and 137 articles.

Let us look at some *interesting facts* about the Russian constitution. In the Constitution of the Russian Federation, there is not a single word that would be borrowed from any foreign language. It is entirely written using only native Russian words. The most important copy of this document is kept in the Moscow Kremlin, in the presidential library. It is used for only one ceremony of the presidential inauguration.

Principles of the Constitution of the Russian Federation:

- 1) the principle of Democracy (people`s sovereignty);
- 2) the principle of Separation of powers;
- 3) the principle of a Republican form of government;

- 4) the principle of the priority of Human rights and freedoms;
- 5) the principle of Federalism;
- 6) the principle of the Rule-of-law state;
- 7) the principle of Social Welfare state;
- 8) the principle of Secular state.

The doctrine of *separation of powers* began to develop rapidly during the period of decomposition of feudal relations and the development of capitalism in Western Europe in the 17th – 18th centuries. Its founder is the French thinker C. Montesquieu. He believed that each branch of government has means of control over the other, and this control is mutual.

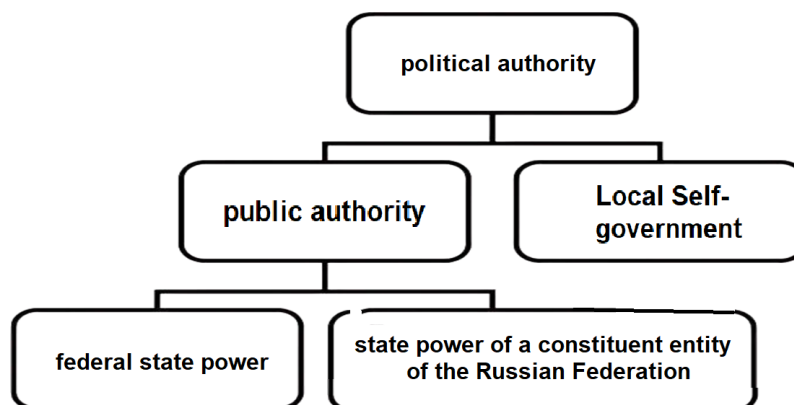


Fig. 11. The principle of Separation of Powers in the Russian Federation

The purpose of each branch of government is as follows: the legislative branch creates laws, changes and repeals them; the executive branch implements laws passed by the legislature; the judiciary “punishes crimes and resolves conflicts of businesses and individuals”. The freedom and security of people depend primarily on the functioning of the judiciary. The task of judges is to ensure that their decisions and sentences “are always just an accurate application of the text of the law”.

The legislative branch plays a dominant role, while the other two authorities implement laws and their activities are of a subordinate nature. According to Art. 10 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, State Authority in the Russian Federation “is carried out on the basis of Separation of Powers: division into legislative, executive and judicial”. Due to the specifics of the territorial structure and the implementation of the principle of federalism, State Power in the Russian Federation is exercised at two levels: – federal and regional (level of constituent entities of the Russian Federation).

At the federal level, *legislative power* is exercised by the Federal Assembly, the Parliament of the Russian Federation, which is a representative body. The Federal Assembly consists of two chambers: the Federation Council and the State Duma. The Functions of the Parliament are legislative and constituent (participates in the formation of other supreme authorities, for example, gives consent to the appointment of the Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation, the Prosecutor General, etc.). The Parliament approves the budget ratifies international treaties, controls the work of the Government of the Russian Federation, etc.

At the regional level, the legislative power of the subjects of the Russian Federation is represented by republican legislative Assemblies, regional Dumas, etc. They may differ in name, but

their powers are uniform and, for the most part, correspond to the powers of the federal parliament. For example, the legislative body in the Volgograd region is the Volgograd Regional Duma.

The main purpose of the *Executive branch* is the execution of laws, their implementation in the process of governing the society. The executive power is represented by an extensive system of government bodies varying according to the powers they perform. Executive authorities are based on strict vertical subordination: higher authorities have the right to give mandatory instructions to lower authorities. Consequently, the executive branch is characterized by a strict hierarchy.

Executive power in the Russian Federation is exercised by the Government of the Russian Federation which is a collegial body of general competence, consisting of the Chairman of the Government, his deputies and heads of federal ministries. The system of executive authorities also includes specialist government agency (sectoral executive authorities) such as federal ministries and agencies.

The executive authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation are the Governments of republics, federal cities and some regions, and regional Administrations. Also, the system of executive authorities of a subject of the Russian Federation includes the highest official of the subject (for example, the head of the Republic of Tatarstan, the Governor of the Volgograd region, etc.), Government Agencies of Special Competence, ministries, committees, departments, etc.

The *Judicial branch* of government is represented by a system of federal courts and courts of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

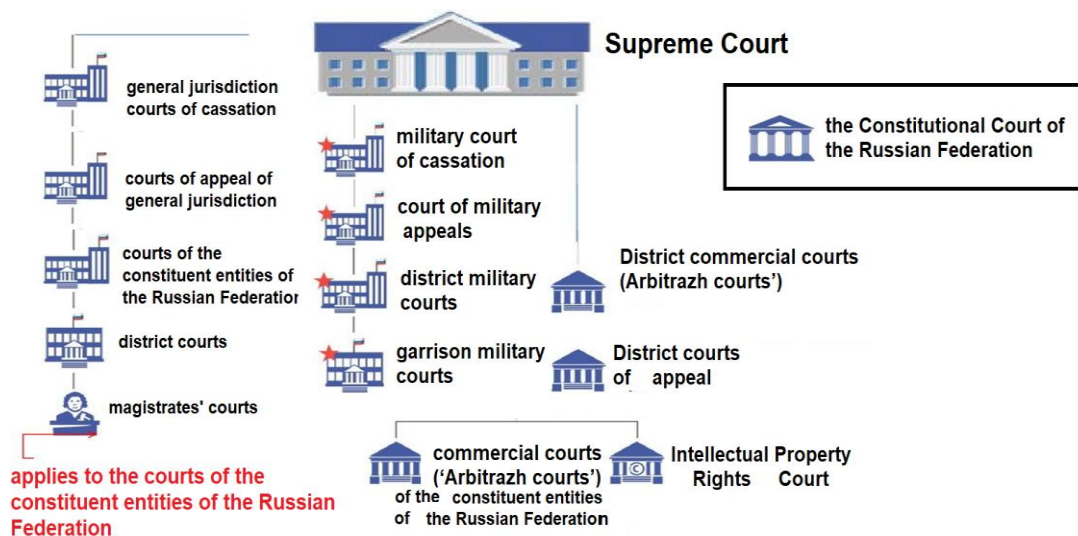


Fig. 12. The Judicial Power: System of courts

The federal court system includes:

- The Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation, the highest court which resolves cases on the compliance of the Constitution of the Russian Federation with regulations of the federation and its subjects, resolves disputes between government bodies at various levels, interprets the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

- The Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, the highest court that presides over the courts of general jurisdiction or regular courts (hearing criminal, administrative and civil cases), commercial (or “arbitrazh”) courts carry out trials in cases of economic disputes, military and specialized courts.

- Cassation courts of general jurisdiction.
- Courts of Appeal of general jurisdiction.
- Supreme Courts of republics, regional courts, courts of federal cities, courts of autonomous regions and autonomous districts.
- District Courts.
- Military Courts.
- Specialized Courts (e.g. Intellectual Property Court).
- Commercial Courts of districts, Commercial Courts of appeal, arbitration courts of constituent entities of the Russian Federation and Specialized Arbitrazh courts that make up the system of federal Commercial Courts.

The courts of the Constituent Entities of the Russian Federation include magistrates' courts, which are courts of general jurisdiction of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation (lower level).

Judges are independent and subject only to the Constitution of the Russian Federation and the Federal Law. At the same time, they are irreplaceable and inviolable.

A special place in the system of government bodies is occupied by the *President of the Russian Federation*, who is the head of state, the guarantor] of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the rights and freedoms of man and citizen. In accordance with the established procedure, he takes measures to protect the sovereignty of Russia, its independence and territorial integrity, and ensures the coordinated functioning and interaction of government bodies.

The President of the Russian Federation determines the main directions of the state's domestic and international policies, represents Russia in international relations. Not formally belonging to any branch of government, the President acts as their coordinator and is the most important link in the system of "checks and balances".

The Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation, the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation, the Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation, the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Russian Federation and a number of other government bodies that perform important functions in the functioning of the system of Separation of Powers also remain "outside the scope" of the branches of government.

Thus, the principle of Separation of Powers enables the branches to restrain and control each other, preventing excessive concentration of power in the hands of one person or body. This creates additional legal guarantees that prevent the development of authoritarian tendencies in the state, ensuring freedom in society and the protection of individual rights.

Fundamentals of the Constitutional System of the Russian Federation. Russian state is humanistic. Secondly, the duty of the state to recognize and respect person's right and freedoms. The Russian state has some specific fundamental features which include democracy, federalism, rule of law, and the republican form of government, the fact that it is a social and secular state.

It is recognized that the people of the Russian Federation is sovereign and the only source of power. There is separation of responsibilities between federal and regional government borders, recognition and guarantee of local self-government as an independent level of public authority. Social and economic, as well as political integrity of the Russian Federation includes the unity of economic space, single currency – ruble, freedoms of economic activity and support for competition and ideological diversity, political pluralism.

Federalism in Russia is, first of all, a state organization type of national relations. Russian federalism ensures the sovereignty of nations living on the territory of the Russian Federation. The Russian Federation consists of republics, territories, regions, cities of federal significance, autonomous regions, autonomous districts which are equal subjects of the Russian Federation. The principle of federalism ensures the state integrity, the unity of the system of state power, separation of authority of the state power of the Russian Federation and its constituent entities.

In relations with federal government bodies, all subjects of the Russian Federation have equal rights which are aimed at ensuring equality and self-determination of peoples in the Russian Federation.

The sovereignty of a nation means its supremacy and independence in resolving issues of its internal life and relationships with other nations, its free expression of will in choosing the form of national statehood.

Russian federalism is also a form of democratization of governance. Decentralization of state power and its distribution among regions is an important guarantee of democracy in government. In such conditions, the center is deprived of its monopoly on power and cannot use it arbitrarily; it is controlled by the system of “checks and balances”.

The starting principles of the national-state, national-territorial and administrative-territorial structure of the Russian Federation are the following principles enshrined in Part 3 of Article 5 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

State integrity of the Russian Federation. This means that the Russian Federation is an integral, united and indivisible state; its subjects do not have the right to leave the Russian Federation. The Preamble of the Constitution of the Russian Federation states that the multinational people of the Russian Federation preserve the historically established state unity. The integrity of the Russian Federation is presented in various aspects: in terms of territoriality – the territory of the Russian Federation is the totality of the territories of all subjects of the Russian Federation; economically – there is a single currency on the entire territory of the Russian Federation; socially – the entire population of the Russian Federation has the same standards of living, etc.

Unity of the system of state power. A unified system of power is manifested in the sovereignty of the Russian Federation, in the presence of federal government bodies whose powers extend to the entire territory; in the supremacy of the federal Constitution and federal laws. Subjects of the Russian Federation enjoy significant independence in the exercise of state power. However, they must recognize the constitutional division of jurisdiction and powers between them and the federation as a whole, the supremacy of the federal Constitution and laws.

Distinctions of subjects of jurisdiction and powers between government bodies of the Russian Federation and government bodies of its subjects are ensured. The Constitution of the Russian Federation determines, firstly, the subjects of the exclusive jurisdiction of the Russian Federation, i.e. the range of issues on which decisions are made only by government bodies of the Russian Federation; secondly, subjects of joint jurisdiction of the Russian Federation and its constituent entities; thirdly, the Constitution of the Russian Federation enshrines the right of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation to independently make decisions on issues that are not within the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation and do not fall under their joint jurisdiction. At the same time, disputes about competence between state bodies of the Federation and state authorities of its subjects are resolved by the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation.

Equality and self-determination of the peoples

The principle of equality and self-determination of the peoples of the Russian Federation. The importance of this principle is emphasized in the Preamble of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, which states that Russia is a multinational state and its federal structure reflects this. Numerous national states and national-state formations in the Russian Federation are considered as various forms of national statehood, as a form of exercise by nations and nationalities of the right to self-determination. Currently, the Russian Federation includes 21 republics, 1 autonomous region and 5 autonomous districts.

Equality of subjects of the Russian Federation

This principle of the federal structure of the Russian Federation was first enshrined in paragraph 4 of Article 5 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation in a rather unique form. Firstly, in the equality of their rights in relations with federal government bodies; secondly, within the constitutionally established equal limits of competence of subjects of all types, equally limited competence of the Russian Federation; thirdly, in equal representation of all subjects in the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation.

In accordance with the Constitution, the concept of government of the Russian Federation is based on a three-level organization of public authority. The people of the Russian Federation exercise their power directly (by direct expression of will) and through the system of public power, which is exercised in Russia in the forms of state power of the Russian Federation, state power of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation (regional power) and local self-government (municipal authorities). Each of these levels of public authority is organizationally separate, i.e. independent within the limits of his competence.

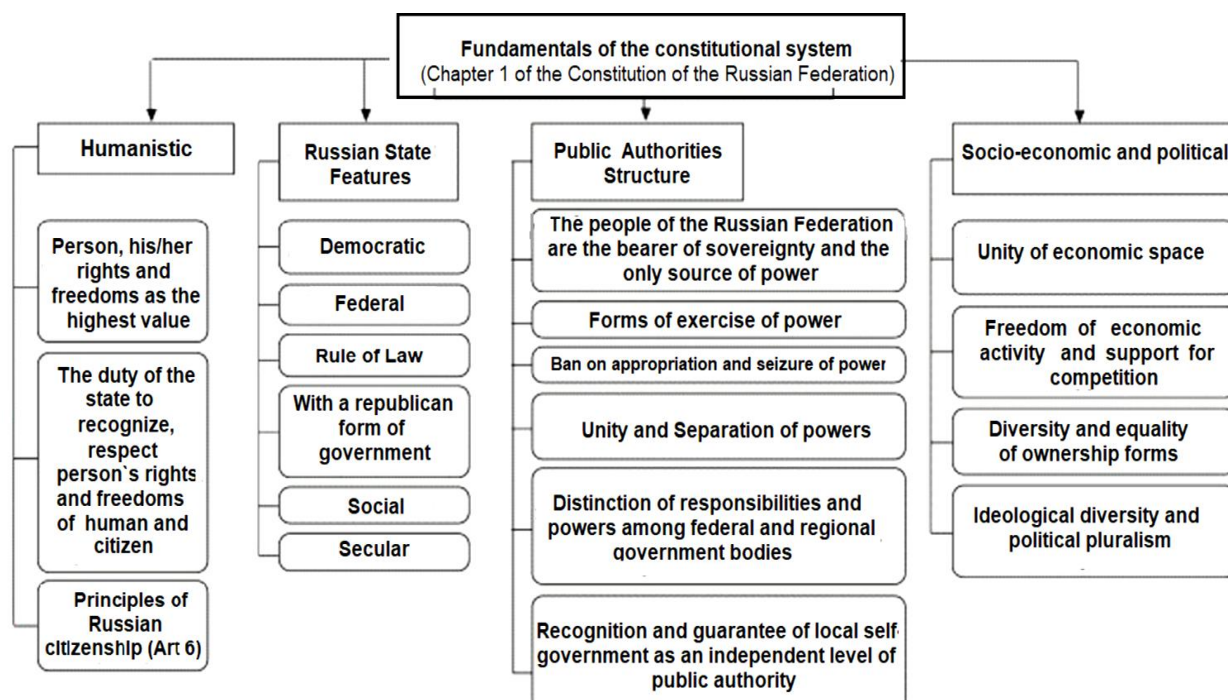


Fig. 13. Fundamentals of the Constitutional System

The formation of public authorities at various levels by the population ensures that the interests of various groups of citizens are respected. And the lack of administrative subordination of state

authorities and local governments ensures their interaction as independent representatives of the interests of the population. This creates conditions for the most adequate reflection by the system of public authorities of the diverse, including competing, interests of various territorial communities.

The mandatory existence of federal government bodies, government bodies of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation and local self-government bodies as independent government bodies expressing the interests of various territorial communities is laid down in the Constitution of the Russian Federation. This is a federal guarantee of the democratic organization of public power in the Russian.

Federalism

The Constitution of the Russian Federation of 1993 established a Republican Form of government in Russia. In practice, it is a mixed presidential and parliamentary republic with strong Presidential power.

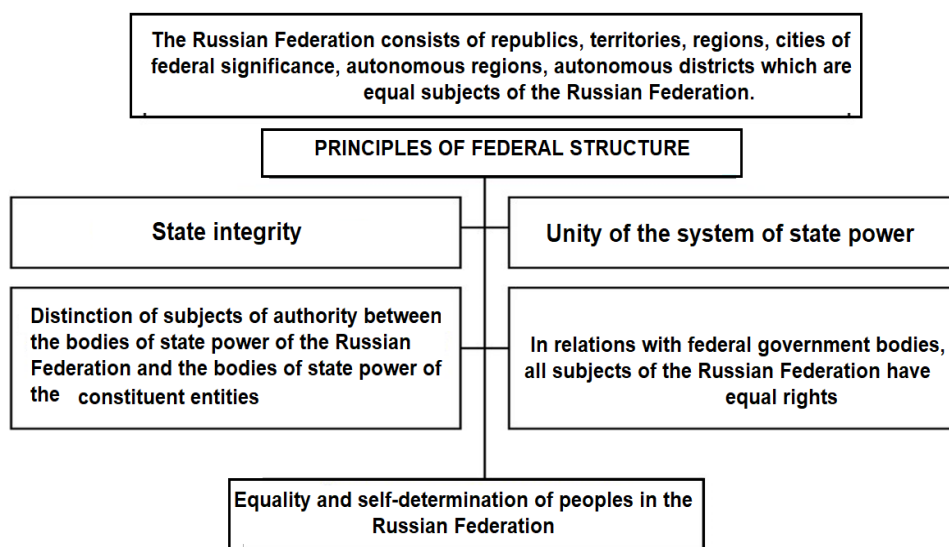


Fig. 14. Federalism

The balance of powers is organized in such a way that the President forms the Government of the Russian Federation. At the same time, the State Duma gives its consent to the appointment of the Chairman of the Government. The State Duma has the right to seek the resignation of the government by expressing NO confidence in it (Part 3, Article 117). The State Duma cannot be dissolved on the grounds provided for in Article 117 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation within a year after its election (Part 3 of Article 109).

Rule of Law State

The idea of a rule of law state is its consistent democracy, assertion of sovereignty of the people as a source of power, and subordination of the state to society.

Social State

Its policy is aimed at creating conditions that ensure decent life and freedoms, labor and health of people; support of disabled and elderly citizens, minimum wage guaranteed by the social welfare system. State support is provided for family and children. A system of funds is established by the state and non-government entities for the purpose of accumulating funds with their subsequent direction for social support of Russian citizens in need. They include Social Insurance Fund, Unemployment Fund, Pension Fund, and the Statutory Social Insurance Fund.

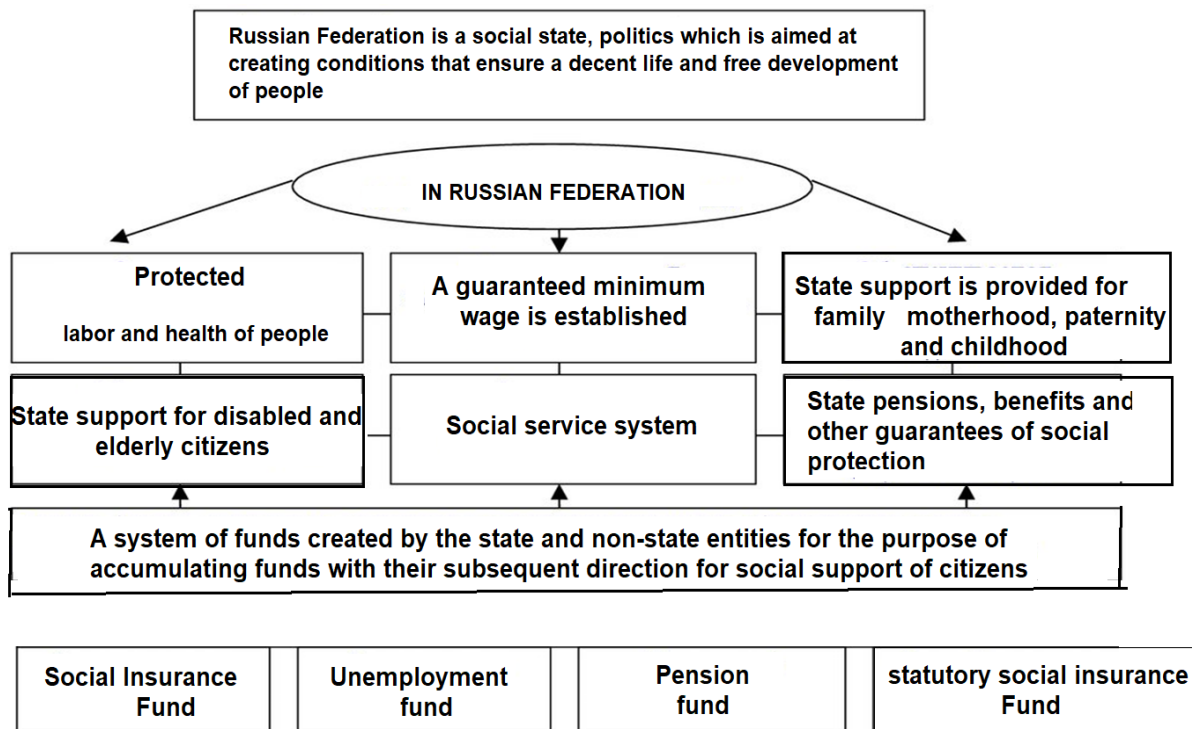


Fig. 15. Social State

The Russian Federation is a Secular State

The Russian Federation does not interfere with a citizen's determination of his attitude to religion, does not impose on religious associations the performance of functions of state authorities and local self-government. The state does not interfere with the activities of religious associations if it does not contradict the law. It prohibits officials of state authorities, local self-government, and military personnel from using their official position to form a certain attitude towards religion

The state ensures the secular nature of education in state and municipal educational institutions. Ideological diversity is presence of various ideological movements, concepts, etc. in society. The right of individuals, social groups, political parties and associations is respected. People can freely develop theories, views regarding the economic, political, legal structure of Russia, be active in introducing ideology into the practical sphere, publicly defend their ideological views, conduct active polemics with other ideologies.

Political diversity is creating equal opportunities to participate in the political process for all social and political structures and other associations whose activities are political in nature and within the framework of the Constitution of the Russian Federation. Political diversity is expressed in a multi-party system. 25 political parties are officially registered in the Russian Federation as of 2024.

Local Self-government in the Russian Federation

Local self-government ensures participation of the population in solving local affairs, management of municipal property and financial resources of local government. Local self-government ensures the development of the territory, performs public service functions, protects public order, ensuring the rule of law in a given territory. It enables respect of interests and rights of local self-government guaranteed by the Constitution of the Russian Federation and laws.

Chapter 5

RUSSIAN ECONOMY: MODERN HISTORY AND CURRENT TRENDS

Since 1991, the Russian national economy has undergone serious transformation. This is associated with the transition to a market economy, private form of ownership, active integration into the global financial system, reforms of government, legislation in the field of business activity, economic sanctions and attempts to establish economic sovereignty.

Currently, the Russian economy is one of the largest global economies, possessing colossal reserves of resources, great potential for innovative development and plays a major role in world exchange due to logistics routes. BRICS expansion has a large-scale international impact on global economy; five more countries joined BRICS on January 1, 2024. The role of BRICS in the global economy is expanding with every new nation joining it and it is aimed at disrupting the Western hegemony, including by establishing the New Development Bank.

The global nations' economy size is compared annually based on gross domestic product (GDP). Russian GDP calculation according to purchasing power parity in 2023 ranked the 6th. Therefore, much attention is paid to comparing the nominal GDP and the real GDP of the state.

Four macroeconomic agents can be identified according to their participation role in the Russian economy: households, firms (producers of goods), government as a regulator of the economy and at the same time a subject of economic activity, and the global sector, which includes all other states having economic relations. Business activities in the market of households and firms form the private sector of economy.

The role of the *government* is not limited to regulating participants in the private sector of the economy. In addition to interfering in the market relationship between the producer and the consumer either by establishing taxes or providing subsidies to producers, the government forms the state budget and ensures implementation of social welfare policy. It is responsible for the production of public goods related to the improvement of the territory, production of goods that are important for consumers, but unprofitable for commercial entities. The government ensures the allocation of budget investments to implement the necessary structural changes in the national economy aimed at developing the most highly effective types of economic activities with a high technologies and high added value commodities.

The external sector is included in interaction of households, firms and the government which forms an open economy. There are two important interests: external investments in the most profitable projects, movement of global financial capital and the solution of export-import issues with the goal of ensuring balance in production and consumption.

At the level of the national economy, there are 4 *markets*: economic resources market, market of goods, works and services, financial market and currency market. The market for goods, works and services is highly dependent on the domestic producer capacities as well as the typical

demand of local consumers. The Financial Assets Market is the most open and attractive for financial capital investors.

The Central Bank of Russia is a mega-regulator of the financial market. The government monetary policy is formed by the Central Bank, which also determines the inflation management policy.

The global market economy evolution has led to the fact that at present the most effective is the mixed model which combines all the methods of economic activity necessary for growth: economic freedom of entrepreneurial activity to ensure employment of the population and meet the demand for a range of goods, works and services; government responsibility to ensure the safety of economic activity and accessibility of the widest possible range of goods to the population.

Modern Economic History of Russia

The Centrally-Controlled Administrative Economy of Russia existed before 1991 and was characterized by: absence of private ownership; state production planning and centralized decision-making system; absence of a private banking system, ban on foreign exchange transactions and the absence of a free financial market.

Analyzing the reasons for the Soviet Union collapse, we can state that the following economic problems faced by the nation during that period played a major role: the crisis of the centralized system of planning the production of goods and the state budget deficit; crisis of interstate agreements with countries of the former socialist camp; weak competitive performance of national producers compared to western producers. Using the example of Gorbachev's Perestroika ("restructuring"), one can see how the reform plans worked out in theory did not coincide with the real state of affairs. Political reasons played a large role in the Perestroika plan, for the sake of which irrational decisions for national interests of Russia were made.

There are 3 main periods of *Perestroika*: Stage 1 (1985–1988) included: anti-alcohol program, fight against corruption, rejuvenation of personnel in the upper management layers, freedom of speech declaration, moral values undermined, and national interests neglected.

Stage 2 (1988–1989) was characterized by abolition of censorship, private labor activity introduction, cease of supporting socialist regimes globally, decline of the ruling party.

Stage 3 (June 1989 – September 1991): the Communist Party loses power, opposition movements emerge, former republics leave the Soviet Union, adoption of the new Constitution. The financial situation of worsened. The ruling class had no clear plans for transformation, moral values were undermined, and national interests neglected for the sake of western ones, at the same time, interethnic conflicts within the country grew.

In addition to internal objective problems, the Soviet Union collapse was greatly influenced by interference of some foreign countries of the West, striving not only to defeat the political opponent, but also to get access to the huge natural resources of Russia and of the former Soviet republics, and to liberate the sales market for their producers primarily transnational corporations.

The *internal reasons* for the Soviet Union collapse includes, among others, bureaucracy (red tape), technological lag, ineffective economic reforms. Furthermore, the neglect of consumer goods production in favor of heavy industry led to a total deficit of food commodities. As a result, the country introduced per capita food stamps for sugar, meat, tea, soap and a number of other everyday commodities.

Among external reasons, the so-called “oil needle” played a large role in the Soviet Union collapse, when in the late 1980s Western countries took advantage of the Soviet Union dependence on oil sales and collapsed world oil prices, which led to a sharp decline in Russian state budget revenues. External reasons also include the Cold War and arms race, which even further increased military budget expenditures.

In 1991 the decision to completely release prices to free formation or ‘price liberalization’ was taken. The main mistake that modern economists name is that price liberalization was carried out before the privatization of enterprises; as a result, against the backdrop of production shortages and growing dependence on imports, a sharp rise in prices led to the impossibility of the emergence of a new Russian economic model. Consequently, in 1991, during one year, there was extreme impoverishment of the population and the inability to carry out effective transformations and development of national production with high competition from imports. Super-monopolization led to 100–150 times price increase, while wages grew only 10–15 times. As a result, over 30 % of the population was below the poverty line.

In 1992 the *Shock Therapy* of then acting Prime Minister Egor Gaidar was implemented. In economics, shock therapy is usually referred to as the most radical approach of allowing the strongest enterprises remain on the market, all weak enterprises should be made insolvent. As a result of this policy, the Russian economy sharply increased its dependence on IMF loans and had to comply with the requirements of this fund for further prices liberalization. So, inflation began to grow at even faster.

The situation was aggravated by the *privatization* of Russian enterprises that began in 1993, when these enterprises were massively bought up by foreign companies with one goal – to bankrupt the competitors and free up a new market for their products. Large industrial enterprises producing ships, aircrafts, and vehicles were also privatized and bankrupted, which led to the complete loss of economic sovereignty and the integration of the Russian economy into global economic processes with its assigned role as a supplier of cheap resources, including minerals, and a profitable market for the goods and services of transnational corporations and Western enterprises.

Russian economy in 21st century

Another important growth factor in the 2000’s was the increase in the domestic component of aggregate demand. The growth in domestic consumption amounted to 102 % over the period of 2000–2008 and outstripped GDP growth of 83 %. Within this framework, our economy differed dramatically from China, for example, where exports were the main driver of growth.

Additional resources provided by foreign direct investment and high oil prices, which prevailed in the global economy before 2008, also proved to be significant contributors to GDP growth. The total volume of additional resources for the Russian economy, including oil and gas revenue as well as capital inflow, amounted to over 300 billion USD.

Capital inflow to the Russian economy was driven by a number of factors including low interest rates in the USA and Europe leading to greater capital flows from developed to developing countries.

Expansion of domestic market increased attractiveness of the Russian economy for foreign investors.

As a result, massive capital outflow of 11 % of GDP in 1999 was replaced by capital inflow of 7 % of GDP in 2007. High oil prices were also an important driver for growth. Annual average price for Brent increased from 28 US dollars in 2000 to almost 100 dollars in 2008. Quantitative assessment of output elasticity to oil prices allows to attribute about 3 % of the average annual growth rate of GDP during the Golden decade to the oil prices.

The Great Recession of 2008–2009 was a turning point in the Russian economic history of the 21st century. The Great Recession became the most severe economic crisis of the 21st century influencing economic policy in Russia and other economies after 2008. The recovery after the global crisis was slow and did not follow the V-shape typical of many previous economic crises. This was a signal of fundamental shifts in the structure of the global economy and perhaps a transition to a “new normal”. The slowdown of globalization after 2008 is indicated by the decline in the growth rate of international trade and capital flows. After 2018, there was also a shift from the WTO rules-based system to regional block policies and unilateral trade restrictions. New types of industrial policy were enacted around the globe, including the policy of reshoring productive capacity from China. New types of monetary policy (such as Quantitative Easing) were implemented, which created uncertainty about the future of inflation and long-run economic growth. The problem of inequality worsened which lead to growing social tension.

In 2009, when the global crisis made its impact on the Russian economy, GDP contracted by – 7,8 %. This contraction was larger than that of the 1998 crisis. However, effects of external shocks were overcome by 2010, when GDP increased by 4 %. At that time, to many observers this indicated a return to the pre-crisis model of growth. Government policy in 2009–2010 largely accounts for a speedy recovery.

Due to macroeconomic policy, there were substantial resources available to limit the impact of recession used to protect the banking system, help companies in the production sector, and boost consumer demand and provide social protection. Compared to other countries, Russian public debt grew only insignificantly and stayed low, amounting to less than 10 % of GDP in 2010. Anti-crisis measures were focused on macroeconomic stabilization and the cushioning of social impacts. This temporarily increased the share of the compensation to employees in Russia’s GDP from 47 % in 2007–2008 to 50,4 % in 2010.

Russia faced a second recession in 2014–2015. It was caused by another set of external shocks – declining oil prices and mounting geopolitical tensions which resulted in a series of sanctions and counter-sanctions. It is noteworthy that in case of both recessions (2008–2009 and 2014–2015) the decline in GDP was accompanied by a period of high inflation. The stagflationary nature of these economic crises made it especially challenging for the government to cope with them. The government anti-crisis policy in 2014–2015 is considered to be one the most effective in Russia’s modern history. Output recovered relatively fast and inflation was reigned in. This was made possible due to the following measures: transition to the floating exchange rate regime and inflation targeting enabled the Central bank to preserve foreign reserves; tight monetary policy; budget consolidation and reduction in government expenditures; structural policy measures stimulating import substitution in a number of sectors, such as agriculture.

Decline of the growth rate of the Russian economy can be attributed to internal factors as well. The growth model of the Golden Decade has exhausted most of its potential, and a new model

based on higher productivity, more efficient institutions, innovation and investment in human capital is required.

Over the recent years, there were a number of significant economic policy initiatives, for example President's "May Decrees" of 2018 relied more on public rather than private or foreign investment. National projects (worth over 25 trln. rubles) became the main instrument of achieving national goals. Currently the investment activity associated with national projects is expected to become one of the primary drivers in a new growth model for the Russian economy.

Russian economy in 2020s

The pandemic greatly affected the labor market, when forms of remote employment, self-employment, and freelance employment were introduced. The pandemic of the Covid-19 impact caused: emergence of new remote forms of labor relations; reduced territorial inequality and the increased market openness; changed the structure of supply and demand in the labor market; revision by the employer of conditions and remuneration for remote work. The growing digitalization impact include Smart City technologies introduction; growth of the digital economy, sharing economy and new jobs with new functionality.

Structure of Russian economy

Table 1. Structure of GDP by industry in percent*

Industries	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agriculture and forestry, hunting, fishing	3,8	3,8	3,9	3,9	3,9
Mining	11,5	11,9	10,4	10,1	9,8
Manufacturing industries	14,4	14,4	14,6	14,6	14,5
Providing electricity, gas and steam	2,2	2,1	2,2	2,2	2,2
Construction	4,6	4,7	4,8	4,9	4,9
Trade, repair of cars and motorcycles	11,7	10,9	11,4	11,4	11,5
Transportation and storage	5,4	5,5	5,6	5,6	5,6
Hotels and catering	0,7	0,8	0,9	1	1
Information and communication	2,5	2,6	2,6	2,6	2,6
Finance and insurance	4,1	4,5	4,5	4,5	4,5
Real estate transactions	8,9	9	9,1	9,2	9,2
Professional activities, RD	4	4,1	4,2	4,1	4,1
Activities of households as employers	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,3	0,3
Education	2,8	3	3,1	3,1	3,2
Public administration and military security; social security	6,4	6,5	6,6	6,6	6,6
Administrative activities	1,7	1,8	1,7	1,7	1,7
Health and Social Services	3	3,1	3,2	3,3	3,3

* data of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation

Strengths of the Russian economy include the largest reserves of natural resources (minerals, water, forests, etc.), accompanied by a favorable geographical location, availability of logistics routes connecting Asia and Europe; as well as considerable intellectual potential.

Over the period of 2000–2023, Russian GDP per capita in constant prices almost doubled. It increased from about 6,500 dollars in 2000 to over 13,000 USD in 2023. Today Russia is one of the world’s leaders in terms of educational attainment of population. More than 60 % of young people of 25–34 years have a university degree. Russia managed to accumulate substantial financial reserves and maintain a relatively low level of debt, which should reduce the country’s vulnerability in the face of possible external shocks.

The *challenges* to the Russian economy growth include economic sanctions of the west, high share of shadow economy; differences in available resources, income and life quality on the large territory, dominance of transnational corporations in the domestic market, negative impact of globalization on national economic sovereignty, increasing sanctions pressure.

The threats to the Russian economy include:

- use of discriminatory measures against the key sectors of the Russian economy restricting access to foreign financial resources and modern technologies;
- maintaining a significant share of the shadow economy;
- slowdown in the global economy
- going outside the raw material export model of economic development.

Protecting Russian national economic interests requires the formation of a sustainable innovative basis for economic development.

A systematic approach to the formation of a high innovative level of economic activity require: training of qualified personnel; ensuring a favorable business climate; environment favorable for the implementation of innovation, including tax incentives, direct government support through grants, subsidies and competitions.

For the purpose of developing national industry, Russia has an *import substitution policy* aimed at achieving technological sovereignty. This led to the launch of projects which are unprofitable but necessary for the formation of national economic sovereignty. Considerable budget funds through the Russian Industrial Development Fund are allocated to support the production of medicines, shipbuilding, car industry, radio electronics, and aircraft manufacturing.

Table. 2. Interaction of the Digital and Shadow Economies

	Digital Economy	Shadow Economy
Economic	Economic sovereignty Ensuring labor productivity growth through the introduction of digital technologies Increased economic benefits and innovative products	Understatement of tax revenues of the state budget Additional source of income for households Unfair competition
Social	Reducing labor intensity and negative manifestations of the “human factor” Rising unemployment and the role of state social policy	Shadow employment There is no quality control of shadow economy products
Environmental	Digital sustainable development (urban agriculture, green transport, etc.) The Increasing Ecological Footprint of Digitalization	Unaccounted damage to the environment Unaccounted for, underestimated withdrawal of resources from the environment

As a result, current trends in government **economic policy** include:

- growth in labor productivity of the employed population;
- state social policy that protects the rights of poor citizens and the most vulnerable social and age groups;
- minimizing the carbon footprint of economic activities;
- achievement of economic sovereignty, sustainability and independence of Russian economy in the sanction policy of the west;
- effective measure against the shadow economy in order to increase tax revenues and legal employment;
- product quality control to prevent negative consequences from counterfeit goods and smuggling.

Russian economy and sanctions

Today, the Russian economy is in a state of equilibrium, which was achieved thanks to timely implementation of government support measures. For example, the transfer of foreign consumers of Russian energy resources to payment in rubles made it possible to stabilize the exchange rate and avoid additional risks of loss of exporters' foreign currency earnings.

Quickly curbed inflation made it possible to reduce the key rate and provide businesses and the population with affordable loans. The rapid stabilization of the economy led to an increase in lending volumes. In 2023, the volume of new loans provided to legal entities and individual entrepreneurs increased by 29.8 %. Support measures taken by the Government of the Russian Federation play an important role in stabilizing the economy. One can observe a gradual restoration of imports, made possible thanks to preferential lending programs for importers, simplification of some customs procedures, and the abolition of duties on imports of investment goods.

Government measures to support agricultural producers occupy an important place in the issue of stimulating the economy. Advances to grain producers for sowing work, a preferential lending program, and preferential railway tariffs for the transportation of agricultural products made it possible to grow and harvest a large harvest.

In 2023, there was no decline in investment activity; a number of measures have been developed to stimulate investment. Innovations in the field of public-private partnerships are intended to support investment activity during this period. Such innovations include changing the rules for concluding special investment contracts, extending the deadlines for implementing investment projects in some industries (for example, timber and fishing), expanding the possibilities for adjusting the terms of concessions, simplifying the procedures for providing land plots to enterprises and other financial measures.

The Russian economy is moving towards recovery growth.

Chapter 6

CURRENT GLOBAL TRENDS AND RUSSIAN SOCIETY

Structure of Modern Russian Society

Russian society is still undergoing transformation and development: the Russian Federation was formed 30 years ago, before that there was the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union; these states preceded our current political and social system and had a large cultural and historical foundation. But real modern Russia is very young, and at the same time, the structural changes that are taking place in Russian state are incomparable in our historical retrospective. The Russian nation is now at the stage of formation, because the concept of “all-Russian” has not yet become a unifying principle, is not a common basis for everyone, although all the prerequisites for the true formation of a nation exist and the Russian state is doing a lot to ensure this.

Researchers nowadays primarily highlight changes in the structural composition of the Russian state. In the Soviet Union, the social composition was fairly even, although it also had certain structures – there was a nomenklatura in a privileged position, a broad layer of the working class, and the peasantry the foundation of the society occupying a similar social and economic niche.

Now the social composition has changed due to the fact that the conditions for the formation of the quality of life used as the basis for the structuring society. As a result, there is now an inevitable increase in the middle class, which is a normal process for a capitalist, liberal society. But at the same time, the current middle class is formed from a different social strata, different from originally intended. In a capitalist society, it is assumed that the middle class is formed from the owners, people who have property in relation to the instruments of production, capital, land, real estate.

Now in Russia, the middle class is a broad layer of people who have certain economic opportunities ranging from 50 to 60 % of the population. This includes highly qualified white-collar specialists and blue-collar workers (e.g., a highly qualified machinery operator) in an enterprise that requires precise calculations or precise actions, since the level of its economic adaptation may be much higher than in the state that built a society of social justice. Its level and quality of life represent the situation in the country as a whole, this is a kind of “social standard” that reflects the similar life situations in which the majority of the population is.

There are two polar strata. The upper group is 11–20 % of population, which is characterized by a predominance of life chances (resources of influence at work, advantages in purchasing power, comfortable living conditions, etc.). There is certain instability of the position of the upper group, people do not always maintain their positions in it for a long time.

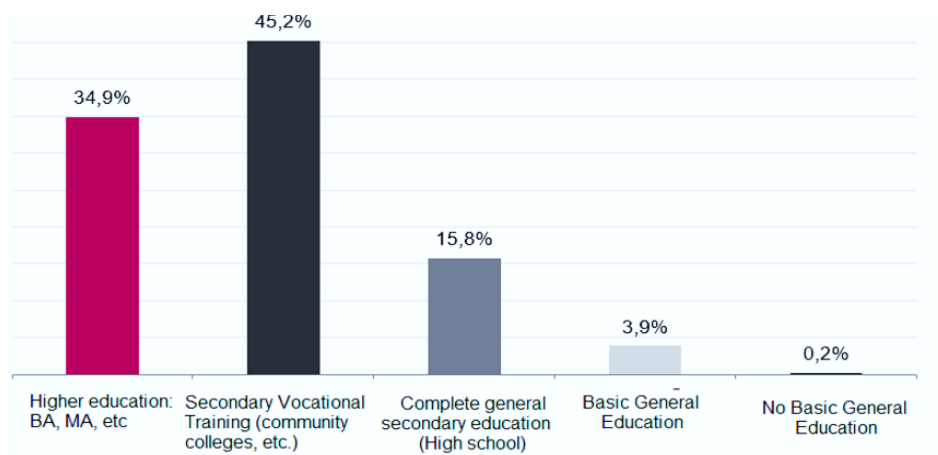


Fig. 16. Education and professional training in Russia, 2022 data

Mobility

From the point of view of mobility and equality, the indicator is positive: since there is an upward mobility, everyone has the prospect of being at the top. However, for educated, qualified and capable Russians who can occupy high positions, there is a probability of downward mobility if their living conditions worsen (changes at work, birth of a child, illness). Therefore, there is no stable zone of well-being, where, having achieved a certain quality of life, one can stay for a long time. The same is true about the lower position as it is possible to get stuck at the bottom. A part of Russian society consists of citizens living below the poverty line with low economic opportunities even for employed individuals whose life quality is still very low. Some people theoretically, can afford to buy a new household appliance, such as a washing machine, refrigerator, TV, car, but in fact cannot afford it.

Getting into one or another stratum depends on human capital, available resources and the ability to implement them in the labor market. Therefore, an important point is the nature of employment. The portraits of the groups here are very clear: at the top there are managers and specialists with higher education, at the bottom there are mainly workers, unqualified employees in trade and service sector.

Young people and residents of cities, primarily of Moscow, St. Petersburg and regional capitals have a better chance of getting to the top. The vulnerable population at risk is in urban-type settlements and villages. However, this is not an unambiguous divide: representatives of all groups are in every territory, area, city or village, but the proportions differ.

Upward mobility is noticeably predominant. There are more opportunities for growth: many new areas of employment have emerged where people from any class can make a career. It is social mobility that opposes stagnation. Russia has the world's largest share of the population with secondary vocational education, as well as people with bachelor's, master's degrees or postgraduate degrees. Thus, 45 % of Russians have secondary vocational education, 34 % have university degrees. In the United States, 11 % of residents have secondary vocational education.

So, there will be a top, middle and bottom. The dominance of the middle class suggests that the bulk of citizens live in very similar conditions in terms of their position in the system of inequalities. The lower group is larger in number than the upper group, although both together make up about half of Russians.

Global Trends and Russian Perspective

The modern world has entered the next phase of systemic transformations. There is a debate about the coming image of the future. In the meantime, we can talk with certainty about the directions of changes taking place, the so-called `global trends`. Trends are understood as the main tendencies of ongoing changes that set the general perspective of transformations.

The trend of the world economic center of gravity shifting to the Global South. Western countries are losing their former economic hegemony. The economic breakthrough of China and India has fundamentally changed the balance of power in the world. China has surpassed the United States in terms of its share of global GDP (in Purchasing Power Parity). India from the 9th position it occupied in the 1990s in the global economy, moved to third. Indonesia which was previously absent there entered the top ten. Instead of the Atlantic, the Pacific Ocean became the main waterway of trade. And Russia's reorientation to the global South in its strategic priorities is in accordance with the eastern vector in the development trends of the world economy.

The end of Unipolarity trend. The system of a unipolar world, which had real chances for political implementation after the collapse of the Soviet Union, encountered resistance from a number of non-Western powers. The first major political figure to criticize unipolarity and the expediency of the transition to a multipolar world order was Russian President Vladimir. V. Putin at the Munich Security Conference in 2007. The crisis of unipolarity is manifested not only in the loss of economic leadership by the West. The modernization of the armed forces of Russia and China has changed the balance of forces in the military-technical sphere and shaken the idea of the priority of the military power of the West.

The perception of Western leadership in the development of human potential has changed. The formidable superiority of US economic power is also under threat. The rapidly ballooning expense on wars around the world is widening already huge budget deficits. This is also intensifying a gathering US fiscal crisis of growing debt, financed by foreign capital. The Covid-19 pandemic has shown that the healthcare system of some countries has significant flaws and is not coping well with pandemic challenges. There has been a loss of moral leadership in the West. Non-Western countries no longer want to follow the Western bloc, which was manifested, in particular, in their refusal to join anti-Russian sanctions despite strong pressure.

The West also lost its leadership in the formation of behavioral standards. Just 30 years ago, the fashion for Western patterns of behavior was widespread almost everywhere. The legalization of children's transgender surgery even without the consent of parents has become a dividing line between it and traditional civilizations. And in consolidating these trends, it is important to record that it is Russia today that is at the forefront of the forces advocating a multipolar world order.

Trend of growing geopolitical tension and military escalation. Military escalation in the modern world is a reflection of existing global contradictions. The more contradictory the world becomes, the higher the military tension rise. The main reason for the growth of geopolitical tension is the reluctance of the West led by the United States to lose its role as a world leader, as well as the inability of the existing system of international relations, without structural reforms and adaptation to the realities of today, to fulfill the functions once assigned to it of maintaining a fair world order and strategic stability. To defend this role, various measures are being taken from exporting "color revolutions" to starting wars. Military escalation objectively increases the risks of using nuclear weapons, which would be a disaster for humanity.

Growing trend of Social Polarization. Social differentiation is intensifying, leading to the formation of a multi-story building of humanity and the actual consolidation of inequality. Over the past decade, the conventional 50 % threshold of material wealth owned by the richest 1 % has been passed. Thus, a historical maximum of inequality has been reached. We can say that because of colossal difference in resource capabilities, the principles of equality of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights have been undermined.

The difference in levels of life allows us to talk about different worlds. Social inequality corresponds to regional inequality. At the beginning of the 19th century, at an early stage in the history of colonialism, the income gap between the inhabitants of the richest and poorest countries in the world differed by three. Currently, this gap is already 70-fold. In fact, a system of inequality of civilizations is being established, which can be defined not only as neo-colonialism, but also as neo-racism.

The threat of Demographic Transition. In accordance with the theory of Demographic Transition, the trend in the natural reproduction of the population consists of an objective increase in life expectancy rates with a decrease in birth rates. Many western nations (including Russia), due to these trends, are objectively aging. As a consequence, the retirement age limits are rising. For Russia, the trend is complicated by the fact that birth rates are lower than death rates. The birth rate does not reach the level of natural population reproduction in more than 100 countries of the modern world, setting the vector of depopulation.

At the same time, countries that preserve the institutions of Traditional Society, despite the general trend, still have high childbearing rates, which, with an increase in life expectancy ensure rapid population growth. The emerging disproportions between countries of depopulation and countries with high rates of natural population growth are resolved through immigration.

Trend of increasing legal and illegal immigration. Migration flows are directed mainly from African and Asian countries to Europe and North America. The catalyst for migration is wars and other social upheavals associated with global instability. Finding themselves in a different cultural environment, migrants do not adapt well to the living standards of the host countries, which leads to conflicts with the local population.

Russia, like the countries of Europe and North America, is a demographic recipient. It mainly receives flows of labor migrants from post-Soviet countries. If mainly people from former European colonies migrate to Europe, then citizens of former Soviet republics or their descendants migrate to the Russian Federation. Due to this, relations between migrants and local residents do not have the same level of confrontation as in Europe.

Bubble Economy Trend. Neocolonialism. Dedolorization. “Some countries live beyond their means and transfer some of the weight of their problems to the global economy; they live like parasites on the global economy, on their monopoly of the dollar”, – this was the assessment of the American economy back in 2011 by Vladimir Putin, then the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation. And here is the assessment given to the modern world economy in 2017 in the anniversary report of the Club of Rome: “98 % of financial transactions are now speculative in nature. There is an oversupply of capital in fictitious but profitable areas, while the areas on which the future of the planet depends are experiencing a shortage of funds”.

The metaphor of a soap bubble was used in relation to the growth of the dollar supply. The sale of unsecured dollars was a form of global parasitism and neocolonialism. However, the “soap bubble” must burst sooner or later, and this will obviously happen in some future.

The coming shock will inevitably hit countries that were focused on acquiring dollars. Aware of the threats of inflating the dollar soap bubble, the Russian Federation is forming an agenda for de-dollarization, transition to payment in national currencies in trade exchanges with other states.

Trend of Growing Terrorist Threat. The 21st century is associated with an unprecedented spread of terrorist threats. The rise of terrorism is associated with the possibility of achieving maximum resonance through terrorist attacks. Various religious, ethnic or political groups, unable to achieve their goals through democratic means, have increasingly resorted to terrorist attacks.

Entire terrorist states are created in the Middle East, and the Russian Armed Forces made a significant contribution to their defeat. In principle, international cooperation could make it easier to counter terrorism. However, modern geopolitical divisions prevent such work from being systematic. Moreover, facts are being discovered that global geopolitical players support terrorist organizations for their own political purposes.

Trend of a unified information space. The development of the Internet has created a unified global information space. The speed of obtaining information has fundamentally increased. Many procedures of everyday life have been simplified, from navigational coordination of movement to obtaining college degrees and making purchases. The Internet created new opportunities, but with them also new risks. Thus, the oversaturated information space has led to the spread of behavior in the spirit of “rational ignorance”, when a person refuses to check the information, entrusting this to authorities (media or public opinion leaders) that are attractive to him or refuses to think (write texts giving this task to chat GPT). In addition, the Internet space, unregulated and not subject to previous forms of information control, offers citizens a wide variety of information, often very aggressive and destructive or on the other hand very limited when social media platforms use their algorithms to promote or silence certain views and information. Techniques for manipulating mass consciousness are used.

It was through the social networks that the mobilization of opposition was carried out within the framework of the color revolutions. Various countries around the world are today trying to establish restrictions on the circulation of destructive information on the Internet. It is obvious that it is impossible to completely isolate oneself from the global information space in modern technological realities. But it is necessary to find answers to the challenges arising from it that correlated with the value agenda and value objectives of the Russian state.

Overwhelming Digitalization trend. Digital technologies are actively being introduced into all spheres of public life. Along with the new opportunities that arise from their implementation, digitalization also generates corresponding risks. Among these risks is, in particular, a damaging effect on the intellectual potential and psychological state of children and young people. The development of artificial intelligence technologies is leading to systemic social transformations. Due to the introduction of AI technologies, many professions are becoming a thing of the past, which, on the one hand, gives humanity a chance to refocus on creative fields of activity, and on the other, creates risks of mass unemployment or which is even worse complete dependence on the technology controlled by global corporations in silicon valley striving to gain complete dominance of the individual over all areas of life.

The emergence of AI is on the technological development agenda. The world’s leading technological powers are joining the race to develop advanced AI technologies. Russia is also among the participants in this race. The lag in technological competition can have not only social and economic, but also political refraction.

Trend of Environmental Crisis. The technogenic nature of modern civilization determines the ever-increasing impact on nature. Destruction as a result of anthropogenic impact of ecosystems

comes to humans like a boomerang. The agenda of environmental problems today includes threats of deforestation, air and water, soil contamination, water pollution, decreased biodiversity, desertification, and lack of drinking water.

It is possible to prevent the prospect of self-destruction by conceptually reviewing the attitude of modern human to nature. Some countries propose a transition to “green technologies” as a way to solve environmental problems, which requires huge investments and is inaccessible to most countries of the world. Russia’s proposal, voiced by President Vladimir Putin at the Climate Summit in Glasgow in 2021, is to focus on the conservation of natural resources that have the ability to block harmful impacts on nature. “Russia relies on the unique resource of our existing forest ecosystems, their significant potential for absorbing carbon dioxide and producing oxygen. After all, our country is home to about 20 % of all the world’s forests”.

Resource Depletion Trend. In the future, humanity must face the problem of depleting the resources necessary for its life support, in particular, non-renewable energy resources. In the perspective of the upcoming shortage, the capitalization of Russia as the most resource-rich country in the world is to increase significantly. Russia’s natural potential allows to realistically assessing the possibilities of its future emergence as a leading position in the global economy. However, this requires finding the optimum functioning of the Russian state system, overcoming previous gaps and problems of the current policy, economic sovereignty and transition from the resource exporting model of economy to an innovative and sustainable one.

At the same time, it is necessary to develop promising technologies for the future, when the transition to new energy sources is made. A system must be created that excludes the country’s dependence on any external situation.

Loss of national sovereignty trend. Of the more than 200 nations, not all have real sovereignty. Many nominally independent states find themselves in a politically dependent position on the United States, which is clearly manifested in their acceptance of the anti-Russian or Zionist agenda imposed by the United States. In fact, the majority of European states turned out to be desovereignized, which, in particular, was spoken about more than once by Russian President Vladimir Putin. The United States and transnational actors of globalism use various technologies of desovereignization. Sovereignty is manifested in various spheres – in the economy, technology, culture, and in personnel policy. The current course is a movement towards gaining the full sovereignty of the Russian state.

The trend of glorifying nazism and the spread of other radical and extremist movements. Every year, at the proposal of Russia, the UN General Assembly adopts a resolution to combat “the glorification of nazism, neo-nazism and other practices that contribute to the escalation of modern forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance”. And each time the United States and Ukraine voted against the resolution, and in 2022 a group of Western states joined them in refusing to accept it.

Meanwhile, nazism has already been politically revived. There is an increase in xenophobic sentiments. Nazi figures of the past are being rehabilitated and glorified, and nazi symbols are being distributed. There are real threats of repetition of genocidal practices. After the coup d’état of 2014, Ukraine began to turn into a nazi state. Russia, as the successor of the USSR, which made a decisive contribution to the victory over Nazism in the 20th century, is at the forefront of forces to counter the new world Nazi threat.

FINAL TEST AND ESSAYS ASSIGNMENT

Essay Topics

Choose ONE of the following essay topics:

1. The structure of modern Russian society.
2. Russian position in the global geopolitics.
3. Administrative reforms in Russia.
4. Evolution of the procedure for forming the Cabinet of the Russian Federation.
5. Powers of the President of the Russian Federation in the sphere of executive power.
6. The system of government in Russia.
7. Drivers and outcomes of the Soviet Industrialization.
8. Reasons for the slowdown of the Soviet economy.
9. Causes of the transformational downturn in Russia in the 1990's.
10. Drivers of rapid economic growth of the Russian economy during the Golden Decade.
11. Russian economic performance in the 21st century.
12. Philosophy Culture.
13. Liberal and conservative features of the ideas of the Slavophiles and Westerners.
14. The Narodniks' ideas of political freedom.
15. Religious map of Russia.
16. Slave Culture and Adoption of Christianity.

This essay follows the principles of a traditional analytical review assignment. Students are expected to show sufficient awareness of specific literature on the given topic and ability to produce a structured argument supported by empirical evidence.

Requirements for the essay on the history of Russian economy:

1. For any essay topic, a student should read (and quote in the essay) at least TWO of the sources on the course reading list. Reference should include no less than three different sources in the "Works Cited" section.
2. When possible, a student should support the argument with statistical data either from statistical databases or from scholarly papers.
3. Size and formatting requirements: 2-4 pages, Double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 point font, All citations are to be MLA parenthetical citation. Include a "References" section.
4. Be sure that you follow the standards of academic writing: a brief introduction, a concise and focused claim (or thesis statement), two to three main points you will address, solid reasoning, and evidence (statistical or textual) along with an explanation of its significance.

Evaluation criteria

This is both a reading and a writing course, designed to sharpen your skills of analysis, argumentative writing, and critical thinking as well as familiarize you with important episodes of Russian history and culture. To that end, your essays will be graded using the following criteria: Presentation; proofreading; style and readability; clear context for someone who hasn't read the work; effective introduction and conclusion.

Organization. Thesis; opening and closing sentences; relevant, focused, organized and developed paragraphs; effective sentence and paragraph transitions; clear and understandable overall organization.

Evidence/support; Specific, accurate, convincing details; effective and relevant quotations; high quality of graphs and tables. You are especially advised to fully use arguments and statistical evidence from scholarly works. If you produce your own relevant tables and graphs using open statistical sources (ex. World Bank, Maddison database, etc.), you are likely to score extra points.

Analysis. Clear interpretation; added insight into the literature debate; overall coherence of argument.

A grade of "A" (90 points and more) is difficult (but not impossible) to receive.

A "B" (76–89 points) grade indicates that you have submitted work that is above average but not exemplary in quality.

Receiving a "C" (66–75 points) suggests that you have met the requirements of the assignments but have not gone further than the average. Your effort was adequate but not remarkable.

A "D" (51–65) means that you have written a below-average essay because you have not met some of the assignment requirements, have careless grammatical, mechanical, or punctuation errors, or have presented unclear, disorganized writing.

If you receive an "F" (less than 51), your essay doesn't meet the assignment requirements, doesn't answer the written assignment question, or includes an excessive number of errors.

Final Test

1. Russian civilization is characterized by:

- a) earlier formation of civil society;
- b) early formation of the rule of law;
- c) the leading role of the economy in society;
- d) strong influence of the state on the life of the entire society.

2. Russian civilization is:

- a) European;
- b) Asian;
- c) Eurasian;
- d) Americanized.

3. The current Constitution of the Russian Federation was adopted:

- a) in 2020;
- b) in 1993;
- c) in 1995;
- d) in 1978.

4. A community of free, equal citizens of the Russian Federation of various ethnic, religious, social and other affiliations, possessing civic consciousness, is:

- a) multinational people;
- b) civil society;
- c) Russian nation;
- d) Russian ethnicity.

5. The Russian Federation provides for the following division of state power:

- a) to federal, regional and local;
- b) for legislative, initiative and control;
- c) to the judicial, executive, legislative;
- d) for presidential, legislative, executive and judicial.

6. What is called the “heart” of Russian culture?

- a) paganism;
- b) spirituality;
- c) philosophy;
- d) Orthodoxy.

7. The global challenges of our time do not include:

- a) decrease in the population of Russia;
- b) populism;
- c) inadequate rationalization and quantification of management;
- d) loss of cultural continuity and failure of multicultural identity practices.

8. Which system does Russia associate with the future world order?

- a) multipolar world;
- b) bipolar world;
- c) unipolar world;
- d) pluralistic unipolarity.

9. Select from the list the correct date, from the beginning of which the statehood of Russia has been developing continuously and successively?

- a) 862;
- b) 825;
- c) 735;
- d) 988.

10. What is the basis of Russian culture?

- a) Russian culture and Russian language;
- b) Russian people and Russian culture;
- c) Russian language;
- d) Russian culture, Russian people and Russian language.

11. Which religion, according to sociological research, is characterized as having the second largest number of followers in Russia?

- a) Catholicism;
- b) Buddhism;
- c) Taoism;
- d) Islam.

12. Western countries are losing their former economic hegemony. The economic breakthrough of China and India has fundamentally changed the balance of power in the world. The People's Republic of China has surpassed the United States in terms of its share of global GDP (at purchasing power parity). India from the 9th position it occupied in the 1990s. in the global economy, moved to third. Indonesia, which was previously absent from there, entered the top ten. Instead of the Atlantic, the Pacific Ocean became the main waterway of trade. Chinese business is crowding out Western capital on all continents. The implementation of the Chinese "One Belt, One Road" initiative may allow China to take the lead in the economic race with the United States. Obviously, the only way to stop him is politically. In this regard, China appears to be interested in maintaining global stability, while the United States is interested in turmoil and chaos.

What global trend is this passage talking about?

- a) trend towards the end of the period of unipolarity;
- b) growing trend of social polarization;
- c) the trend of the world economic center moving to Asia;
- d) trend of growing geopolitical tension and military escalation.

13. Which of the following characteristics can NOT be considered a heritage of the Soviet system?

- a) Many traditionalist forms of social organization;
- b) Structure of Russian economy skewed towards larger enterprises;
- c) Public ownership of enterprises among the population;
- d) Planned centralized economy.

14. In Russia there are about:

- a) 10 nations;
- b) 19 nations;
- c) 100 nations;
- d) 190 peoples.

15. State structure of Russia:

- a) unitary;
- b) federal;
- c) republican;
- d) confederation.

16. The number of subjects of the Russian Federation is currently:

- a) 75;
- b) 85;
- c) 89;
- d) 90.

17. The Law on the State Flag of the Russian Federation states that “The State Flag of Russia is a rectangular panel...”:

- a) with blue-white-red stripes of the same width;
- b) white-blue-red with a black double-headed eagle in a yellow square;
- c) red with an image in the upper corner of a golden sickle and hammer and a five-pointed star;
- d) with white-blue-red stripes of the same width.

18. Who (what) is the bearer of sovereignty and the only source of power in Russia?

- a) Parliament;
- b) President;
- c) Government;
- d) People.

19. Name the first Russian emperor, whose reforms radically modernized Russia and allowed it to play an important role on the world stage and become one of the great powers:

- a) Ivan the Terrible;
- b) Peter 1;
- v) Alexander 1;
- g) Nikolai 1.

20. On this day, the victory of the Soviet Union over Germany in the Great Patriotic War is annually celebrated; The celebration is accompanied by parades, wreaths laid, and fireworks in the evening. What calendar date is this?

- a) May 9;
- b) December 12;
- v) January 1;
- g) June 12.

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