WHAT STANDS BEHIND THE “ENIGMATIC RUSSIAN SOUL”? IS THERE A PLACE FOR A NATIONAL MANAGEMENT MODEL?

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Do History and Culture matter?

Human beings are driven not only by interests, but no less by collective values, prescriptions and taboos.

Transmitted through culture they allow human groups to survive and adapt in changing environment.

Cultural patterns have dynamics of their own and are resilient, but they can change and do change.
Russia with an area of 17,075 million km² is the largest country in the world.

To the west, it borders Ukraine, Belarus, Poland and the Baltic countries; To the north, Finland, Norway and the Baltic republics; and To the south, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, China and North Korea.

Russia has a coastline on three oceans: the Arctic, the Atlantic and the Pacific.
The Russian Federation comprises 83 federal subjects, which are grouped into 8 federal districts that are administrated by envoys of the president.

There are 11 cities with a population of over 1 million: Moscow (the capital), St Petersburg, Novosibirsk, Nizhny Novgorod, Ekaterinburg, Samara, Omsk, Kazan, Chelyabinsk, Rostov-Na-Don and Ufa.
Population

Russia’s population is approximately 146.9 million, of which 56.0% are of working age, 18.6% are below it, and 25.4% are above it. Approximately 54% of the population is female and 46% male.

Russia is home to 190 ethnic groups. According to the latest census, the majority are Russian (81.0%), with Tatar (3.9%) and Ukrainian (1.4%) being the next largest groups.

It holds two of the three largest cities in Europe: Moscow with eleven million citizens and St. Petersburg with five million.
The meaning of Russianness

English word ‘Russian’ has two equivalents in Russian language:
(1) ‘Russkii’ – referring to language, literature, ethnicity;
(2) ‘Rossiiskii’ - referring to the state.

The terms do not coincide. Russian diaspora in the West cannot be described as ‘rossiiskie’ while a significant number of the citizens of Russian Federation are not ‘russkii’.

We’ll mostly speak about Russian (‘russkaia’) kul’tura, while at the same time referring to Russia (‘rossiiskaia’) empire
Religion

Russia was baptised in 988. The import of Eastern Christianity from Constantinople separated Russia from both Medieval Europe and Islamic world.

During two and a half centuries under the Tatar rule (1240-1480) Orthodoxy became the National church and the only source of collective identity for Russia.

With the fall of Byzantium (1453) and the end of the Tatar Rule (1480) Moscow became the only Orthodox power in the world and started to view itself as the only guardian of the true faith.

More than 70% of ethnic Russians (‘russkie’) define themselves as Orthodox while less than 10% say they “attend church regularly” and around 40% say they “believe in God”.

For the majority today Orthodoxy is not a religion or a way of life, but an identity.
The teachings of the Orthodox Church and their role in the Russian behavioural patterns

The Orthodox doctrine of “the other world” has no Purgatory. There is no middle ground between Hell and Paradise, i.e. no middle ground between absolute sin and holiness, salvation and damnation. Life on earth is considered to be beyond redemption.

The world is taken by sin and evil, gradual improvement is hopeless and useless and the only way to salvation is an immediate, total and radical regeneration.

Pskovo-Pecherskii Monastery – two views:

An Orthodox believer aspired to be saved not through the regular confession and penitence, but by the final act of God’s grace and the protection of the Holy patrons. “The last will become the first”.
The transformation of the Moscow tsardom into the Russian empire (1698-1721)

The first Russian Emperor Peter the Great (rule 1689-1725) realised that the military competition with the West implied cultural, social; and economic transformations.


New calendar. The time starts from scratch.

New elite, dressed in European dress, shaved like Europeans, educated in European way and behaving itself in the European manner.
“Are we European?”: Two main trends of Russian thought - Westernizers and Slavophiles.

Westernizers believe that Russia needs to catch up with the West, whereas Slavophiles speak about Russian exceptionalism and the unique way of development. This debate continues until present day.

The Russian notion of ‘The People’ (“Narod”) does not include the educated estates. It implies that “the hidden truth” is concealed in the lower classes. “Narod” was idolised by the elite, but had no political representation even after the abolition of serfdom in 1861.
The “Enigmatic Russian Soul”

- Endurance and perseverance
- Deep emotions—soulfulness
- Self sacrifice
- Duty to group and friendship
- Fatalism
The Communist Legacy

- Ideological pressure
- Compulsion
- Direct state economic control
- State-owned land and property
- Government planning
- Direct distribution
- Government price control
- Poor economic performance
- Low living standards
- Demoralized society
- Hard drinking
- Bribery
- Embezzlement
Russia: new political identities

Reconstruction of geopolitical view
Turning face to the traditional values from Soviet past
Strong independent policy
Stress in national values and support of national ideas
Isolation in International relations

Game changer: Articulated Russian policy heightened international tension in the world but brought to the new political configuration
Growing centralization of power
Emerging of charismatic leaders with personal and national ambitions
Potential for increased conflict
Values in Tension

European and Mongol
Wealthy and poverty-stricken
Official laws versus understood rules
Public versus behind-the-scenes
Entrepreneurialism versus egalitarianism
Individualists versus working for the greater good
Recognized international business market versus black market
Modernization versus strong ties to tradition
Russian love of the 'strong leader' 

Important factor is the reliance on a 'strong leader' – the tsar, the president – who will punish offenders and ensure a good life for all.

Most Russians share in the 'macho' cult and regard strength, rather than a knowledge of economics or the law or an ability to defend the public interest, as the pre-requisite for a place in the social hierarchy.

The military-administrative way of thinking rejects any 'nice little liberal ideas', such as political or economic competition, a system of checks and balances, class actions against government institutions and much else.
Sociological survey in Russia on the management system quality

Centralized administration at upper levels

Autonomy at low level

Successful implementation of large-scale projects, which require concentration of resources
Taking success and achievements for granted
Over-expenditure of resources

Caution, Conservatism

Catastrophes can be man-made
Mistakes have serious consequences
Risk-aversion
The world is a dangerous place
Structure and hierarchy in Russian companies

The hierarchical structure in Russian business practices means that the decision makers higher up have authority over their subordinates.

Showing respect for seniority and recognising the hierarchical structure is vital for establishing and maintaining strong business relationships.
Russian management model

Russian management system has always mobilized more resources for getting things done than any other country.

The main function of State body is creating mobilization events and controlling their realization.

Oversized resources mobilization of Russian management model (In GDP government expenses part is considerably bigger than worldwide)

Prof. Alexander Prokhorov
## The Russian Model of Management Functioning Regime

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<th>The stable</th>
<th>CHARACTERISTICS:</th>
<th>The unstable</th>
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<td>Oppression of competitive relations</td>
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<td>‘Cosmetic’ character of reforms</td>
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<td>Loosening the management style</td>
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<td>No strict ideology in social life</td>
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<td>Quick replacement of manpower and their rotation</td>
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IN SEARCH OF A “RUSSIAN MODEL” IN EDUCATION:
A HISTORIAN’S TAKE

UNICON, April 24, 2019
Professional education at crossroads

Models – global or national?

Logic of change – effectiveness or fads?

Key drivers – private initiative or the state?
.. It all began with Peter I (1682-1725)?...

Built first modern schools in Russia
Imported foreign educational models
Driven by practical need and concerns

... OR DID HE?

*if not him – what drove the changes and defined the design of the new schools?*
Two case studies

Key elite professional schools for training officers for the navy and the army:

Naval Academy in St.Petersburg (1715)
Noble Cadet Corps in St.Petersburg (1731)

Who are the agents of change, and what directs their actions?
NAVAL ACADEMY IN ST. PETERSBURG (1715)

Trains officer’s for Peter I’s new navy, but also engineers, administrators, etc.
The key professional school for the next few decades

Role of Peter I?
Role of practical needs and practitioners?
Role of foreign experts and foreign models?
NAVAL ACADEMY IN ST. PETERSBURG (1715)

Peter I never contributed to designing the school; got the idea from a French “expert”

Peter I’s admirals and captains (including the foreign ones) never lobbied for a school, or cared much about it

The foreign expert – “Baron de Saint-Hilaire” - was an impostor

The model this “expert” imported was just one among many possible models
First “modern” military school in France
Built after a (botched) war against Prussia

Surprise 1: promoted by a financier and a king’s mistress, not generals

Surprise 2: takes a Russian (!) school as a model:

“...among all the models that could be taken to form [the École Militaire in Paris], there could not be found a better one than the Cadet School in Petersburg”

Joseph Pâris-Duverney, the founder of École Militaire, to Louis XV (1750)
Noble Cadet Corps in St. Petersburg

Built in 1731 – after Peter I’s death – under his “lazy” and not very educated nice Empress Anna

• Based after the model of the Berlin Cadet Corps – and based on the Pietist (protestant) pedagogic principles

• German Pietists, in turn, borrow from the Catholic pedagogy of Archbishop Fenelon, a Frenchman

• No evidence of military effectiveness – yet, becomes the key elite school for the next half-century
“Administrative Entrepreneurs”

Trajectories of educational change are defined by “administrative entrepreneurs” … not by the practical effectiveness of new educational models, which becomes evident – at best – only much later

“Administrative entrepreneurs”

Driven by their personal agendas
Use resources of the state to promote their agendas
Succeed when built alliances with other players and powerbrokers
… from Peter I to the Soviets…

”administrative entrepreneurs” in the Soviet era?
PhysTech, Novosibirsk State University

post-Soviet educational entrepreneurship:
Doubling of enrollment in higher ed in the 1990s
New projects – Higher School of Economics, New Economic School, Skolkovo
# Takeaways

## Global *or* National?

- Probably, a pointless question
- Models are never really “national” or global

## Private initiative *or* the State?

- There is no “state” as an actor
- Focus on entrepreneurs behind the façade of the state – and their agendas

## Effectiveness *or* Fads?

- It’s the politics, stupid!
- What does your innovation do for specific actors?
Questions for group work

• Can we talk about a unique national leadership model for each country?

• What impact does it have on educational system and process?

• Is the slogan “Think global and act local” still working?

• How can we benefit from different approaches in education?
Cultural Orientations™

These dimensions are adapted from the work of several anthropologists and international business consultants including: Florence Kluckhohn and Frederick Strodtbeck (Variations in Value Orientations); Edward T.Hall (Beyond Culture); Geert Hofstede (Culture’s Consequences: International Differences in Work-Related Values); Charles Hampden-Turner and Alfons Trompenaars (The Cultures of Capitalism)