

PARTT1PLAGO

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Prof. Wallis

World Contemporary History – Hist. 107

Spring 2019

Final Exam

What were the global challenges that faced the United States when it became the superpower after the Soviet Union's collapse in 1991

Identify any ten (10) and their context and significance as related to this class:

1. Six Day War

The Six Day War occurred in June 1967 from 5th to 10th. It was fought between the combined forces of Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, and Egypt who were reinforced by other countries such as Morocco and Pakistan on one side and Israel on the other side (Brooks and Wohlforth 29). The battle was accelerated by huge scale military forces buildups by the closure of Egypt of the Straits of Tiran to shipping of Israeli, irrespective of various Israeli cautions that this would be a war action. With an Israeli attack on the Egyptian Air Force, the war started. The attacks were a total success. For the rest of the war, the air supremacy was pretty much guaranteed to the Israelis.

2. Cuban Missile Crisis

The October 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis was dangerous and direct confrontations between the Soviet Union and the U.S during the Cold War. It was the period when the U.S and the USSR came closest to nuclear conflicts. Featuring secret and direct miscommunications and communications as well as miscalculations and calculations between the two sides, the crisis was a special one. Also, the intense crisis was featured by the facts that it majorly involved the level of Kremlin and White House with comparatively little inputs from the separate governments typically played out in the process of foreign policy (Brooks and Wohlforth 33). The Cuban Missile Crisis greatly enhanced JFK's prestige. By appearing to be a strong President facing down the Soviet Union he increased his domestic support. The crisis took place during the mid-term elections and it was clear that the resolution of the crisis would have electoral implications. Internationally perceptions of US strength were enhanced and allies reassured by the mixture of strength but also of restraint. The Crisis alarmed the general public. Post-apocalypse stories became much more prevalent in general culture.

The Soviet Union tested its first nuclear device in 1949 four years after the US. The Soviet Union remained less advanced in terms of its development of nuclear weapons and delivery systems in 1963. The Soviet Union been at an overwhelming strategic disadvantage and was humiliated (Harff 12). The new Soviet leadership probably came to power as a result of the crisis. They were determined that they would never be humiliated in such a way again. A huge investment was by the Soviet Union to reach strategic parity and the tentative dialogue between the US and Soviet Union curtailed.

3. Gendercide

Assuming only heterosexual relationships, 1 out of every 10 Indian men cannot get married as there are only 9 women for every 10 men in India. This is the average across India and masked by healthy ratios in states such as Kerala. In many parts of Delhi and adjoining Haryana, there are only 8 women for every 10 men. No wonder, Delhi is deadly for women.

A society with a lot of "unmarried men who want to get married, but can't", can be a very dangerous place for women. Depressed, angry and dejected such a society can be a very risky place. Rapes, people trafficking, and sexual violence can go up. Women would be traded. Prostitution would go up. Men would also be very protective of their brides/wives as it might become a prize just and even to get married at all. The violence against women & the difficulty of protecting their kids would make even more prospective parents avoid girl babies; thus, setting up a vicious cycle.

4. Ayatollah Khomeini

Khomeini is a great historical figure. Any man that can lead a movement that topples 2,500 years of the monarchy is a great historical figure. But "great" does not necessarily equal "good". The Ayatollah set Iran back in some areas by approximately 50–75 years. These areas include human rights, minority rights, women's rights, political rights, freedom of the press, judicial rights, and freedom of expression overall (Brooks and Wohlforth 30). Further, he harmed Iran's long term aspirations by isolating it from the rest of the world and approved that Iran now carried the label of a state sponsor of terrorism. He failed to emphasize Iranian ideals and instead focused on pan-Islamist populism that focused more on religion than national identity. Finally, the Ayatollah

allowed the Iran-Iraq war to drag on for 6 additional years following Iran's victories in 1982 that effectively brought them to their pre-war status.

However, the Ayatollah's reign did not suffer from much corruption that came mostly after his death. Through his magnetic charisma as a leader, he was able to convince the Persians to practice sacrifice, piety, and hard work, thereby enabling the people to sustain an eight-year war effort all the while the prices of commodities remained relatively stable, consumer basket of goods stayed available to most, there was an increase in rural infrastructure projects, and renewed interest in God and religion (Harff 23). He was a mixed bag for sure, but one thing is undeniable, Ayatollah Khomeini, a man from humble origins, shocked the world and completely changed the world order.

5. Mikhail Gorbachev

Mikhail Gorbachev was a Russian politician, most famous for having introduced his policies of Glasnost and Perestroika. Through these, he basically revolutionized the existing political system of the Soviet Union. Before Gorbachev, the press and citizens had very little freedom of speech and Glasnost changed that. Similarly, Perestroika also tried to shake up and bring the stagnant Soviet economy back on track. Gorbachev basically made the Soviet political system more liberal and 'democratic' within the confines of socialism. Through these policies as well as other actions, he helped stop the cold war which was this animosity and hostility between the US and Russia.

6. Taliban

'Talib' in the Pashto language means 'student'. So the Taliban literally means 'made of students'. It was initially a movement started by Mullar Omar, a jihadi during the Mujahideen war against the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan. Afghanistan, after the Soviet troops left, was in a pathetic situation. There was no stable Government and so many warlords rose during the Mujahideen because of the ISI & the CIA's support (Brooks and Wohlforth 36). After the war, no one cared for Afghanistan. US's only goal was to drive the Soviets out of Afghanistan, so used the ISI and armed the anti-Soviet people and revolutionists of Afghan. Mullah Omar was one such guy who

fought against the Soviet. After the war was over, as I said, no one cared about Afghans or the country, not even the ISI and CIA.

Omar started this movement named 'Taliban' soon after he became famous, and he utilized this fame to capture more and more provinces and someday entire Afghanistan. Their ultimate goal was to give Afghanistan a stable Government. But as they gained more power, Islamic extremism haunted them and their aim now became to implement radical Islam in the whole country (Harff 33). Osama's and Omar's views of Islam, as well as both their goals and interests, were similar. That is why they became very close friends and the Taliban got connected to Al-Qaeda. After the 9/11 attacks, Osama was under the Taliban's protection and they never agreed to hand him over to the US in spite of the entire world's and the ISI's pressure as well.

7. Al Qaida

It is an umbrella name for all the radical Islamist pan-globalist paramilitary and terrorist organizations that had descended from the radical Islamist mujahidin the USA had imported into Afghanistan to have them fight secular Afghan government and Soviets who were aiding them. However, it has more connotations with Saudi Arabia, who are the main source for leaders, manpower, and funding for these pan Islamist groups. These are just names, in the end, as shown by how easily many Islamist groups just 'switched' their allegiance to ISIL in Syria when it became more beneficial to do so.

8. Muslim Brotherhood

Muslim Brotherhood is a fundamental concept of Islam. It means two persons belonging to different regions, speaking different languages, having different racial origins become bound by Muslim Brotherhood as soon as they embrace Islam as their belief and creed. The only common characteristic of being Muslim is enough to dominate all other identities (Harff 42). Loves of language, culture, customs, clouts, color, caste, race, and country become secondary things. The foremost relationship is Muslim Brotherhood between two Muslims in any part of the

First Muslim Brotherhood was formally created in Mecca when every newcomer who accepted Islam was made a brother of another newcomer Muslim. This was done to create safety against

the oppression of infidels of Mecca (Brooks and Wohlforth 36). When the Prophet migrated to Yathrib/Madina and Muslims followed; the Prophet created a relationship of formal "Muslim Brotherhood" among Muhajireen and Ansar.

9. Tet Offensive

The origins of the Tet Offensive date back to 1945 when Vietnam was under Japanese occupation. The Viet Minh had instigated the August Revolution which was a series of popular uprisings throughout the cities of Vietnam to overthrow the Japanese puppet government that had been ruling since the occupation. The Vietnamese thought they could replicate the results of the August Revolution against the Americans that had just redoubled their efforts in Vietnam as of 1968, having over 549,500 troops in the country alone (Brooks and Wohlforth 38). The idea was that while the NVA and Viet Cong couldn't beat American forces in a conventional setting, they could instead attack strategic points across South Vietnam and hopefully incite chaos across the country that would shake the Americans confidence in a victory. The Saigon government was thought to be shaky enough to topple with relative ease, a quick strike most likely forcing out the extremes placed in the government by the U.S. Even if the offensive were to fail, the psychological impact would be devastating, destroying any idea of American victory and eroding their last public base of support in South Vietnam.

10. Yom Kippur War

The Yom Kippur war was launched by Egypt and Syria to gain back territories lost during the six-day war. It is significant because it restored Arab pride and brought Israel to the negotiating table it led the way to a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.

It was significant because it shook the Israelis out of the Six-Days War euphoria and the illusion that they are untouchables. They learned that the lack of peace (where peace is obtainable, which is not necessarily the case for other conflicts) has its price, and that price is high. It was also significant for the Arabs as they discovered that Israel will not be defeated by war: Israel had the worst starting conditions possible, and yet it was able to defeat both Syria and Egypt.

Egypt and Israel chose to sign a peace agreement, Syria changed tactic to use the PLO, the Palestinians and other guerrilla forces as a tool to slowly erode the security of Israel. This play is

still on today, as more players have joined the table over the years (Brooks and Wohlforth 32). It was significant because the myth of the invincibility of the IDF was shattered and the war ended up with Israel having a bloody nose and had a taste of defeat by Egypt which made it realizes that having peace with Egypt is much better than the state of war.

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GENERAL COMMENTS

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