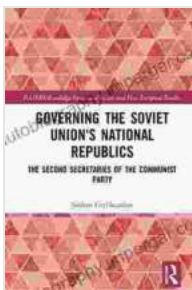


# Political Theory and Community Building in Post-Soviet Russia: Theoretical and Empirical Approaches

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 led to a profound transformation of Russian society. The old communist ideology was discredited, and new political and economic systems were introduced. This period of transition was also marked by a resurgence of interest in community building.

Community building has a long tradition in Russia. In the pre-revolutionary period, communities were often based on religious or ethnic ties. During the Soviet era, communities were largely organized around the workplace or the state. However, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, many of these traditional communities were weakened or destroyed.

In the post-Soviet period, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of community building. This is due in part to the need to address the social and economic problems that have emerged in the wake of the Soviet collapse. Community building can help to provide social support, economic opportunities, and a sense of belonging.



## Political Theory and Community Building in Post-Soviet Russia (BASEES/Routledge Series on Russian and East European Studies)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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However, community building in post-Soviet Russia is a complex and challenging task. There are a number of obstacles that need to be overcome, including:

- The legacy of the Soviet era, which emphasized collectivism and state control.
- The lack of experience with democratic institutions and practices.
- The economic crisis that has plagued Russia since the collapse of the Soviet Union.
- The rise of nationalism and ethnic tensions.

Despite these obstacles, there have been a number of successful community-building initiatives in post-Soviet Russia. These initiatives have taken a variety of forms, and they have been based on a variety of political theories.

Political theory can play an important role in community building. It can provide a framework for understanding the social and political forces that shape community life. It can also help to identify the values and goals that should guide community-building efforts.

There are a number of different political theories that can be used to justify and shape community-building initiatives. Some of the most common theories include:

- **Liberalism:** Liberalism emphasizes the importance of individual rights and freedoms. Liberals believe that communities should be based on voluntary association and that they should be governed by democratic principles.
- **Communitarianism:** Communitarianism emphasizes the importance of community values and traditions. Communitarians believe that communities should be based on shared values and that they should be governed by a shared sense of responsibility.
- **Marxism:** Marxism emphasizes the importance of class struggle. Marxists believe that communities should be based on economic equality and that they should be governed by a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat.
- **Feminism:** Feminism emphasizes the importance of gender equality. Feminists believe that communities should be based on the equal participation of women and men and that they should be governed by principles of gender justice.

These are just a few of the many political theories that can be used to justify and shape community-building initiatives. The choice of theory will depend on the specific goals and values of the community-building initiative.

There have been a number of different community-building initiatives in post-Soviet Russia. These initiatives have taken a variety of forms, and they have been based on a variety of political theories.

Some of the most common community-building initiatives in post-Soviet Russia include:

- **Housing cooperatives:** Housing cooperatives are a form of self-management in which residents own and manage their own housing. Housing cooperatives have been a popular form of community building in post-Soviet Russia because they provide residents with a sense of ownership and control over their living environment.
- **Community gardens:** Community gardens are a form of urban agriculture in which residents grow food together in a shared space. Community gardens have been a popular form of community building in post-Soviet Russia because they provide residents with a way to access fresh, healthy food and to connect with their neighbors.
- **Community centers:** Community centers are a type of public space where residents can gather for a variety of activities, such as socializing, learning, and recreation. Community centers have been a popular form of community building in post-Soviet Russia because they provide residents with a place to socialize and to build relationships with their neighbors.

These are just a few of the many different community-building initiatives that have been undertaken in post-Soviet Russia. These initiatives have had a positive impact on the lives of many Russians, and they have helped to build a sense of community in a rapidly changing society.

The relationship between political theory and community building in post-Soviet Russia is a complex and evolving one. There are a number of different political theories that can be used to justify and shape community-building initiatives, and the choice of theory will depend on the specific goals and values of the initiative.

There are a number of strengths and weaknesses to different political theories and community-building approaches. Liberalism, for example, emphasizes the importance of individual rights and freedoms, but it can also lead to a lack of social solidarity. Communitarianism, on the other hand, emphasizes the importance of community values and traditions, but it can also lead to a lack of individual freedom.

The best approach to community building in post-Soviet Russia is likely to be one that draws on the strengths of different political theories and approaches. This approach should be based on the specific needs and values of the community, and it should be flexible enough to adapt to changing circumstances.

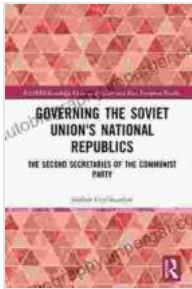
Community building is a complex and challenging task, but it is an essential one for post-Soviet Russia. Community building can help to provide social support, economic opportunities, and a sense of belonging. It can also help to strengthen democratic institutions and practices.

Political theory can play an important role in community building. It can provide a framework for understanding the social and political forces that shape community life. It can also help to identify the values and goals that should guide community-building efforts.

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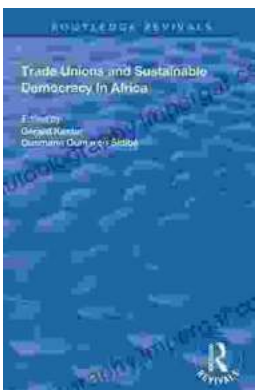
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