

Секция «Возможности и горизонты России в условиях новой политической реальности»

## Characteristics and prospects of political transformation in Russia

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In the early 1990s, Russia embarked on a transformation of its political system, abandoning the Soviet system and introducing a Western constitutional system of separation of powers, and promoting a multi-party system and a policy of liberalization of the press. However, from the changes of Peter the Great to Yeltsin, social change in Russia has not been able to escape from the top-down tradition. The Orthodox Church, which forms the basis of Russian culture, originated in Byzantium, where East meets West. The political, economic and cultural exchanges with Byzantium have contributed to the most direct influence of the Orthodox Church on Russian national culture. For example, the idea of "divine right of kings", the theory of the "Third Rome", and finally the establishment of the "Tsar". The political transformation of Russia was characterized by a combination of Westernization and localization in the context of traditional culture and specific historical conditions.

The Tsarist feudal dictatorship was replaced by a high degree of centralization under Soviet communist rule. In the mid-1980s, Mikhail Gorbachev proposed "reform and new thinking," advocating "openness," "pluralism," and "humanism." The move is aimed at reforming the political and economic system. However, society as a whole soon went to the other extreme, rejecting authoritarianism altogether in favor of Western-style democracy. Public opinion viewed Soviet history as a pitch-black mess and adopted a wholesale rejection of the Soviet socio-political system, economic system, and ideology. Authoritarianism was completely equated with totalitarianism and totalitarianism. The decline of authoritarianism was the result of a combination of reasons. First, because of the long persecution of authoritarianism, people's fear of totalitarianism has instinctively turned into rejection of authoritarianism and desire for democracy. Secondly, the political and legal systems of Western societies made the people yearn for democracy and reject authoritarianism with all their might.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia took an alternative approach to the political model of Western countries. However, the development of democratic politics in Russia is in trouble. The economy was deteriorating and society was in turmoil. The country's chaos and disorder bred a need for authoritarianism. There was a desire to strengthen government authority, to exercise effective control over society, and to maintain social stability. Russia proved unable to replicate the Western model of democracy. The years 1991 to 1993 marked a watershed in Russia's political history, with the transition from one-party rule to a multi-party system. The 1993 referendum and the promulgation of a new constitution established a system of separation of powers that strengthened the power of the president and weakened the power of the parliament. The 2007 party platform introduced the concepts of "sovereign democracy" and "Putin's plan" as part of the "democratic system." The 2007 party program introduced the concepts of "sovereign democracy" and the "Putin Plan" as the core ideological framework of the party.

Putin has taken a number of measures. State ownership has increased in the areas of finance, energy, transportation and media. For example, the crackdown on oligarchic powers has stabilized the political and economic order in Russia. Increased control over the press and media

has largely prevented confrontation. In the control of the instruments of public opinion, Yeltsin chose the method of blocking the media that were unfavorable to him. Putin, on the other hand, used legal and economic means to force individual oligarchs to relinquish their control over the press. In the 15 years of Vladimir Putin's rule, the Russian economy has regained nationalization of key industries such as finance, energy and media. In the past decade, European countries have become increasingly dependent on Russian energy. Strategic energy exports are increasingly used as an instrument of foreign policy. Control of the energy, media and banking sectors has eroded the economic autonomy of non-state actors. Putin is also using the Eurasian Union as a tool to increase trade with East Asia. He is also actively involved in China's New Silk Road project, which connects China to Europe through a series of infrastructure investments signed by member states or underway. Overall, the Russian government today has much broader control over economic activity than it did 20 years ago in the post-communist era.

Russian authoritarian politics is not only characterized by the concentration of power, but also contains the form and content of democracy. Russian scholar A. Migrajan points out that authoritarianism plays an essential stabilizing role in the transition to a democratic society. Since the bourgeois revolution of 1789, France has undergone several revolutions to establish a democratic system over a period of nearly 200 years. However, due to the lack of state authority to guide it, democracy was not really established until the early 1980s. In contrast, the compromise between the emerging bourgeoisie and the aristocracy in Britain, under the authority and efforts of the British King, led to the establishment of the first bourgeois parliamentary democracy in the world. Russia's 1993 Constitution incorporated the principles of the Western constitutional system in many places, while having its own unique constitutional structure. It incorporates elements and mechanisms of the French and American presidential systems that are conducive to strengthening the power of the president and reducing the constraints on his power. To some extent, this has contributed to the phenomenon of "strong president and weak parliament" in Russian political life today. This is why some people call it a "super presidential system".

The "super-presidential system" reflects the centralized character of the Russian authoritarian political structure and the operation of power. Russian scholars differ in their assessment. Proponents of authoritarian politics argue that the interests of national survival take precedence over the interests of building a democratic system. A stable political environment is needed, leading to an inevitable return to centralization. Some scholars see it as transitional in nature. Right-wing liberals, on the other hand, accuse it of being a variant of totalitarianism. At the same time, some Western commentators have accused Russia of developing "authoritarian" tendencies. However, Russia's particular situation dictates that the authoritarian-oriented political structure will continue for a certain period of time. Given Russia's unique political and cultural traditions and human background, as well as the complex domestic and international situation, it is still a difficult process to find a way to move toward a legalistic authoritarian politics. In the unique political and cultural traditions and human background of Russia as well as the complex domestic and international situation, it is still a difficult process to explore a path of one's own.

## References

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