

**Leader and elite positioning  
in hierarchical system  
of power distribution:  
Russian option.**



## LEADER AND ELITE POSITIONING IN HIERARCHICAL SYSTEM OF POWER DISTRIBUTION: RUSSIAN OPTION

### POSICIONAMIENTO LÍDER Y DE ÉLITE EN EL SISTEMA JERÁRQUICO DE DISTRIBUCIÓN DE PODER: OPCIÓN RUSA

#### ABSTRACT

In article evolution of leader and elite imperious positioning within hierarchical system of the imperious relations is considered in the context of the designated world political dynamics (“power vertical”). It is specified change of model of leader representation of the leading head of the state (V. V. Putin): from constituent - to transformational (according to J. Burns). On the basis of data of expert poll parallel changes at the regional and elite level - in their accompanying and interfering aspects are shown.

KEYWORDS: leader and elite positioning, hierarchical system, poliarchaic system, constituent model, transformational model.

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#### RESUMEN

En el artículo, la evolución del líder y la élite del posicionamiento imperioso dentro del sistema jerárquico de las relaciones imperiosas se considera en el contexto de las dinámicas políticas mundiales designadas (“poder vertical”). Se especifica el cambio de modelo de representación líder del líder principal del estado (V. V. Putin): de constituyente a transformacional (según J. Burns). Sobre la base de los datos de la encuesta de expertos, se muestran cambios paralelos a nivel regional y de elite, en sus aspectos acompañantes e interferentes.

PALABRAS CLAVE: posicionamiento líder y élite, sistema jerárquico, sistema poliarchaico, modelo constituyente, modelo transformacional.

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## INTRODUCTION

Considerable changes in aspect of leader and elite positioning were outlined in a global and Russian political situation in recent years. In an essential measure (if not first of all) they act as an administrative projection of the developing world dynamics. It is about the accelerated structuring and considerable increase of influence of political actors on local and civilization, and regional level and redistribution of political and economic “poles” both in the world, and in the national and state dynamics. From here an escalating demand on political leaders of new-old type - leader types which, apparently, consigned far to the past: Stalin, Churchill, De Gaulle, Reagan who not only were able to concentrate huge resources of the power in the hands but also accepted huge responsibility for the made decisions and their consequences for the nation and the whole world.

A new row opens, undoubtedly, V. V. Putin's figure which in world public opinion is perceived as one of the most influential types of the political leader. At the same time, thanks to purposeful influence of globalist media this image is constantly demonized. But also the fact that already shown and observed tendencies of world dynamics are oriented on such type combining the increased responsibility, suspension, but at the same time courage and determination in the made decisions and the subsequent actions is noticeable. The need for such type, the institutes and technologies promoting its formation is confirmed by growth of number of representatives of global political establishment (D. Trump, Xi Jinping, K. Erdogan).

## METHODS AND MATERIALS

How observed tendencies can be explained within a political discourse of the modern political theory? It will be a question of the concept of leader and elite positioning in the context of hierarchical and poliarchaic sys-

tems of distribution of the power in case of elite approach to her understanding as it developed in line with the known polemic of Ch. Mills and R. Dahl and their followers. In this case under “hierarchy” the system of the imperious relations allowing “unipolar” concentration of the power at traditional power institutes as opposed to “diversified” or “multi-polar” concentration of the power in key knots of social networks means. The analysis of evolution of this discussion shows that it develops wavy. At the present stage enough the tendency gravitating to hierarchy in distribution of the power considerably proves. As emphasizes one of the largest modern elitology scientist D. Higli: “On the one hand, apparently, that strengthening of “vertical” tendencies returns us to earlier stages of development of democracy and provides stronger leadership. On the other hand, the elements which are fastening elite and not allowing fight and disagreements to destabilize between them democratic policy are weakened” [Higli 2006: 29-30]. Similar to the fact that in the Russian option this tendency was shown much earlier and is caused not only subjective, but also objective factors. It is about the known concept of “power vertical” and the corresponding political practice which the famous Russian political analyst N. S. Leonov called “the main building of V. V. Putin” (See: [Leonov 2013: 30]. Its manifestations were originally connected first of all with immaturity of civil society and institutes of democracy and need of creation of guarantees of their formation and advance to more mature forms.

At the same time, it is necessary to emphasize that the liberal and critical thought gives interpretation of a tendency to hierarchical distribution of the power as unambiguously authoritative and not corresponding to democratic values. That it is not indisputable and as it was already noted above, the hierarchical model and in the conditions of democratic political culture can have the essential hidden background.

As for the Russian authoritarianism, it is caused not only small experience of democratic management and not created modern democratic political culture, but also a number of the objective factors causing involvement of mobilization approaches to political management. In a domestic political discourse appeals to “the Russian model of management” (A. Prokhorov, A. Parshev) [are rather



characteristic See: [Prokhorov 2002: 121]) within which objectively caused stereotypes of behavior and the power, and the population are described: unstable (mobilization, emergency) and stable (stagnant). It is connected also with a geopolitical arrangement, and interactions of the country (See: [Dynamics of interaction ... 2013]), and climatic features of the environment of existence.

### MAIN PART

Within built and transformed "power vertical" there is no system of leader and elite positioning invariable and. In relation to the first stages of development of system of positioning, in our opinion, the constituent model of political leadership acts as the most adequate model (See: [Krutko 2011]) where the most influential representatives of business elite and political elite act as constituents. Plots in which it was described which of oligarchs and the immediate environment of V. V. Putin influences adoption of significant decisions were very widespread in our domestic political analytics and journalism of 2000-2007. So, N. S. Leonov provides words and estimates from one very frank interview of O. Deripaska: "When the journalist asked O. Deripaska directly whether V. Putin is a manager or itself makes decisions, the oligarch with skill answered: "The president of Russia is the some kind of top manager operating all country. He is the clever adequate person never exceeding limits of the powers ... Under it is possible to give money that we also do. We are the Russian real power. Large business is a part of our technology" [Leonov 2013: 180-181].

However after a decade the situation even if it originally also corresponded to O. Deripaska's vision and some other constituents, significantly exchanged. It's not just that almost all former structure of elite constituents changed and mostly was drawn. Orientations, characteristics of the political leader which became closer to other type which the authoritative researcher of political leadership J. Burns called transformational (see changed: [Burns 1978] at which the governor heading the state increases the moral level of the people and, thanks to it, is improved itself (see in more detail [by Jankovic 2012])). In this case there is an advance from status and position elite type of the leader to an archeological status type within which high creative, meritocratic, manipulative qualities and

characteristics are capitalized that allows to expand significantly a circle of constituents, considering as the main political customer of all citizens of the state. This stage is fixed by political analysts, analyzing the most important messages of the last presidential message of V. V. Putin to Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation 2016: "Practically in each subject of the performance Putin emphasized that the people are a customer of these or those changes and his interests are higher than interests of elite and all system of a state administration" ([Ivanter, Rogozhnikov, Skorobogaty. 2016: 16]). The specified evolution results within the same hierarchical system ("power vertical"). And at the appropriate potential of the political leader there is his transformation in originally national leader.

It is remarkable that a number of foreign researchers analyzed also transformation of the socio-political role repertoire of the authoritative political leader which provides timely change of registers of the highest administrative and political management. So, Fiona Hill and Clifford Gaddy point to six masks roles of V. Putin providing his ascension to tops of the power: "Statesman", "Market expert", "Expert in survival", "Resident", "Stranger", "Person Stories" [Hill, Gaddy 2016].

And what occurs at the regional leader and elite level? And how it reacts to changes in the top management?

Analyzing the current state of elite interaction and their efficiency at the regional level in modern Russia, we conducted expert survey by the technique compatible to the main tools of the Rostov scientific ethnologic school [Ponedelkov, Starostin 2014: 5-18] also received, first, confirmation to the general estimated judgments stated above, and, secondly, rather detailed characteristic of a modern ethnologic situation in data of survey conducted in August, 2016 in 3 Russian regions with number of experts - more than 100 among which the state and municipal heads and employees, representatives of regional administrative and political elite [Ponedelkov, Starostin prevail 2016; 2017].

However, judging by reviews and estimates of experts of valuable orientations of regional elite (and it is representatives in the basic of subelite groups which know the chiefs not from words, and on affairs), it is not democra-

tic elite, not statesmen and not patriots. And, judging by estimates, intensive fight against corruption and bureaucracy in the domestic elite environment is necessary still long.

What factors, determinants promote formation of such dominating valuable installations? The expert positions ranged after processing and noted in the following polling block can serve as the answer to this question: "Note, please, the factors reducing efficiency of actions of representatives of regional political and administrative elite? (to give no more than 3-4 possible answers)" - see tab. 1.

Possible answers	% of answers
1. Corruption	77,1
2. A lead of the power from the people	60,0
3. Bureaucratization of authorities	34,3
4. Low authority of heads	20,0
5. Low professionalism of employees, performers	20,0
6. Weak financial and material resources	17,1
7. Insufficiently developed standard and legal base	17,1

It is easy to notice that experts see the main reasons for inefficiency of elite not in objective, institutional, external factors, and in the low level of the human capital.

It is obvious, difficult to expect some noticeable return at such quality of human material and its spirit in the solution of problems of modernization of the country, an exit from social and economic recession. It is also fixed by experts at the answer to a question: "As if you estimated a contribution of political and administrative elite to innovative development of Russia?" (see tab. 2).

Possible answers	% of answers
1. As insufficient	54,3
2. As hardly noticeable	22,9
3. As considerable	14,3
4. Elite just brakes innovations	5,7
5. I am at a loss with the answer	2,9

Saw relevancy of a contribution only 1 of each 7 experts. Positions of the vast majority - skeptical and critical. It is thought that not so the famous politician and the liberal G. A. Yavlinsky who, reflecting on where there is a country at such elite deals, called the latest

book "Peripheral authoritarianism is far from the truth. As well as where Russia came" [Yavlinsky 2016]. But the main design advising layer concerning the strategy of social and economic and political development in us former, as well as 20 years ago, remains liberal. The Russian President continues to be guided by these recommendations. And only when they lead up a blind alley is forced to become the crisis managing director for what is exposed to liberal criticism as allegedly the adherent of authoritarianism. But political practice of the last years more and more moves to search of other recipes in development strategies. Nevertheless, despite sanctions and lectures from the West, inertia of former approaches remains considerable. And it is still focused on foreign sources. About what our experts were not slow to note, answering a question: "Estimate extent of influence of the foreign organizations on formation of modernization installations of modern Russian elite?" (see tab. 3).

Possible answers	% of answers
1. Average	34,3
2. High	31,4
3. Low	28,6
4. I find it difficult to answer	5,7

In other words 2/3 experts are convinced of westernized valuable installations of modern Russian elite in search of new development strategies. Though it is already obvious that the support on these recipes leads the country to stagnation and degradation.

It was important to find out also as far as the potential of resilience of elite to the progressive and national focused searches disturbs experts. On this case the following question of the questionnaire was used: "In Russia always considerable specific weight was occupied by latent and shadow relationship in the environment of a ruling elite layer. Therefore many high-quality changes in system of the Russian power in Perestroika years and post-Perestroika years of the end of the 20th century were unexpected and tragic for our society. What probability of such cardinal transformations in the next years? How it seems to you?" (see tab. 4).

Possible answers	% of answers
1. Such changes are possible, but their probability low	34,3
2. Probability average in the mode "fifty on fifty"	25,7
3. The probability is almost zero	25,7
4. Cardinal changes are possible and their probability is high	5,7
5. Cardinal changes are inevitable and their probability is very high	2,9
6. I find it difficult to answer	5,7

Though  $\frac{1}{4}$  experts do not see danger from "the fifth column". But more than  $\frac{1}{3}$  consider such changes very probable. So to interests of global elite our experts estimate the potential of aiming at changes of strategy of elite towards submission as significant.

### CONCLUSION

Summarizing the given fragment of results of expert poll in the context of the problems put in article, it is necessary to emphasize that the strategy search conducting in democratic society in Post-Soviet Russia is far from end. On the contrary, in modern circumstances the circle of problems which demand strengthening of these searches, deviation from recipes of the western and westernized liberalism, the appeal to own historical experience, including technologies of formation of the national focused state elite and actively influencing them and their list of regional leaders and the national leader was designated. ■

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