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## Models of transformation of political elites: possibilities of application in Russia

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### Abstract

The paper summarizes research in the field of generalization of models of the life cycle of political elites, proves the position that the existing tools and methods of updating the national political elite in modern research are considered within the framework of the "innovation-tradition" dichotomy. It is proved that there is no unambiguous answer about how effectively a regional elite can be formed under the conditions of using various methods and models in modern research on the basis of both the Russian and foreign political process. It is shown that the current model of renewal of the regional elite in Russia has a hybrid character, when after the introduction of gubernatorial elections in most subjects of Russia, the heads of regions were first appointed by the President, but in most cases among regional political leaders, and later, in the case of establishing a civil dialogue, they were chosen by voting. It is shown that this model can be used only in the conditions of the formation of the institute of renewal of regional elites, however, to assess the effectiveness of the activities of this institute when the configuration of the national political elite changes is the direction of further research.

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**Keywords**

Regional political elites, renewal of elites, political process, gubernatorial elections, civil dialogue.

**Introduction**

The definition of the category of political elite in scientific research in different countries has significant differences. Thus, in developing countries, it is customary to refer to the regional political elite, including all the forces influencing its formation and renewal, such as the regional business community, in studies on political processes in developed countries, it is customary to refer to the business elite representatives of government and local self-government. Currently, Russian studies are only forming provisions regarding the application of the category of regional political elite in aspects of its effectiveness in decision-making. Meanwhile, the study of this category in relation to the political process in various manifestations, including in the aspect of renewal, is the most urgent scientific problem. In modern political science, a number of provisions have now been developed regarding the study of the category of political elite, the differences between this category and the political system of a region or country, its governance. In particular, the characteristics of this phenomenon were determined, including such as renewal, role in the political process, efficiency of decision-making, and in most studies different methodologies are used to assess this phenomenon.

**Main content**

The concept of "political elite, in modern political science, in relation to different levels of political processes is increasingly becoming the subject of research, but at the same time, the definitions of this category vary significantly.

A variety of criteria for attributing political figures to the elite were investigated, but already in the earliest works it was noted that the socio-economic development of the country as a whole or a separate region is closely related to the effectiveness of the political elite, its renewal. The term "political elite" was introduced into scientific circulation at the beginning of the 20th century and was defined as the ability to control other people on the basis of superiority in intellectual, moral or material terms.

A number of studies have shown that it is very significant that the political elite belongs to a certain ideology. In modern research, a functional approach to the formation of the political elite prevails on the basis of the ideas that it tries to implement in political activity, through their implementation both within the party system and independently.

Today, it is customary to separate the political elites who make strategic decisions significant for the country, and the elites who make decisions at the regional level. But it is worth noting that there is a relationship between national and regional political elites.

Examining the models of renewal of political elites, we can say that we are talking about the points of view regarding the impact of various "agents of influence" on their appearance, namely, "promotion from below" or "appointment from above". In the scientific literature, there is an unresolved question about the effectiveness of these models. The "promotion from below" model is characterized by the fact that the regional elite is formed through the opposition of regional authorities. The "appointment from above" model is a situation where the head of a region or a regional legislative assembly is

appointed by the President. There are also hybrid models when the head of state supports one of the parties in a political confrontation or appoints a potential leader to a position before the elections.

In world practice, there are several theses about the change of political elites. One of them is "strong elites become even stronger." Another is that virtually all democratic institutions, such as the regional parliamentary process, have less and less influence on the political process, when the influence of the regional executive power is incomparably higher than the legislative one. In Russian conditions, this trend is intensified due to the influence of the President and his administration in the process of not only state regulation, but also the political process. This trend was also revealed in the works of more than a decade ago in relation to the transformation of the regional political system in many countries.

The process of formation of regional elites in the USSR was not stable and depended on several external factors. The evolution of the process of updating regional political elites in Russia has undergone significant changes since their first change. At that time, the process of elite renewal was associated with conflicts, but as a result of their resolution, the "rules of the game" of this process were institutionalized, one institution was replaced by another. In the future, the change of regional elites occurred at the beginning of the 20th century after the change of economic and political course. Also, at the same time, the models of its implementation were repeatedly transformed. Thus, we can say that a change of ideology or key ideas accompanies the renewal of the regional elite.

Since the 90s of the last centuries, the manifestation of the evolution of the renewal of regional elites is characteristic of such a political process as the election of the heads of subjects. Elections were held in all regions of Russia at intervals of four or five years. However, in addition, in most cases, the renewal process itself did not take place, in fact, the opinion of the population was not considered, and the regional elite formed as a result of such elections was ineffective in decision-making. As a result, a mechanism was formed to select the most "successful" candidate through several unethical political technologies, and the renewal processes themselves were associated with significant violations. Later in the election process, the main institutions for appointing the heads of the subjects of the federation were formulated.

The existing model has a hybrid character, when after the introduction of gubernatorial elections in most Russian regions, the heads of regions were first appointed by the President, but in most cases among regional political leaders, and later, in the case of establishing a civil dialogue, they were chosen as a result of voting. The heads of regions were appointed among representatives of regional political elites, while most often a choice was made in favor of the heads of governors of a younger age, which was also supposed to contribute to the renewal of regional elites.

To study the effective formation of the regional elite, it is necessary to conduct a comprehensive analysis not only of the elections themselves, but also of the instruments for the formation of regional legislative assemblies. It is shown that this model can be used only in the conditions of the formation of the institute of renewal of regional elites, however, to assess the effectiveness of the activities of this institute when the configuration of the national political elite changes is the direction of further research. The repeated elections currently taking place indicate that in most cases, after the appointment and the first term, the current heads of regions retain their positions, in fact, the situation has not changed from the position of the composition of the participating political movements and parties and their ratio. All this indicates that there is no unambiguous answer about how effectively a regional elite can be formed within the framework of such an approach to its institutionalization.

Currently, it is not possible to reliably determine whether the political elite that can effectively

make decisions and implement the values shared by the regional community is being formed by the population of the region. Therefore, according to the authors, it is from the standpoint of this approach that it is necessary to re-evaluate the recent elections, as well as the resulting transformations of regional political elites in order to answer the question whether the change in approaches to the renewal of regional elites, such as the cancellation of elections and the appointment of heads of regions, has allowed. In the future, the appointment of regional leaders "before the elections" will create an institution that allows the renewal of regional elites within the framework of the political process. According to the authors, the conceptual basis of such a study should be the consideration of the institute of renewal of regional political elites as an institution from the perspective of the dichotomy of the presence or absence of civil dialogue between the regional political elite and all layers of society.

## Conclusion

It can be said that it is a proven fact that there is no unambiguous answer to the question of which of the models of renewal of regional elites is the most effective. At the same time, modern research is focused on comparing how much the national political elite can interfere in this process - directly appoint the heads of regions and, accordingly, thus determine the composition of the regional elite, through the influence of the "ruling party" or the nomination of political leaders should occur as a result of the political process. In modern research, a number of provisions have been formed regarding the activities of political elites, the key of which is that a certain regional political elite is the bearer of ideas and values. Its transformation means a change in the ideology of the implementation of the political process.

It is necessary to investigate this problem from the position of having a full-fledged civil dialogue in the regional political process. According to the authors, these approaches do not allow us to assess whether the model of renewal of regional elites formed as a result of a series of successive transformations is effective, especially if it is studied only within the framework of an established dichotomy, since it is obvious that the effectiveness of decisions made by the elite is not always determined by the institutional mechanism of its formation.

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## Модели трансформации политических элит: возможности применения в России

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### Аннотация

В статье обобщаются исследования в области обобщения моделей жизненного цикла политических элит, обосновывается положение о том, что существующие инструменты и методы обновления национальной политической элиты в современных исследованиях рассматриваются в рамках дихотомии "инновация-традиция". Доказано, что нет однозначного ответа о том, насколько эффективно может формироваться региональная элита в условиях использования различных методов и моделей в современных исследованиях на основе как российского, так и зарубежного политического процесса. Показано, что нынешняя модель обновления региональной элиты в России носит гибридный характер, когда после введения губернаторских выборов в большинстве субъектов России главы регионов сначала назначались Президентом, но в большинстве случаев из числа региональных политических лидеров, а позже, в случае налаживания гражданского диалога, выбирались путем голосования. Показано, что данная модель может быть использована только в условиях формирования института обновления региональных элит, однако оценка эффективности деятельности этого института при изменении конфигурации национальной политической элиты является направлением дальнейших исследований.

### Для цитирования в научных исследованиях

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### Ключевые слова

Региональные политические элиты, обновление элит, политический процесс, губернаторские выборы, гражданский диалог.

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