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**JUMP OUT OF THE USSR:
AN ATTEMPT OF PRO-WESTERN MODERNIZATION
OF POST-SOVIET RUSSIA IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 1990s**

Summary. *The purpose of the article is to analyze in a historical context the experience of introducing market reforms in Russia in the first half of the 1990s by the method of so-called «shock» therapy and the revival of democratic processes on the Russian national land. The research methodology is based on the fundamental principles of objectivity and historicism, which involve consideration of particular phenomena and processes in their development and close connection with the system of relevant social relations. Any historical fact investigated in the article is considered in the development, against the background of specific historical circumstances, which implies the use of a method of comparative analysis, which has clarified the essence of many significant events for the Russian socio-political thought of this period. The research novelty is based on the fact that with the help of available and previously unpublished sources from Russian archives, an attempt was made to comprehend the*

pro-Western modernization of Russia in the late 1980s and early 1990s in the general context of Russian history. **Conclusions.** Particular attention is paid to the ideological and civilizational influence of the West on modernization processes in Russia in general and in the post-Soviet period in particular. The resuscitation, under the influence of pro-Western democratic values, traditional for the Russian socio-political thought of the direction of «Western» and the representatives of the further perspective of the national-civilizational progress of their own country were traced. The reasons for the failure of pro-Western modernization of post-Soviet Russia, the strengthening of anti-Western society, demodernization sentiment with the further collapse of democratic institutions and processes are considered. The beginning of the 1990s in Russian history is a period of crisis, once again connected with the disintegration of the empire and the subsequent attempts to implement democratic pro-Western civilizational and ideological practices. Similar to previous historical periods (for example, the February Revolution of 1917), the attempt to democratize Russia in the early 1990s failed. The miscalculations of economic reforms («shock therapy») by the government of E. Gaidar, the weakness of democratic traditions and civil society institutions, strong positions in the socio-political discourse of imperial-revanchist sentiments, ultimately discredited the pro-Western liberal path. At the turn of the 2000s, another neo-imperial restoration took place in Russia. The cycle of Russian history has returned to authoritarianism.

Key words: Russia, the West, «Westerners», radical liberals, reforms.

СТРИБОК ІЗ СРСР: СПРОБА ПРОЗАХІДНОЇ МОДЕРНІЗАЦІЇ ПОСТРАДЯНСЬКОЇ РОСІЇ У ПЕРШІЙ ПОЛОВИНІ 1990-х рр.

Анотація. Мета дослідження – в історичному контексті проаналізувати досвід запровадження у Росії першої половини 1990-х рр. ринкових реформ методом так званої «шокової» терапії й відродження демократичних процесів на російському національному ґрунті. **Методологія дослідження** спирається на фундаментальні принципи об'єктивності та історизму, що передбачають розгляд окремих явищ і процесів у їх розвитку та тісному зв'язку із системою відповідних суспільних відносин. Будь-який історичний факт, що досліджується в роботі, розглядається у розвитку, на фоні конкретно-історичних обставин, що передбачає застосування методу порівняльного аналізу, завдяки якому з'ясовано сутність багатьох знакових для російської суспільно-політичної думки зазначеного періоду подій. **Наукова новизна** полягає у тому, що на основі доступних, а також раніше не опублікованих джерел із російських архівів, здійснено спробу осмислити прозахідну модернізацію Росії наприкінці 1980-х – початку 1990-х рр. в загальному контексті російської історії. **Висновки.** Особливу увагу акцентовано на ідейно-цивілізаційному впливі Заходу на модернізаційні процеси у Росії загалом та у пострадянській період зокрема. Прослідковано реанімацію, під впливом прозахідних демократичних цінностей, традиційного для російської суспільно-політичної думки напрямку «західництва» та бачення його представниками подальшої перспективи національно-цивілізаційно поступу власної країни. Розглянуто причини провалу прозахідної модернізації пострадянської Росії, посилення в суспільстві антизахідних, демодернізаційних настроїв із подальшим зортанням демократичних інститутів й процесів. Початок 1990-х рр. в російській історії – кризовий період, вкотре пов'язаний із розпадом імперії та подальшими спробами імплементації демократичних прозахідних цивілізаційно-світоглядних практик. Подібно до попередніх історичних періодів (наприклад, Лютнева революція 1917 р.) спроба демократизації Росії на початку 1990-х рр. зазнала невдачі. Прорахунки економічних реформ («шокової терапії») уряду Є. Гайдара, слабкість демократичних традицій та інститутів громадянського суспільства, міцні позиції в суспільно-політичному дискурсі імперсько-реваншистських настроїв, у кінцевому підсумку дискредитували прозахідний ліберальний шлях країни. На рубежі 2000-х рр. у Росії відбулася чергова неоімперська реставрація. Цикл російської історії повернувся до чергового авторитаризму.

Ключові слова: Росія, Захід, «західники», радикал-ліберали, реформи.

The problem statement. Modernization processes in Russia, beginning with the proclamation of the empire on 22 October 1721 by Peter I of and ending with the legal dissolution of the USSR in December 1991, were characterized by certain defining and common features for different historical periods. Thus, the decisive impetus and response

(according to A. Toynbee) to the beginning of reforms of Peter I, Alexander II and Stalin's Great Fracture was the «challenge» (military, economic, civilizational, class) from the West. It was the West, in its broad cultural and civilizational dimension, in the history of Russian reforms, which was the decisive catalyst for change, forcing the ruling elite of Russia to «cut the window on Europe», to undertake liberal reforms in response to the defeat of the West in the Crimean War (1853 – 1856), to embody a policy of «industrialization» in the «hostile capitalist environment» of the West. Therefore, in spite of the constant criticism of the West by the relevant directions of Russian socio-political thought (Slavophiles, Eurasians), constant statements about the perniciousness in the Russian national project of Western values, the existence of Russia without the West was not possible. The presence of fictitious or real dangers on the part of the West prompted Russian elites to modernize the country, following Western patterns of behavior and life in the economy and culture. Ultimately, it was the anti-Western rhetoric that served as an important basis for the demodernization processes in Russia (the curtailment of democratic freedoms, repression and terror) and became an integral element of Russian national identity.

Another common feature of the history of Russian modernization is its «jumping» character, unlike the West, where similar processes have evolved «from the bottom» and «matured» for centuries. Implementing reforms, the Russian ruling elite tried to revolutionize «from the top» in the shortest possible time to modernize their country: to «jump» into Europe in the XVIII century, quickly capitalize it in the second half of the XIX century or turn into an industrial giant in two «five years» in the 1930s. This resulted in a peculiar Russian version of modernization – a symbiosis of local traditionalism and modern pro-Western influences. Thus, for example, the manufactures (introduced by Peter I) were based on the serf labor of the peasants, while in Europe they were freelance. Stalin's modernization «from the top» has led to significant imbalances in the economy in favor of manufacturing means of production. As a result, the Soviet Union has not been able to develop, in contrast to the West, high-tech industries in the service sector after World War II. The costly and inefficient Soviet command-and-control model of the economy failed to move into the post-industrial stage of its development, and the Kremlin leaders' slogan «to catch up and overtake America» proved to be another propaganda bluff.

The analysis of the recent research. The sources for writing the article were reflections and analysis of the present reality and vision of the country's future and its main ways of development, expressed by the leading representatives of public-political thought of Russia in the first half of the 1990s in the press, magazines, published political proclamations, etc. Unknown documents from the Russian archives have been introduced for the first time into scientific circulation, which relate to the activities and worldview of the liberal segment of Russian socio-political thought in the early 1990s. Among recent works on the problems of the history of Russian liberalism of the 1990s, one can distinguish the research of A.V. Golovchenko (Golovchenko, 2015). Among the foreign authors, the work of Padma Desai, an American expert at the Center for Transit Economics at Columbia University (New York), who paid particular attention to the analysis of market liberal reforms of the Yeltsin-Gaidar government known as «shock therapy» (Desai, P.), is noteworthy.

The purpose of the article. To analyze attempts to democratize and liberalize Russia in the first half of the 1990s and find out the reasons for their failures.

Statement of the basic material. In the history of Russia, 1991 can be compared with the year 1917, which became a turning point and led, under the influence of the Great

War of 1914 – 1918, to the February Revolution, the fall of the empire and the attempt of democratic modernization, the Bolshevik revolution and the revival of imperial structures under the new name of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The confrontation with the West in the Cold War has caused a deep social and economic crisis of the cumbersome and inefficient economic system of the USSR. The entire period of 1961 – 1985 was characterized by a continuous decline in economic development. Too much military load on the economy has contributed to a huge imbalance in the economy. The USSR has been confronted with a whole host of crises, including the lag in the arms race, the reluctance of the Soviet people to accept the role of dumb objects, etc. Nursing privileges, inefficiency of the bureaucratic apparatus, arbitrariness and irresponsibility of officials, corruption caused general outrage. Socio-political contradictions were imposed on ethno-national ones (Chubar'jan, 2007, p. 735). Attempts by the new Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) Secretary General, Mikhail Gorbachev, to modernize the existing Soviet socio-economic model (in the context of the XXVII Congress of the CPSU's «perestroika» proclaimed in February 1986) were essentially to return to the elements of the previous Bolshevik «New Economic Policy» (NEP) of the 1921 model. Not wanting to eliminate the main obstacle to reform - the monopoly of the CPSU to power, Gorbachev's modernization of the USSR was therefore not systematic, aimed at a radical restructuring of the command-administrative model of governance created in the 1930s and failed. Finally, on 8 December 1991, the leaders B. Yeltsin (Russia), L. Kravchuk (Ukraine), and S. Shushkevich (Belarus) signed an agreement to dissolve the USSR in the Belovezhskaya Pushcha.

The disappearance of the Soviet Union's geopolitical map of the world has put a new leadership in Russia (the Russian Federation since 1991), which came to power in the wake of a broad democratic movement, in front of new modernization challenges. In contrast to the Soviet period, the West and its democratic values have now become a key prerequisite for reforming Russia, and its criticism has virtually disappeared from socio-political discourse. The country is starting to organize itself a civil society that calls for democratic change. In the wake of the turn to the West and its values in post-Soviet Russia, such a trend of socio-political thought as «Western» has been revived for it since the XIX century.

The overwhelming majority of «new Russian Westerners» believed in a single main path of human development, linked it to the West, and considered Western political and economic institutions a model for imitation, and even something inevitable for Russia and the rest of the world (Tcygankov, Tcygankov, 2005, p. 4). An outstanding Russian writer and dissident V. Aksenov was convinced that the revival of Russia was unthinkable outside the context of Western civilization. «In order to survive or simply offer our children and offspring a better life,» he is convinced, «we must absolutely become part of the European-American, Christian world.» (Aksenov, 1993, p. 200).

The basis of modernization of Russia was recognized by the «Westerners» as «the preservation of its role as a European nation», which foresaw the rejection of the global imperial policy and ideological messianism of the previous Union. Such a question raised the prospect of sound domestic economic reforms – the preconditions for Russia's national revival (Zagorskii, Zlobin, Solodovnik, Khrustalev, 1992, p. 13). The determinants of Russian modernization should be «the physical and moral recovery of the Russians, the education of life skills in an electoral democracy and a competitive market economy» (Orlov, 1995).

In 1992, the «Westerners» organized the «Civil Society» movement in Russia, the main purpose of which was to build a civilized civil society, under which self-government bodies

and various public organizations would be able to exert a significant influence on governing bodies, subordinating the activities of the state and political parties, current interests, views and ambitions of their leaders and governing structures, and the implementation of orders that are constantly (and not only during elections) received through public unities «bottom-up» and only performed by officials and politicians. The main niche of its daily work was seen by the «Civil Society» movement in the interval between election campaigns, in the creation of various social forms (self-government bodies, trade unions, etc.), which were able to provide direct collective participation of citizens in solving their problems and at the same time the problems of society. The main means of achieving this goal were considered by the organizers of the movement as the direct creation of various self-government bodies and public participation in solving specific problems of territories, industries, population groups, etc. Self-governing committees, trade unions, consumer associations, human rights organizations, that is, all public institutions that «establish a direct reciprocal relationship between the citizen and the state in the person of its bodies and numerous officials and are able to try to put the work of officials and politicians together under public control of society», could become full members of the «Civil Society» (Central Archive of Political History of Moscow, f. 8644, d. 1, c. 4, p. 2, 4, 5).

In the wake of Russian society's demand for immediate change, many liberal democratic parties and movements are united around pro-Western reforms. In the beginning, most of the then democratic parties and movements united into a single coalition based on the broad public Movement «Democratic Russia» (DR), whose constituent assembly was held on 20–21 October 1990 in Moscow. At the opening of the forum, it was stated that the DR was the «successor to all the previous Russian democratic movement» (Danilov & Zasorin, 1992, p. 28). In 1991, DR offices were established in more than 300 settlements of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR), in particular in all regional and republican centers, and the number of DR members reached not less than 200–300 thousand people (Korguniuk, 1996). In the Declaration promulgated, the Movement intended to pursue a free market, free enterprise and competition; different forms of ownership; pluralism in politics, ideology and culture; dismantling the totalitarian state system, the consistent realization of the right of nations to self-determination, etc. (Koval, 1991, p. 307–309).

Since December 1991, the Public Committees of Russian Reforms (PCRR) have begun to emerge in Russia. From 29 February to 1 March 1992, the All-Russian PCRR Practical Conference was held in Moscow, attended by 248 participants from 71 regions of the country. Leading figures of the Liberal Democratic Movement of Russia, including Vice Prime Minister M. Poltoranin, Chairman of the State Committee on State Property Management A. Chubais, Chairman of the Antimonopoly Committee of Moscow O. Novikov, and others spoke at the conference. The main purpose of the activities of the Public Committees was that the participants of the conference announced a comprehensive promotion of radical economic reforms aimed at establishing genuine market relations and repelling any forces that could impede such transformations. The public committees also declared their full support for the «strategic line of the Russian government, headed by B. Yeltsin,» because its activities «truly aimed at radical reforming of the Russian economy» (Russian State Archive of Social and Political History, f. 661, d. 1, c. 84, p. 14, 15). One of the leaders of the Democratic Russia movement, L. Ponomarev, described the goal of the PCRR in the context of «uniting the efforts of society to fully support radical economic and social transformations in the Russian Federation» (Krasnikov, 1992).

In the summer of 1992, an attempt to unite democratic forces was carried out by leaders of the deputy group «Reform» and the parliamentary Coalition of Reforms, which included fractions the Democratic Russia and Radical Democrats. On 4–5 July 1992, a Reform Supporters Forum was held in Moscow, attended by approximately two thousand participants, representing more than 40 parties, public organizations, parliamentary factions, and many key members of the Russian government (acting Prime Minister E. Gaydar, Deputy Prime Minister A. Chubais, Foreign Minister A. Kozyrev, etc.). The Forum reached an agreement to launch a powerful bloc of democratic forces in support of reform and government. The main priorities for the further modernization of Russia were the transformation of society into a community of private owners, economically free citizens, and opposition to totalitarian-communist and pro-fascist tendencies (Ivanov-Smolenskii, 1992).

The socio-economic pro-Western modernization of Russia, the essence of which was to move from Soviet command-and-control practices to Western free-market models, began in the autumn of 1991 with the reign of E. Gaidar and with the support of Russian President B. Yeltsin. The policy, which was intended to solve the problem of rapid transition to a market economy, was called «shock therapy». The term «shock therapy» pretty clearly reflected the essence of governmental measures – to «cure» the Russian economy from socialism in a quick and sharp way (Bezborodov, 2009, p. 277). In the history of Russian modernization, it was another jump», this time from the USSR to the West and its socio-economic model.

The world-view modernization principles of the Yeltsin-Gaidar government reforms were to reduce state intervention in private enterprise, monetarism, and reduce public social programs. Such views were called radical-liberalism, which corresponded to the classical bourgeois liberalism of the West, which in the late XX century became a liberal-conservative ideology called «Thatcherism» and «"Reaganomics"» (Sogrin, 1996, p. 41). The public-sector of radical liberals were perceived solely as a source of corruption, a favorable environment for the intertwining of state and criminal interests and structures, and social support for the population was justified only in a transitional period. Thus, K. Borovoi (leader of the Party of Economic Freedom (PEF) and organizer of the Russian Commodity Exchange) assured the Russian public that «a very efficient economy» can be obtained only with small taxes, as well as the lack of state ownership in large enterprises and without a powerful public sector as a whole (Borovoi, 1993, p. 107, 113).

Further practical steps to implement the program and ideas of «shock therapy» during the end of 1991 – 1993 proved the failure of the «jump» of Russia into the free market of the Western sample. In the global civilizational dimension, the experience of two years of reforming the Russian economy has shown that radical-liberal ideology was utopian in advance, because the rapid entry into the market does not yet provide the society with stabilization based on the models of Western civilization, which has spent several centuries on forming its own economic well-being. The use of the shock therapy method was ineffective under the conditions of substantial preservation of elements of a super-centralized planned economy, which played a devastating role in the Russian economy in the early 1990s, turning it into a raw material appendage of developed industrialized countries (Bezborodov, 2009, p. 305).

The impoverishment of a large part of the population on the background of rapid enrichment of a small group of people, due to speculative capital, has led to rapid disappointment and disillusionment with the broader circles of the Russian public about the modernization capabilities of Western economic and social structures on the domestic national land. Most of the intellectual elite of post-Soviet Russia began to look for a special

civilization path for their country, while adapting to the present-day realities the anti-Western constructions of traditional ideas of Slavophilism and Eurasianism for Russia's socio-political thought. Thus, despairing from the reforms of the Yeltsin-Gaydar government, the former Western supporter, the famous scientist and thinker O. Panarin (1940 – 2003), who saw no prospects for Russia in case of its European self-identification, became a convinced anti-Westerner and Eurasian. Having become part of the «European family», O. Panarin is convinced, that Russia will automatically lose its former role, becoming from the leader of the non-Western «second world», which recently remained the USSR, to a backward, poor relative of the West. Formerly convinced Westerners blamed the modern liberals for denying Russia the right to civilize creativity, while imposing a passive role on the student (Panarin, 1993, p. 6, 9).

Having accumulated certain ideological tenets of a new reading of Slavophilism and Eurasianism, the pro-Western modernization vector of Russia's development was denied by the largest anti-Western political force at the time – the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) and its leader G. Ziuganov. Support for its slogans and programmatic frameworks in Russian society are evidenced by the fact that the Communist Party won the elections to the State Duma in December 1995 with the result of 22.3% of the vote (over 15 million Russians who participated in the elections). In G. Ziuganov's program treatise «Russia is my motherland. The ideology of state patriotism», the basis of the ideological doctrine is a traditionalist teaching, which rejects the Western-liberal path of Russia, individualistic ethics and the «idols» of the free market. Elements of this doctrine are «the Russian idea, supplemented by the modern realities of life and those social conquests of socialism that have been achieved during the 70 years of Soviet power»; understanding of the state's role as a «roadmap» of Russian history and a key factor in the country's development; recognition of the priority of state interests over the interests of the individual, social, corporate and ethnic groups; rejection of the class approach in favor of the thesis on the organic unity (catholicity) of the Russian nation; interpreting the Russian nation as the nucleus of Russian and Soviet statehood (Ziuganov, 1996, p. 93).

Against the backdrop of the failures of radical market transformations, Russian liberal forces, especially those close to power, are also beginning to evolve toward traditional Russian statehood, increasingly ignoring the priority for freedom and inalienable rights of the individual and citizen over the Western values in comparison with the state. Thus, created at the end of May 1995 on the Kremlin movement «Our Home is Russia», headed by the Head of the Government of the Russian Federation V. Chernomyrdin (1938 – 2010), declared a decisive refusal to support any «radical forces of both the right and left direction, which strive to destroy order and stability»; the movement's program stated «the completion of the liberal stage of reforming the Russian economy» and «building a mixed socially oriented economic system.» The foreign policy section of the program «flirted» with the great state feelings of the Russians, speaking that Russia «was, is and will be a great world power», because of this «the development of close integration of the CIS countries» should take place exclusively under the auspices of Russia (Analiticheskii tsentr «Izvestii», 1995).

By the mid-1990s, the Democratic Choice of Russia (DCR), led by the consistent Westerner E. Gaidar, has continued to be established on 13 June 1994, through a force that consistently defended pro-Western liberal values in post-Soviet Russia. The first Chechen war (1994 – 1996), which became a kind of «litmus test» for Russian liberals, forced the DCR to openly distance itself not only from the government of V. Chernomyrdin, but also

from B. Yeltsin. In the «Chechen issue» the DCR faction in the State Duma, although was not ready to recognize Chechnya's independence, has actively called for talks to end armed confrontation, exchange of prisoners, aid for the wounded, etc., so as to create preconditions for free and fair elections in a republic under international control (CAPHM, f. 8716, d. 1, c. 33, p. 3, 4).

The Third (extraordinary) Congress of the DCR, held in Moscow on 26 August 1995, decided to join the party in the election bloc Democratic Choice of Russia – United Democrats (DCR – UD) (CAPHM, f. 8716, d. 1, c. 33, p. 11). Contrary to criticism from NATO and the European Union, which has been increasingly heard in public statements by leaders of pro-Kremlin «parties of power», the DCR – UD has demanded greater political, economic and military cooperation with democratic countries, especially with the European Union and NATO. «We will resist,» the unification platform noted, «any recurrence of imperial ideology and militaristic consciousness» (CAPHM, f. 8716, d. 1, c. 33, p. 37).

As a result of voting in the State Duma in December 1995, the DCR – UD bloc was defeated without breaking the five percent passing barrier (3.86% of votes). Liberals of the so-called «first wave», who came to power in 1991 and were primarily responsible for conducting a «shock» to the West by «shock therapy», found themselves on the sidelines of the further Russian history. The defeat of the radical liberals forced E. Gaidar to express doubts about the reliability of the Russian democratic institutions and to preserve such basic structures of civil society as the free press, fair and fair elections within the statutory terms (CAPHM, f. 8716, d. 2, c. 13, p. 22).

Conclusions. At the turn of the 1980s – 1990s, a new Russian «Western» was ideologically and institutionally resurrected in the social and political mind of Russia, whose representatives saw the future of their country in the consistent implementation of the key post-Soviet statehood of key liberal-democratic values. Another historic attempt at pro-Western modernization of Russia in the early 1990s, the new Russian «Westerners» saw a rapid «jump» toward a market economy and liberal democracy, through the dismantling of the old command-and-control system by «shock therapy» tested in some countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The economic miscalculations of young reformers in the Yeltsin-Gaidar government, the absence of a stable market and democracy traditions in the Russian society itself, as well as the resistance of conservative supporters of traditional great power values led to the failure of Russia's democratization and its final return in 1990 and the achievements of the late 1980s – early 1990s.

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