

## ABSTRACT

As a multi-ethnic federation nation, Russia, since its independence in 1991, initiated market reform and embarked on establishing a democratic system. In the process of this transformation, it had to confront many challenges related to ethnicity and democratization. Democratization is a long and complex process and, more than often, not an easy road. Russia too, hence, was not exempted from facing such challenges.

The federalism of Russia has inherited some remnants of its legacy from former Soviet Union. Former Soviet Union's policy of regional autonomy based on ethnicity has had substantial degree of influence on Russia's federalism. The federalism is regarded by many people as a systematic mechanism which is able to accommodate a multi-ethnic culture. However, Russia, at the very onset of adopting this system, had to confront many forces which supported ethnic separation. Unification became a mere agenda not mutual consensus. The relationship between federalism and ethnic autonomy and development became an important issue for the future of Russia. This paper hereby chooses the federalism of Russia and ethnic autonomy as the topic of the thesis, and selects the 1990s as the focal point of this analytical study.

The analytical framework of this paper exploits the approach of new-institutionalism to examine a post-Communist Russia. Our paper comprises of three key frameworks for analysis. First, we will pick one of the relatively distinct concepts of democratic transition—"Pacted Transitions" to analyze Russia's democratization process. Let's take the reference of political expert Terry Lynn Karl's study on compromise. His analysis on pacts includes both basics and managerial, thus offering a much better understanding on pacts. At the same time, he employs strategy and leadership as variables to create modes of transition to democracy. The writer of this paper amends this chart to include two additional variables. From the aspect of strategy and leadership, we can analyze some of the compromises undertaken by the federalism and regional autonomies including the "Union Treaty," the Federation Treaty, the Constitution of Russian Federation, "On Delimitation of Jurisdictional Subjects and Mutual Delegation of Authority between the State Bodies of the Russian Federation and the Russian Federation and the State Bodies of the Republic of Tatarstan," the Civic Accord, the

power-sharing agreements between Russian federal government and its subjects, etc, which Russia encountered during its transition process. In addition to these, this paper will also accommodate in its analysis chart the ethnic republics of Tatarstan and Chechnya - two most prominent regional forces during the initial period of Russia's transition, plus three study cases on Kalmykia, Buryat and Tuva.

All the above mentioned treaties and agreements, with the exception of the Civic Accord, had significant influence on the development of Russia's federalism and the interrelationship between the Federation and the territories. Here we'll discover that, except for the "Constitution of Russian Federation" which can be classified as "Imposition" in the mode of "Cooperation between the elite and the mass", the rest belong to the mode of "Compromise" in "Elite Ascendant". Even though most of the agreements were conceived by way of compromises, but since the national constitution was passed and approved in a coercive manner, this has remained as one of the predominant reason for the subsequent instability of the Russian Federation. Secondly, while referring to the theories proposed by various political experts on the federalism, including studies on asymmetrical federalism, we can examine the arrangement of the Russian Federalism and analyze its characteristics from its constitution's perspective on division of powers and jurisdictions between the center and the territories. From the analyses of these experts, wherein they infer that this type of asymmetrical federalism holds potential for generating conflicts and does not have any positive influence towards the development of the federalism, even to the extent of possible undermining of the federation's unification, we can provide some explanation for the instability of the Russian Federation.

Finally, let us inspect the development of relationship between the Russian Federation and the regions from the perspective of utilization of strategies - the strategies which were employed by the Federal government and the territories (especially the ethnic republics) from the time of Russia's initial phase of independence till the late nineteen nineties, and through the type of strategies, time progression and the distribution of spectrum, understand the synopsis of this relationship.

From the development of events since the "Parade of Sovereignties" in the early nineties till the "Parade of Bilateral Treaties," after 1994, by referring to time progression and the distribution of spectrum we can understand that the government of the Russian Federation has been deteriorating

progressively –at first posing benign and offering incentives, and then eventually resorting to oppression by military might. Since it's first conflict with Chechnya in 1994, the secessionist forces in the regions have relatively quailed, with the majority of the territories rather claiming for economic rights and autonomy. It was only after the appointment of President Vladimir Putin that these problems between the federal government and the territories were intensively looked into and dealt with.

This paper utilizes the approach of new-institutionalism to analyze the Russian Federation and the ethnic autonomies. We choose the nineteen nineties period as the focus of this research and select Kalmykia, Buryat and Tuva as the subjects for case studies. This paper allots the time beginning from the independence of Russia till the departure of President Boris Yeltsin as the primary time period for analysis, with in-depth look on ways to resolve ethnic conflicts while studying the process of development of the Russian Federation, with a hope to get a deeper understanding of how to resolve ethnic problems within a multi-ethnic nation.

The whole paper is comprised of six chapters.

The first chapter explains the motive of this study, the various approaches used for the study, the frameworks of this analysis and the distribution of the chapters. Taking the characteristics of nationalism in Russia, it's ethnic groups and various related theories and policies instigating the disintegration of the former Soviet Union as the basis of study for its background aspects, the second chapter deals with nationalism and Russia, the interrelationship between the two.

The third chapter probes into Russia's democratization and its federalism. It analyzes Russia's early stages of transition to democracy with special reference to "Pacted Transition" as the focal point. Here we study the contents and significance of the various treaties and agreements of Russia and thereafter from the theories of the federalism, we analyze the essence and features of the federalism adopted by Russia.

The fourth chapter focuses on the relationship between the Russian federal government and the territories. Here we take Russia's policies on ethnicity, the relationship between the federal government and the regions and the regional elites as the focus of our observation.

The fifth chapter partakes the republics of Kalmykia, Buryat and Tuva as case studies for this research. These three republics are either descendants of the Mongol or have close association with Mongoloid ancestry. In this chapter we take a look at the policies adopted after Russia's independence and their interaction with the center.

The sixth chapter evaluates the pros and cons of Russia's democratization and federalism. Thereafter, as the foreground of this paper, we study all the reforms in Russia, which are undertaken by the Russian Federation following the election of President Vladimir Putin, and the relationship between Russia, a multi-ethnic nation and its democratic consolidation.

This paper assumes that Russia has inherited the vestiges of former Soviet Union and at the same time adorning itself with a style of a modern democracy, making it very difficult to adapt to changes following its democratization. In the nineteen nineties, the Russian federal government was quite unsuccessful in handling the secessionist forces in the regions, especially the ethnic republics. The federal government was unable to restrain the trend in regional power struggles, which became fervent after the secessionist forces tempered down. This eventually led to the use of prolonged methods of suppression by President Vladimir Putin. This paper assumes that the Russian Federation needs to make major structural changes in its system in order to adapt itself to future reforms, failing which, the regional forces will once again rise up as the center weakens, thus proving unfavorable for the development of Russia in the long-run.

**Key Words :** Russian Federation, federalism, National Autonomy, Kalmykia, Buryat, Tuva.