

## **Traditional and Modern Concepts of the Emergence of the System of Meritocracy in China**

**Mirzavaliev Javlonbek Avazbekovich**

*National University of Uzbekistan "Civil society and legal education" senior teacher of the  
department*

**Annotation:** In this article, the factors of the origin of the concept of meritocracy, which is gaining relevance today, in Ancient China and its importance, the stages of development of the meritocracy system in China today, the possibility of coexistence of democracy and meritocracy in Chinese politics is also expressed in the economic sphere, meritocratic principles in achieving efficiency in public administration. the importance of implementation is discussed.

**Keywords:** Meritocracy, Keju system, democratic principles, talent, personnel policy, efficiency, individual talent, vertical democratic meritocracy, political meritocracy, Michael Yang, Daniel Bell.

Concept about the origin of meritocracy system in terms of political management and organize it, statecraft, the development of state service system rooted a long time ago.

Although the term "meritocracy" came from the West, it is also compatible with the culture of China. Before the development of meritocracy system features by Michael Yang, the approaches about creating the political system have existed VI century B.C and fitted with Confucius philosophy. That's why due to some Chinese scientists theory, the first meritocracy system is created in China [1].

In the era of Chan dynasty, there was a system included 9 stages ( Keoju system ) to choose the best experts for government position. They were given degrees which indicate skills and abilities. But despite the existence of a system of ranks, the highest positions were occupied by influential politicians, who were appointed to this position not based on the level of qualifications, but by acquaintance and nepotism. Therefore, the rating system has been improved and complicated.

During the reign of the Sun Dynasty, an improved version has been introduced, which is for public services which made it possible to select people who knew best not only administrative problems, but also art and Confucianism. This examination system consists of 3 levels, each of which has internal levels. In many ways, the system resembles the current model of higher vocational education. This allowed the local elite to enter the bureaucratic apparatus, and these processes, according to Chinese researchers, brought the Chinese political system closer to the meritocratic concept [2].

Provisional state examination system in 605 Sui dynasty (581-618) until the decline of the Sin dynasty in the 20th century (1636-1912) lasted for more than a thousand years. For more than a

thousand years, selection for civil service in the Chinese Empire was based on the results of public examinations: public examinations open to men of almost any age.

According to some scholars, this system was an integral part of the existence of a strongly centralized empire and was a central element in Chinese cultural history until its abolition in 1905 [3].

At the current stage, China's academic environment is actively interested in meritocracy and to ensure the legitimacy of the government characterized by the prospects of integration into the political system. Beijing University Professor D. Bell considered only "Vertical Democracy" since it is very realistic to implement meritocracy according to the "meritocracy" model, recently, China has been actively integrating the experience of Singapore in order to meritocratize the political regime and solve problems in the field of public administration and economy [4].

The possibility of following political traditions in many ways lies in the similarity of the general religious principles of these countries, because, as in China and Singapore, a significant part of the population believes in Confucianism. Along with Buddhism and Taoism, it traditionally forms the basis of Chinese philosophy. It was Confucianism that formed the ideological dogma of subordinating individual interests to the public interest and the responsibility of the individual to the state in Chinese society. The paradigm developed by Confucius prioritizes the structure of the social system based on principles and ideals that determine the main types of social relations.

Among them, the main pairs are "ruler-citizen", "father-son", "husband-wife", "brother-in-law" and friends. Since this doctrine originated in the Chinese empire, it gradually flowed into the dogmatic basis of the code of the Chinese aristocracy, considered the elite of the expert stratum. We can cite some historical similarity of this aristocratic thinker concept with the philosopher rulers depicted in Plato's "The State", which served as one of the pillars of European philosophical thought.

The meritocracy in the interpretation of D. Bell can be rationally opposed to the liberal democratic concept and can increase the efficiency of public administration in China from the point of view of the transparency and efficiency of politicians. At the instrumental level, the introduction of meritocracy can be carried out on the basis of competitive selection for positions of authority, separation of the system of qualification criteria, setting more time limits for the exercise of powers by officials, and others.

Over the past 20 years, China's political system has undergone many changes, with a focus on the Singaporean model and a clear tendency towards meritocracy. According to researchers Shinyan Li and Hong Xiao, China is already moving ahead of the Singaporean model and opting for a very sophisticated system to select talents for political activity [5].

There is an understanding in Singapore's political discourse that meritocracy is not a universal answer to the question of how the political system should be organized—state leaders intend to carefully select and promote talented politicians. Because such a small country lacks not only natural resources, but also human capital [6]. It is natural for Chinese researchers to ask these questions and often consider the experience of using meritocracy in China to be suitable only for the city-state and not for other countries of East Asia, especially large countries like China.

At the same time, Singaporean officials and representatives of the academic community were convinced that political meritocracy was justified and that it could be successfully developed in other countries through reforms that incorporated the principles of meritocracy and fundamental aspects of the Confucian legacy. Of all the countries of East Asia, Singapore's connection with China is the most obvious. Since the 1990s, Chinese politicians have been regularly visiting Singapore for training, study and exchange of experience in the field of public administration. Since then, more than 12,000 Chinese officials have been trained at Nanyang University of Technology and have defended their dissertations on public administration and economics on the

basis of this university. To this day, most of them work in leadership positions in the Chinese government [7].

The political values of Singapore and the forms of political power practiced in that country cannot be applied in the same way in China. However, at the same time, some aspects of the Singaporean experience are widely used in China. From Deng Xiaoping to the current Xi Jinping, Chinese leaders talk about the importance of studying Singapore's political system.

Other researchers call China's political model "deliberative": "Because of the lack of distinction between deliberative and aggregative mechanisms of public participation in the debate, there has been a revision of the generally accepted concept of deliberative democracy in China [8].

At the same time, Chinese ideas about the legitimacy of power are full of contradictions. Li Cheng, an expert on Chinese politics at the Brookings Institution in Washington, said China's political process is based on the principle of "weak leaders - strong factions" and the system is "damaged by nepotism and patronage in the selection of leaders [9].

According to Bo Zhiyue, a researcher at the National University of Singapore, if in a meritocracy system the person who achieves the best performance in his work should be a candidate for the highest position, the principle in Chinese politics is the opposite: "If A is better than B, A should be removed [10].

The success of the economic component of the meritocracy policy in China today seems undeniable, thanks to the anti-poverty program based on this concept, the Chinese government was able to reverse the centuries-old trend of stratification of society and, according to various estimates, lift several hundred million ordinary Chinese citizens out of poverty.

Now the whole world is watching China's experience of meritocracy. China, unlike Singapore, 'can shake up the world. Since the beginning of the 1990s, several scientists predicted that China's economic growth could become the second largest economy in the world. China rightly continues to promote political leadership at the highest levels of power, and the rhetoric of the current government clearly focuses on bringing to power people of intellectual and personal qualities who can be called talented. Such features are listed in the Chinese Communist Party's Regulations on the Selection and Appointment of Leaders [11].

A system combining elements of middle-level democracy and high-level meritocracy could be part of China's future political reforms.

At the same time, in the actions of political actors, there is a tendency to the opposite version of the synthesis of meritocracy and democracy - the version in which the concept of meritocracy is characteristic of the lower level. A typical example is the social rating system (in a broader sense - social integrity; pinyin: shèhuì xìnyòng t xì) introduced by the State Council and described in the document "On Planning the Construction of the Social Security System (2014-2020)" [12].

This system does not directly name intelligence and ability as the highest value that opens the possibility of access to political power, but rather refers to criteria that represent the intellectual and moral aspects of the legitimacy of political power in many ways - the frequency of violations of laws, the behavior recorded by cameras, activities in the financial sector, the behavior of citizens, the general in the sense that it is based on other information that can be presented as a complete description of each citizen and allows to assess his "political compatibility".

According to D.B Grafov, "the development of the social rating system in China allows for the introduction of more and more precise means of control, because of misunderstanding, unconscious citizens are separated from consciously disloyal citizens" [13].

However, at the level of China's socio-economic policy, there is still a tendency towards "top-down" (dingseng sheji) projected reforms. If at the end of the last century, China used more the concept of "moving on the rock" (experimental reforms), today the reforms started "from the top" come to the fore.

In addition, Chinese leader Xi Jinping clearly emphasized the importance of the intellectual development of politicians. In a 2013 speech at the Central Party School of the Communist Party of China, the leader repeatedly referred to the "skills crisis" (benling kunhuang), which he considered to be more specific and more important than a political or economic crisis. According to him, everyone involved in the senior leadership of the country should be well aware of the skills crisis and eliminate it in every possible way to restore the nation. The Communist Party of China itself considers itself a "xuei xin" - a learning party [14].

In addition, Xi Jinping expressed that he could not accept not being able to attend training sessions due to his heavy workload. Perhaps this emphasis on the need for education of the head of the state is related to the fact that the public perceives the spirit of learning from civil servants as weak, the spirit of entertainment is strong, and finds a disturbing tendency in this [15].

At the same time, the possibility of coexistence of democracy and meritocracy in Chinese politics is also reflected in the economic sphere. With a more meritocratic welfare state policy, in the economic sphere China pursues a clearly democratic policy and seeks to achieve a balance between the two spheres through reforms. The Chinese government plans to combine traditional government intervention and market economy as an integration mechanism.

In March 2013, at a press conference after the National People's Congress (NPC) session, which elected Li Keqiang as prime minister, he explained that the process of improving the market economy is not yet complete, "there are great opportunities for further liberation of the productive forces. There is a huge field that allows turning the results of the reforms into a blessing for the whole nation" [16].

As a result, the idea of maintaining a meritocracy at the highest levels of government with a democratic emphasis at the lowest levels becomes more plausible. But in China's political discourse, it is important that meritocracy remains meritocracy, not just a cover for authoritarianism under the auspices of admitting the deserving to the information environment.

Authoritarian methods allowed China to successfully transition from an agrarian society to an industrial society, researchers say. But to fully transition to a post-industrial society, China needs a free information environment in which competitive innovation can occur, and this, in turn, means more freedom in public power [17].

Based on the above, it can be argued that there are moderate manifestations of meritocracy and democracy in China. The optimal correlation of these concepts is seen in the orientation of political power to meritocracy at the highest level and democracy at the lower level. At the same time, it is important that the meritocratic principles of the highest level of political power correspond to the fundamental idea of meritocracy about the most "strong" (intellectually developed, talented, moral) government, without masking authoritarian practices that suppress any possible opposition sentiments in the state.

Based on the analysis of the theoretical-methodological bases of researching the concept of meritocracy, it can be concluded as follows:

1. Meritocracy emerged in the second half of the 20th century as an important principle of the New Public Administration model, which emerged as a result of the emergence of new innovative ideas in public administration, and acquired a unique historical and political significance that positively affects the improvement of the efficiency and effectiveness of public service;
2. It can be argued that China has moderate forms of meritocracy and democracy. The optimal interrelationship of these concepts is seen in the orientation of the highest level of political power to meritocracy and middle level democracy;

3. Meritocracy is a more perfect political system than democracy, but for its proper implementation, the foundation laid by the democratic system and wider opportunities should be created;

4. In the last 50 years in developed democratic countries, the concept of meritocracy has been thoroughly studied mainly from the point of view of sociology, economy, education and psychology, and compared to them, it can be said that it has been analyzed in a relatively narrow scope as an object of political research.

## REFERENCES

1. Tan C, Geng Y. *India and China: twenty centuries of civilization interaction and vibrations*. University of Michigan Press, 2005. P. 128.
2. Mc Clellan J.E., Dorn H. *Science and Technology in World History*. 2nd Ed. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. P. 43.
3. Elman B.A. *A Cultural History of Civil Examinations in Late Imperial China*. University of California Press, 2000. P. 609.
4. Bell D.A., Garton Ash T., Nathan A.J., Zhang T. Is the China Model Better Than Democracy? Meritocracy could avoid the pitfalls of American-style politics — at least in theory // *Foreign Policy*.
5. Bell D.A. Li C. eds. *The East Asian Challenge for Democracy: political meritocracy in comparative perspective*. Cambridge University Press, 2013. P. 167.
6. Герасимов В.С. Политическая меритократия - восточная альтернатива западным традициям управления обществом XXI века // *Вестник МГИМО Университета*. 2015. №2. С.196-197.
7. Bell D.A. Li C. eds. *The East Asian Challenge for Democracy: political meritocracy in comparative perspective*. Cambridge University Press, 2013. P. 123.
8. Лю Янь. Зарубежный опыт институционализации делиберативных практик // *Экономика и управление: научно-практический журнал*. 2020. №1. С.213.
9. Лукин А.В. Китайская политическая система: навсегда или временно? // *Говорят эксперты МГИМО*. URL: <https://mgimo.ru/about/news/experts/234380/> (дата обращения: 13.05.2022).
10. Лукин А.В. Китайская политическая система: навсегда или временно? // *Говорят эксперты МГИМО*. URL: <https://mgimo.ru/about/news/experts/234380/> (дата обращения: 13.05.2022).
11. Дан чжэн линдао ганьбу сюаньба жэньюн гунцизо тяоли [党政领导干部选拔任用工作条例. Партия ва давлат органларининг етакчи кадрларини танлаш ва тайинлаш бўйича ишлар тўғрисидаги низом]. URL: <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n1/2019/0318/c419242-30980036.html> (дата обращения: 26.07.2022).
12. Система социального рейтинга Китая. URL: <http://www.china.com.cn/chinese/zhuanti/283732.htm> (дата обращения: 17.11.2021)
13. Графов Д.Б. Система социального рейтинга в КНР как информационно-коммуникационная технология поощрения и наказания // *Власть*. 2020. №2. С.256-257.
14. Си Цзинпин цзай чжунъян дансяо цзяньсяо 80 чжоунянь цинчжу дахуй цзи 2013 нянь чуньцзи кайсюэ дяньли шан дэ цзянхуа [习近平在中央党校建校80周年庆祝大会暨2013年春季学期开学典礼上的讲话. Мактаб ташкил этилганининг 80 йиллиги ва 2013 йил баҳор семестрининг бошланишига бағишланган йиғилишдаги нутқи] // *Теория Китая*.

URL: [http://theory.people.com.cn/n/2013/0304/c49169-0670182.html?ivk\\_sa=1024320u](http://theory.people.com.cn/n/2013/0304/c49169-0670182.html?ivk_sa=1024320u)  
(дата обращения: 20.03.2022).

15. Мэн-цзи шундай деган эди: “Қадимда муносиб одамлар ўзларининг маърифатлари билан бошқаларни ёритган бўлсалар, энди [одамлар] ўзларининг алданиши билан бошқаларни ёритишни ўйлайдилар”. (Мэн-цзы, гл. 6Б, 20 // Пер. П.С. Попов // Конфуцианское «Четверокнижие» («Сы шу»). М.: Вост. лит., 2004. С. 389.
16. Си Цзинпин тань «Чжунго тэсэ шэхуйчжуи»: даолу цзю ши дан дэ шэнмин [习近平谈«中国特色社会主义»: 道路就是党的生命. Си Цзинпин "Хитой хусусиятларига эга социализм" хақида: йўл - партия хаёти] // Жэньминьван. URL: <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2013/0105/c64094-20099326.html> (дата обращения: 7.05.2021).
17. Semenov A. Transformation of political regime in the PRC: elements of Taiwanese experience // Conference proceedings. The 7th Annual Conference on Development Studies in Taiwan “Intergenerational In/Justice”, National ChengChi University. Taipei, 2015. P. 24.