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THE MAIN FACTORS OF FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ZEMSTVO SELF-GOVERNMENT IN THE KHARKIV PROVINCE

ОСНОВНІ ФАКТОРИ СТАНОВЛЕННЯ ТА РОЗВИТКУ ЗЕМСЬКОГО САМОВРЯДУВАННЯ В ХАРКІВСЬКІЙ ГУБЕРНІЇ

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Annotation. The relevance of the article is determined by the significant role of zemstvos as effective local governments in pre-Soviet Ukraine. In 1865-1919, zemstvos of the Kharkiv province became an integral part of Ukrainian society and significantly influenced the formation of civil society and market economy in Ukraine. Their activities contributed to solving a wide range of socio-economic and humanitarian problems, which significantly accelerated the post-reform development of the Kharkiv province, also because the most important condition for Ukraine's European integration is the reform of the local government system and the formation of civil society on this legal basis. It is in this regard that Ukrainian researchers are increasingly turning to the experience of the past, in particular to the study of the history of zemstvo institutions that functioned in Ukraine during the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The history of local self-government in the Kharkiv region is of great importance for understanding the peculiarities of both past and present political and socio-economic development of Ukraine, including its individual regions, including the Kharkiv region. Today, there is an objective need to disseminate the experience gained by the Kharkiv Zemstvo in Ukrainian society.

The foregoing indicates the scientific relevance of a special study of the activities of local self-government bodies in the Kharkiv province in the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, especially since this topic has not been sufficiently explored until recently, and contains many controversial issues, some of its aspects need to be rethought.

Key words: zemstvo, government, county, farm, society, sloboda.

Introduction.

In the post-reform years in the Kharkiv province, many journal and newspaper articles and monographic works appeared that examined certain aspects of the development of zemstvo self-government in the Kharkiv region. The formulation and resolution of most issues was dictated by the urgent needs of the socio-economic and cultural political development of the Kharkiv province and the need for the zemstvo to contribute to their resolution. Thus, the most widely circulated local newspapers, Kharkivski gubernski vedomosti and Yuzhnyi Krai, published articles of a scientific nature by V. Hryhoryev. In them, the author generally quite objectively assessed the historical experience of organising zemstvo self-government bodies in the Kharkiv



region and proposed various programmes, projects and recommendations for improving their activities in the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The purpose of the article is to reveal, on the basis of a comprehensive, integrated analysis of available sources, the main directions and peculiarities of the activities of the provincial and district zemstvo institutions of the Kharkiv province as local self-government bodies aimed at solving the main socio-economic, humanitarian, ethno-cultural and everyday problems of the local population of Ukraine in the second half of the nineteenth - early twentieth centuries.

Main text.

The abolition of serfdom in 1861 objectively prompted the tsarist government to take further steps towards reforming socio-economic and public life in the country. That is why the emergence of the Zemstvo reform of 1864, despite its limitations and incompleteness, immediately attracted public attention. The Ukrainian lands of the Russian Empire, in particular the Kharkiv province, saw the emergence of local self-government bodies, the need for which was most urgently anticipated in the country. Zemstvos became an integral part of the socio-political life of Ukraine, which was on the path of capitalist transformation, and had a significant impact on the formation of a market economy. Their emergence contributed to solving a wide range of socio-economic problems that hindered the development of the Kharkiv province. Over the years of their existence, zemstvos gained sufficient experience in approaches to addressing local needs, and this contributed to the increase of their authority as local self-government bodies [1, p.100-104].

The formation and development of zemstvo self-government in the Kharkiv province in the second half of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was significantly influenced by historical traditions that had been accumulated during the previous evolution of the administrative and political structure of the region, in particular, the rich traditions of Cossack self-government accumulated here. The Regulation on Provincial and County Zemstvo Institutions of Self-Government of 1 January 1864 became the legal basis for the Zemstvo reform in Kharkiv province. The



implementation of this Regulation provided for the creation of a new type of local public entities in the Kharkiv region on the principles of omnipotence, bourgeois property qualification, division of power into administrative and executive, but at the same time, there was an undemocratic electoral law, rather strong administrative tutelage, and limited budgetary capacity of zemstvos [2, p.16-17].

According to this provision, provincial and district self-government bodies were created: provincial and district zemstvo assemblies headed by the leaders of the nobility and their executive bodies - provincial and district zemstvo administrations headed by chairmen. By law, the provincial and district zemstvo assemblies, whose members were elected in three electoral groups - curiae, played the role of administrative bodies. Initially, elections were held to the zemstvo district assemblies. Not all citizens had the right to vote, but only those who held a prominent position in society. The property qualification was crucial. The first electoral curia included county landlords who owned land of considerable size, which was set depending on the area (from 200 to 800 dessiatyns). The first curia included not only landlords, but also owners of enterprises worth at least 15 thousand rubles, or merchants with a turnover of at least 6 thousand rubles per year. The second was the city curia, in which the owners of commercial and industrial enterprises within the city with a turnover of at least 6 thousand rubles, as well as owners of real estate, were granted the right to vote [3, p.104].

In the third curia, all peasants of the Kharkiv province had the right to vote, but there were no direct elections. Initially, volost assemblies elected the electors of a given county, who then elected the voters of the county zemstvo assembly. There was a certain number of voters from each curia. Although the peasant curia was the most numerous, the final result was not in favour of the peasants. In the first elections to the Kharkiv provincial zemstvo, 42% of the voting members of the county zemstvo assembly were nobles, and 38% were peasants [2, p.2]. That is why the electoral mechanism worked in accordance with the interests of landlords, who, having gained an advantage in zemstvos, were able to pursue appropriate policies there. The executive bodies of zemstvo institutions - provincial and zemstvo governments - were also



dominated by nobles. All vowels were elected for three years. The composition of provincial assemblies was determined by elected officials from county zemstvo assemblies [4, p. 32-40].

Following the path of gradual, cautious introduction of zemstvos, relying on the nobility, the tsarist bureaucracy closely monitored the progress of the zemstvo reform, including in Kharkiv province. The government was particularly vigilant about preventing the process of unification of zemstvos and their attempts to go beyond local needs. Meanwhile, in Kharkiv and other provinces, the first zemstvo meetings clearly showed a tendency to expand the powers of zemstvos. This was due to the fact that zemstvo institutions were vested with only duties, and their rights and opportunities were limited. The problems faced by zemstvos were the same, and no ways of solving them through joint efforts had been developed, nor did the government allow it. Zemstvos could make decisions, but the law did not allow them to be implemented in practice. The fact that in June 1867, the State Council issued a resolution prohibiting zemstvos from printing zemstvo reports, discussion materials, and speeches delivered at zemstvo meetings without the governor's permission shows how dangerous the zemstvo's desire to unite was to the tsarist government. However, despite the ban imposed by tsarist officials, both Kharkiv and other zemstvos constantly raised the issue of the need to unite zemstvos [5, p.142-148].

During the period of formation of zemstvo self-government in the Kharkiv region, the cardinal issue was the question of the relationship between provincial and county zemstvos, which arose in one form or another. It was the subject of debate at zemstvo meetings and in zemstvo periodicals. Endowed with almost equal autonomy in their internal organisation, provincial and county zemstvos differed in their mutual relations with each other and in their relations with higher governmental institutions. The Kharkiv provincial zemstvo was almost always a representative of all zemstvo institutions in the province, both provincial and district. Given the fact that the Kharkiv provincial zemstvo was supervised by the governor, we can say that all the progressive and most urgent needs of the county zemstvos were disadvantageous to the Kharkiv governor and had no chance of being implemented in practice [6, p.49-50].



Despite the problems that arose in the 1860s and 1870s, the zemstvo of Kharkiv province continued to look for opportunities to revive their activities, as they understood that without reliance on local self-government, the socio-economic and ethno-cultural modernisation of Ukraine was impossible. One of the measures that could be used to revive zemstvo work and increase public attention to zemstvo was the use of the zemstvo press. In the Kharkiv province, the printed zemstvo organ was a weapon of publicity, which was one of the most important driving forces in the complex zemstvo activities, and at the same time served as a guide to the views of zemstvo leaders on the problems of society [7, p. 46-49]. The zemstvo printed media served to clarify various issues of local life in zemstvo assemblies in a comprehensive manner, and also showed the progress of practical implementation of the decisions made. In this regard, the zemstvo publications of the Kharkiv province were a permanent memorial book, which, by providing accurate information about the activities of the zemstvo and their results, was a very important source for correctly raising issues and determining their solution in further zemstvo activities. Zemstvo periodicals in the Kharkiv province were published on the basis of resolutions of zemstvo assemblies and materials submitted by the glasnosts from the counties. The financing of zemstvo periodicals was carried out by the zemstvo itself, including in its budgets the amounts for periodicals and non-periodicals [8, p. 34-38].

The Zemstvo public assemblies of the first convocation viewed the zemstvo as an institution of all institutions, called upon to take care of the needs of all classes of the population without distinction. When electing their executive bodies, the zemstvo administrations, the zemstvo assemblies based their activities on two fundamental conditions: close connection and joint activity with the public on the one hand, and communication with the population through such relations with the public on the other. This is the most striking feature of the resolutions of the first zemstvo assembly, and there is no doubt that this feature was reflected in the historical traditions of the Slobozhansky region. However, another important factor in the election of public provincial and district assemblies was the importance of recruiting personnel capable of solving the pressing problems of society. Their professional and cultural readiness



to solve these problems [9, p.155-159].

The vast majority of meetings immediately established rules for their internal regulations, which guaranteed the correct and most productive work of the public during discussions and the formulation of resolutions. This is the feature that characterises the rules of meetings of the first convocation of zemstvo assemblies. In many cases, the election of public speakers was subject to closed balloting, but in all cases, the results were brilliant: all or most of the white layers showed that these were the persons whom the assembly considered most suitable for this role. There were very few cases of protests against the rights of public speakers, and the assemblies treated them very correctly and consistently. From the very beginning, zemstvo affairs were actually in the hands of a group of landowning nobles, and not all of them, but the middle class [3, p. 20-21]. It was this layer of the nobility that provided the main contingent of zemstvo leaders, and it generally dominated public life in the post-reform period. According to the Zemstvo Regulations of 1864, the tsarist government deliberately appointed a minimum number of members of the zemstvo with financial support. This number was insufficient to deal with the amount of work that the zemstvos had to do. Therefore, a red thread running through almost all zemstvo meetings was the opinion of the public that the largest possible number of members should be elected to the councils. But in all cases, this wish encountered very serious complications: all zemstvos had very little money to pay the salaries of a large number of members of zemstvo councils. In fact, the composition of the boards consisted of representatives from different classes. Analysing the composition of zemstvo assemblies, it can be concluded that the majority of nobility members in zemstvo assemblies corresponded to the desire of the tsarist authorities to compensate the nobility for their losses and to give them a decisive role in zemstvo activities [42, p.83-85].

The responsibilities of the departments included the execution of orders of zemstvo assemblies, namely the preparation of zemstvo estimates and reports, control over zemstvo revenues and expenditures, representation of zemstvo interests in court, and execution of the governor's orders to convene zemstvo assemblies in a timely



manner [11, p.20]. Publicity was an important principle of the departments' activities. The law stipulated that all reports and audit results of the administrations should be published in the Gubernski Vedomosti. Reports of district administrations were published in the Zemstvo Vestnik. Before the 1867 law was passed, the materials of the departments were printed without censorship, except for resolutions that required the approval of the governor. However, after the law was passed, all publications had to be censored by the provincial authorities. As a result, the local population lost the ability to control the activities of zemstvos [1, p. 81].

The effectiveness of Kharkiv zemstvos as local self-government bodies in addressing socio-economic and humanitarian issues certainly depended on the staff of zemstvo institutions. If we analyse the fate of zemstvos from the time of their inception until the second half of the nineteenth century, understanding zemstvo law as the right of the population to local cultural development under the control of the central government, we will see the following. Since 1864, when peasants were allowed to participate in zemstvo self-government, voters and elected officials were divided not by political status, but by property. This led to the fact that not only the wealthy but also ordinary representatives of the poorest population could now be elected to the zemstvo assembly [38, p.60-62]. The staffing problem was a constant concern for the Kharkiv Zemstvo. Therefore, the fact that Kharkiv province was most often referred to as the best when assessing the activities of zemstvos was the result of the emergence of such progressive individuals as A.P. Karpynskyi, I.I. Petrunkevych, A.F. Lindfors, V.M. Khyzhniakov, O.P. Miloradovych, E.S. Hordienko, M.M. Kovalevskyi, K.Z. Bekariukov, P.O. Zelenyi, etc. [12, c.275].

Conclusions.

Thus, the absence of democratic foundations in the state did not in itself provide grounds for the development of local self-government capable of significantly influencing domestic policy. This is what ultimately united the zemstvo officials in their desire to create a general zemstvo body. Forced by circumstances to agree to the introduction of local self-government, the tsarist bureaucracy managed not only to adapt it to its needs, but also to deform this system. Every step, whether it was the



election of public officials, sources of funding, ways of solving local life issues, even the exchange of information between counties and provinces, was strictly controlled, adjusted, or even prohibited. Nevertheless, in the Kharkiv province, zemstvos proved to be a fairly viable local government body and effectively addressed many problems. The zemstvo focused on economic issues, the development of education and medicine, veterinary medicine, statistics, insurance, etc. And it was here that zemstvos achieved notable success. The main thing that gave them strength and resilience was the desire to improve the lives of the people, to make them responsible for the future through the use of self-government.

Literature.

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Анотація. Актуальність статті визначається значною роллю земств як ефективних органів місцевого самоврядування в дорадянській Україні. Земства Харківської губернії в 1865-1919 роках стали складовою частиною українського суспільства і суттєво вплинули на формування громадянського суспільства та ринкової економіки в Україні. Їх діяльність сприяла вирішенню значного кола соціально-економічних та гуманітарних проблем, що значно прискорювало пореформений розвиток Харківської губернії, також тим, що найважливішою умовою Євроінтеграції України є проведення реформи системи місцевого самоврядування та формування на цій правовій основі громадянського суспільства. Саме у зв'язку з цим українські дослідники все частіше звертаються до досвіду минулого, зокрема до вивчення історії земських установ, що функціонували в Україні протягом другої половини XIX – початку XX ст. Історія розвитку місцевого самоврядування на Харківщині має велике значення для розуміння особливостей як минулого, так і сучасного політичного та соціально-економічного розвитку України, в тому числі її окремих регіонів, зокрема Харківської області. Сьогодні об'єктивно виникає потреба поширення в українському суспільстві досвіду, набутого свого часу Харківським земством. Новим є й підхід до вивчення проблеми, який принципово відрізняється від догматичного радянського, що панував тривалий час в історичній науці. Зроблена спроба подолати його обмеженість й обрати для магістерського дослідження більш високий теоретичний і методологічний рівень, який передбачає вивчення й аналіз розвитку органів земського самоврядування та Харківщині як особливого явища в історії формування громадянського суспільства в Україні.

Викладене вище свідчить про наукову актуальність спеціального дослідження діяльності органів місцевого самоврядування в Харківській губернії у другій половині XIX – на початку XX ст., тим більше, що ця тема до останнього часу не була в достатній мірі досліджена, містить чимало дискусійних питань, деякі з її аспектів потребують переосмислення.

Ключові слова: земство, управа, повіт, хутір, товариство, слобода.

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