

**ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONING OF LOCAL AUTHORITY
ORGANS OF TAMBOV REGION IN THE 1920-s:
THEORY AND PRACTICE**

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Key words and phrases: «military communism», a Bolshevik, a board, an executive committee, enlargement, disenlargement, reorganization.

Abstract: The nature of the reorganization of local authority organs of Tambov region in 1921-1925 is described, the results of this reorganization are analyzed, the reasons, which led to other, than it was supposed, results of the reorganization of local government are examined.

By the end of 1920 – the beginning of 1921 the crisis of power had become quite clear and was connected with the full crash of the policy of the «military communism» not only in the economical, but also in the political sphere. At this period the state of power organs, first of all at the regional level, worried Bolsheviks greatly. Most of them were fully disorganized, and in some regions there was practically no power at all.

The system of state government at the local level was strictly structurized by councils of various levels. All cooperation had to be carried out only through higher power organs with the compulsory informing of the provincial executive committee. The practice of guardianship and direct interference of party organs into state affairs led to greater conflicts between local power organs. «Principles of the activity of provincial, volostny, uездny and rural councils», adopted in January 1922, played an important role in the regulation of their work. A new structure and the order of the organization of executive committees as well as rights and duties of their members were strictly defined. The principles also extended the rights of councils in the sphere of the economical and cultural construction. But even the departments of the provincial executive committee did not fulfill their duties. «The statements about the fulfillment of these or those duties are performed very slowly, sometimes criminally slowly. It also takes several weeks to give answers to inquiries. Such a state of affairs indicates the immobility of councils, their bureaucracy, which break any opportunity to solve questions of Soviet construction quickly» [4, D. 392. L. 9.] In May 1922 at the second session of the provincial executive committee a resolution was adopted, in which it was written, “One must admit the further reduction and simplification of the Soviet machinery as necessary, this task must be carried out until the next session.” [4, D. 265. L. 35]

Realizing the unnecessary bulkiness and inefficiency of the organized local government organ, the government adopts some resolutions “About the simplification of the Soviet machinery” in the middle of 1922. The number of departments in uездny

executive committees was reduced greatly. The transformations in the machinery of government also began in Tambov region. Due to the new norms of the staff of executive committees, it was determined that every uezdny executive committee had to consist of not more than 11 members. None of 12 uezdny executive committees corresponded to the settled staff of employees. The number of members was between 15 and 20 people. It was necessary to reduce the staff from 212 members of the uezdny executive committee up to 132. [4, D. 379. L. 772.] Provincial executive committees were given an opportunity to increase or decrease the ultimate number of members of the uezdny executive committee for some uezds, depending on the size of the uezd, but not exceeding the average figure, set for the region.

Relying on this the provincial department of government suggested to divide all uezds of the region into three groups. Uezds with a large number of the population and a big territory were related to the first group. Borisoglebsky, Kirsanovsky, Kozlovsky and Morshansky uezds had a staff of 13 members in the uezdny executive committee. The second group consisted of uezds with a middle number of population: Usmansky, Shazky, Lebedyansky and Tambovsky – they had 11 members in the uezdny executive committee. But Tambov uezd was related to this group as it had better conditions, being situated near the provincial centre, and Lebedyansky, on the contrary, only due to its poor work. The third group consisted of Elatonsky, Lipetsky, Spassky and Temnikovsky uezds as they had a small number of volosts and territories, the number of members of their uezdny executive committees was 9. [4, D. 379. L. 769.]

It was necessary to make changes in volostny and Village Soviets as their work was not good in 1922. This was caused by various reasons – the organizational weakness of councils themselves, their unpopularity among the ordinary population of the country. The efforts were taken to enhance the efficiency of the work of executive committees by the way of the increase of the number of employees. The provincial executive committees were given a right to allow some volosts, if necessary, to have the fourth member of the volostnoy executive committee by the resolution of the ninth All – Russia congress of councils “About the Soviet construction”. In particular, in Tambov region some volosts of Borisoglebsky, Kirsanovsky and Morshansky uezds (on the whole about 10 volosts from 361) were allowed to have the fourth member of the volostnoy executive committee. The main reason in these cases was a large territory of the volost and a big, in comparison with others, population. However, it turned out that there was not much help from the fourth member of the volostnoy executive committee as the work in such committees was also poor. Taking this into consideration, in November 1922, they suggested that uezdny executive committees should hold to the similar for all volosts norm of the number of members, it was 3 without any exceptions. [4, D. 380. V. 2. L. 980.]

At the assembly of the chairmen of volostnoy executive committees, which took place in May 1923, it was said, “The populapity of volostnoy executive committees is not at the proper level. The work is not planned and there are no regular sessions of volostnoy executive committees, concerning local life. The monitoring and the government of the work of Village Soviets on the part of the volostnoy executive committee is not enough, the instructioning of volostnoy executive committees on the part of the uezdny department of government is not enough either.” [5, D. 2240. L. 32.] Due to this situation it was decided, “To carry out the principle of the unified subordination of volostnoy executive committees to the uezdny executive committee by the transmission of all orders, concerning volostnoy executive committees only through the uezdny department of government. Provincial and uezdny departments of government must put a campaign on the strengthening of the volostnoy machinery through executive committees. The uezdny departments of government must elaborate concrete plans of the work for the volostnoy executive committees of the uezd for half a year.” [5, D. 2240. L.33]

The provincial department of government played an important role in the structure of local authority organs. Its functions included: the organization of administration of local executive committees and councils, the monitoring of their activity, the administrative government of a province, the control of the realization of all resolutions of the administrative character, the compulsion to their execution and the administrative penalization, and in particular cases even the suing of a criminal case for their nonfulfillment. [2, P.34.] In Tambov region according to the data of the provincial department of government for 1922, the nomenclature was set in the quantity of 398 persons for the whole province. This also included: 13 persons for the provincial executive committee, 49 persons for the provincial departments of government, 8 persons for the executive committees and 20 persons for the uezdny departments of government. [3, D. 407. L. 398.] The resolution of the ninth congress of councils "About the simplification of the volostnoy machinery" resulted in financial difficulties at the beginning of the year. "The simplification" meant one more reduction of the staff in local, weak executive committees. The congress suggested to liquidate all departments of volostnoy executive committees and to organize the general office-work instead of them and also to reduce the number of members of volostnoy executive committees up to 3 persons. The office machinery of volostnoy executive committees of the province was reduced on the whole to 2200 people, and their staff was reduced to 1092 persons. But it turned out that this did not improve the general financial situation of volostnoy executive committees. According to the adopted resolution only three members of the volostnoy executive committee were paid from the state budget, other members of the staff (the whole technical machinery) had to get salaries from local organs, but even three members did not receive their payment. In fact the People's Committee of Internal Affairs gave a credit only to one member of the volostnoy executive committee, and it came very late. This resulted in the cessation of the activity of some volostnoy executive committees, "employees go away". [3, D. 407. L. 399.] In order to cope with this situation, the provincial department of government received the sanction of the presidium of the provincial executive committee for the imposition of the local population and the right to make it pay in kind and with money as a temporal, exclusive measure. [3, D. 407. L. 400.] This measure improved the financial situation in volostnoy executive committees a bit, but could not solve the problem on the whole and soon it was abolished due to the introduction of a tax, which every yard had to pay. On the whole the staff was reduced from 398 to 338 people. There were 363 volostnoy executive committees, 4197 Village Soviets (2708 Soviets were independent) in the province. Other Village Soviets either united with nearby Village Soviets or were self-governed. The general number of members of Village Soviets was 12130 persons. In spite of the efforts to stabilize the activity of local councils as well as the activity of departments of government, the weakness of their work was evident and the reason of this was not only financial difficulties, which local organs often referred to. For example, in the review of the activity of the provincial department of government it was said, "The weakness of the work of departments of government is explained mainly by the instability of chairmen of departments, their frequent replacement and little experience." [3, D. 407. L. 403.]

At the end of 1923 it was decided to abolish the provincial department of government. Instead of this an administrative department of the provincial executive committee was organized, it began its work on the first of January, 1924. It included not only the former department of government, without organizational functions of the last one, but also the former boards of the provincial police, the criminal investigation department and the inspector of places of confinement as subdepartments. The staff of employees of the new department was reduced by 15 more people. [5, D. 2342. L 14, 17.]

In 1924-1925 in Tambov region the work, concerning the enlargement of volosts and Village Soviets, was carried out. The enlargement, to the mind of its organizers, had to increase the efficiency of the work of power organs in regions. According to the set tasks a specially organized provincial administrative committee formulated "Principles, comprising the work on the enlargement of Village Soviets". The main aims of the enlargement were: the simplification and improvement of the cooperation of volostnoy executive committees with Village Soviets and Village Soviets with the population, and also the closeness of Village Soviets to the population. However, they had to deviate from the set norms in practically all uyezds of the province. The deviations concerned the average uezd norm of the residents of the Village Soviet. It was lowered practically everywhere as they would have had to increase the norm of the distance from populated areas to Village Soviets in order to correspond to it. [5, D. 2342. L. 11.] The enlargement of Village Soviets allowed to reduce the staff of employees by 19 % on the whole. The machinery of 1665 Village Soviets, which existed in the province, had a staff of 3330 persons (the minimal staff taking into consideration a chairman and a secretary for the Village Soviet, and in reality it was bigger as some large Village Soviets took extra employees). The staff of enlarged Village Soviets (700-720 for the province) had to consist of 2724 persons on the whole. [5, D. 2342. L. 12.] The enlargement of volosts had to reduce volostnoy executive committees from 264 to 92 in the province. [5, D. 2314. L. 4.]

But one more effort to improve the situation in the sphere of the local government did not give considerable results. In December 1925 the authorities had to carry out the converse reorganization of organs of local government as they had turned out "due to the fact that they were torn from the economy" not to be able economically to keep the local Soviet machinery with the same staff, which had existed before the first of January, 1925. At first this resulted in the necessity to enlarge volosts and Village Soviets, correspondingly from 264 to 92 (by 64 %) and from 1634 to 700 (by 60 %), this led to a great reduction of employees in the local machinery. But a year of the practical work of Village Soviets with a new staff and some examinations showed that "the enlargement of Village Soviets on the whole had negative results, tore them from the population and set obstacles for the revival of the work of Village Soviets." [1, P. 2-3] As a result the session of the provincial executive committee with the participation of the representatives of volostnoy executive committees and Village Soviets in July 1925 admitted that it was necessary to carry out a general disenlargement of Village Soviets on condition that every populated area with the number of residents not less than 300 could have its own Village Soviet. However, taking the poor local budget into consideration, the disenlargement had to be carried out gradually, beginning with 30 % in 1925. On the whole the number of Village Soviets in the province increased by 32 % from 701 to 930. [1, P. 5.]

So by 1925 after several reorganizations and searches of the optimal mechanism of government the system of local power organs in the province had been organized on the whole and this allowed to continue the Soviet construction in regions.

Literature

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Формирование и функционирование местных органов власти Тамбовской губернии в 1920-е гг.: теория и практика

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Ключевые слова и фразы: большевик; «военный коммунизм»; исполнительный комитет; разукрупнение; реорганизация; совет; укрупнение.

Аннотация: Показывается сущность попыток реорганизации системы местных органов власти Тамбовской губернии в 1921-1925 гг., анализируются их итоги, прослеживаются причины, приводившие к иным, чем предполагалось, результатам реорганизации местного управления.

Formierung und Funktionierung der Ortsmacht des Gouvernements Tambow in den 1920-er Jahren: Theorie und Praktik

Zusammenfassung: Im Artikel wird das Versuchenwesen der Reorganisierung des Systems der Ortsmacht des Gouvernements Tambow in den Jahren 1921-1925 gezeigt. Es werden die Resultate analysiert. Es werden die Gründe, die vorausgesetzt wurden, ausgeprüft.

Formation et fonctionnement des organes locaux des pouvoirs de la région de Tambov dans les années 1920: théorie et pratique

Résumé: Dans l'article est montrée l'essence des tentatives de la réorganisation du système des organes locaux des pouvoirs de la région de Tambov dans les années 1920, sont analysés leurs résultats, ainsi que les causes de la réorganisation qui étaient autres que prévues.
