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# Valery BORTNIKOV

PhD (History), PhD hab. (Political Sciences), Professor of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University, 24 Chopin Street, Lutsk, Ukraine, postal code 43000 (bortnikov.v@gmail.com)

# **ORCID:** 0000-0003-0991-4047

# Yaroslav YAROSH

PhD hab. (Political Sciences), Associate Professor, Dean of the Faculty of History of Political Science and National Security, Volyn National University named after Lesya Ukrainka, 24 Chopin Street, Lutsk, Ukraine, postal code 43000 (Yarosh.Yaroslav@vnu.edu.ua)

#### ORCID: 0000-0001-8376-8979

# Валерій БОРТНІКОВ

кандидат історичних наук, доктор політичних наук, професор кафедри політології та публічного управління Волинського національного університеті імені Лесі Українки вул. Шопена, 24, м. Луцьк, Україна, індекс 43000 (bortnikov.v@gmail.com)

# Ярослав ЯРОШ

доктор політичних наук, доцент, декан факультету історії політології та національної безпеки Волинського національного університеті імені Лесі Українки, вул. Шопена, 24, м. Луцьк, Україна, індекс 43000 (yarosh.yaroslav@vnu.edu.ua)

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# PECULIARITIES OF ZEMSTVOS INTRODUCTION IN VOLYN PROVINCE (the second half of the XIXth – the beginning of the XXth century)

Abstract. The reform of local self-government, administrative and territorial organization on the basis of decentralization, which is taking place in Ukraine, highlights the problem of studying and analyzing historical traditions and forms of local self-government in Ukraine, in general, and its regions, in particular. The purpose of the study is to analyze the historical conditions and features of zemstvos institute introduction in Volyn province. The research methodology is based on a set of general scientific and special research methods, in which the chief focus is paid to institutional, structural and functional, problem and chronological methods and approaches. The Conclusions. In 1864 the introduction of zemstvos in the central and southern provinces is an organic part of the "great reforms" of the second half of the XIXth century that took place in the Russian Empire. The specifics of 2 emstvos as socio-political institutions have been elucidated. In Volyn province, the law on zemstvos of 1903 came into force on July 1, 1904. In the article there has been elucidated a fundamental difference between zemstvos of 1903 and 1911, which consisted in the evolution of zemstvos institution from state institutions to their reorganization, as local governments. The organizational structure of zemstvos, the order of their formation, etc., have been highlighted. There has been done the analysis of "Regulations on Provincial and County Zemstvo Institutions of January 1, 1864", "Regulations on Management of Zemstvos in the Provinces of Vilna, Vitebsk, Volyn, Grodno, Kyiv, Kovenska, Minsk, Mogilev and Podolsk" of April 2, 1903, reports at the first annual meeting of Volyn Provincial Committee for Zemstvo Affairs in 1904, "On Determining the Order of Subordination Actions of Institutions and People to the Department of Land Management", etc. In general, the path of zemstvos institutional development was significantly delayed in Volyn. During their formation, a considerable attention was paid to limiting the Polish influence in favour of the Russian one.

Key words: Volyn province, Right-Bank Ukraine, Russian Empire, zemstvos, local self-government.

# ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ЗАПРОВАДЖЕННЯ ЗЕМСТВ У ВОЛИНСЬКІЙ ГУБЕРНІЇ (друга половина XIX – початок XX ст.)

Анотація. Реформа місцевого самоврядування і адміністративно-територіального устрою на засадах децентралізації, що відбувається в Україні, актуалізує проблему вивчення й аналізу історичних традицій та форм організації місцевого самоврядування на теренах України загалом та її регіонах, зокрема. Метою дослідження є аналіз історичних умов та особливостей запровадження інституту земств у Волинській губернії. Методологія дослідження базується на сукупності загальнонаукових і спеціальних методів дослідження, де головну увагу приділено інституційному, структурно-функціональному й проблемно-хронологічному методам і підходам. Висновки. Запровадження земств у центральних та південних губерніях у 1864 р. є органічною складовою часу "великих реформ" другої половини XIX ст., що відбувалися у Російській імперії. Розкрита специфіка земств як суспільно-політичних інститутів. У Волинській губернії закон про земства зразка 1903 р. вступів у силу 1 липня 1904 р. Показана принципова відмінність земств зразка 1903 та 1911 рр., яка полягала в еволюції їх інституту від державних установ до реорганізації як органів місцевого самоврядування. Розкрито організаційну структуру земств, порядок їх формування тощо. Зроблено аналіз "Положення про губернські та повітові земські установи від 1 січня 1864 року", "Положення про управління земським господарством в губерніях Віленській, Вітебській, Волинській, Гродненській, Київській, Ковельській, Мінській, Могилевській і Подільській і від 2 квітня 1903 р., доповіді на перших річних зборах Волинського губернського комітету у справах земського господарства 1904 р. "Про визначення порядку дій підпорядкованих управлінню по справах земського господарства установ і осіб" та ін. Загалом, шлях інституційної розбудови земств на Волині відбувався зі значним запізненням. Під час їх формування значну увагу приділено обмеженню польського впливу на користь російського.

**Ключові слова:** Волинська губернія, Правобережна Україна, Російська імперія, земства, місцеве самоврядування.

**The Problem Statement.** The activity of higher and central bodies of state power, the apparatus of territorial administration of the South-Western region is conditioned by a set of circumstances related to the division of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the process of integration of Right-Bank Ukrainian lands into the Russian Empire (Bortnikov & Bortnikova, 2021, p. 49). At that time, "economic processes and geopolitical changes enabled important individual and daily changes in the society" (Udod, 2021, p. 208).

This period in the history of Volyn is marked by the existence of insurmountable contradictions between the government and large social groups of the class society on the one hand, and amog social classes – on the other hand. We mean, first of all, the Polish nobility, which dominated in the socio-economic, cultural and spiritual spheres, and the Ukrainian peasantry – the bulk of the population of the province, deprived of basic civil rights (Bortnikov, 2015, p. 5). In general, the post-reform period against the background of a rapid development of productive forces "was a period of a significant revival of various social groups self-organization" (Shandra, 2021, p. 75).

In 1864, in the central provinces of the Russian Empire, the introduction of zemstvos as an institution of a local self-government became an important safeguard in the direction of limiting the tsarist autocracy, development of a public initiative and creativity, revival of economic and cultural activities at local places. On January 1, 1864, the emperor approved the corresponded Regulations (PSZ-2. №40457) та ін.

Zemstvos were established to manage economic and socio-cultural affairs; they were responsible for the construction and management of local roads, schools, hospitals, charities, providing the population with food, organization of land lending and insurance, promotion of agronomic knowledge, improvement in the handicrafts sphere, organization of land statistics, promotion of trade, industry, etc. At the same time, this institute helped to optimize the distribution of power between the center and the local authorities. According to V. Shandra, "these were those spheres of social needs which the bureaucratic state could not cope with" (Shandra, 2020, p. 52).

However, in Volyn province, as in Right-Bank Ukraine in general, zemstvos, as local selfgovernment bodies, were introduced much later.

**The Analysis of Recent Publications.** The subject of modern foreign and domestic scholars' attention is the organization issue of local self-government and zemstvos in Volyn province in the context of the realities and traditions of the Ukrainian state formation of the second half of the XIXth – the beginning of the XXth centuries. In particular: A. Berezhna, D. Beauvoir, A. Bortnikov, O. Budnytsky, M. Volkhonsky, A. Hetmansky, B. Hud, M. Dolbylov, A. Karelina, V. Korobeynikov, O. Pryshchepa, O. Reyent, S. Reznichenko, V. Shandra, T. Shcherba and the others.

According to domestic scholars, for many centuries the Ukrainian people deprived of their own statehood were forced to stick to their traditions, customs, folklore to survive in the imperial environment. In fact, Ukraine has never had the right conditions to develop its own traditions. Accordingly, in order not to become a source of foreign cultures, we need to study our own democratic traditions of state-building thoroughly (Bortnikova, 2018, c. 56).

The purpose of the research is to analyze the historical conditions and features of zemstvos institution introduction in Volyn province, their evolution from state to elected institutions with broad powers to resolve local issues.

The Results of the Research. The system of zemstvo local public administration bodies was not perfect, as zemstvos functioned only at the level of provinces and counties: they did not have a lower zemstvo unit at the level of volosts, as well as a central national representation. According to the right remarks of contemporaries, zemstvos were "a building without a foundation and roof" (Korobejnikov, 2000, p. 117). This structure of zemstvos was not accidental, because otherwise, they would be a powerful political force, and it did not correspond to the interests of autocratic power. At the end of the 1870s, owing to the efforts of zemstvo liberal movement activists, it was possible to unite the efforts of some zemstvos. Five provincial zemstvo assemblies - Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Tver, Poltava and Samara - called for convening of Zemstvo Congress, which took place in Moscow, in April of 1879. In the autumn of 1904, the authorities allowed zemstvos to hold all-Russian meetings. On September 8, a meeting of the Bureau of National Congresses took place, at which it was decided to convene a Congress of zemstvo activists in Moscow on November 6, 7 and outlined a programme. However, the Congress was not authorized by the authorities and was held in private with the permission of the Minister of the Interior (Volhonskij, 2002, p. 3). Only with the beginning of World War I there was created all-Russian organization - the All-Russian Zemstvo Union.

In the second half of the XIXth – at the beginning of the XXth centuries there was a wide-ranging debate in government circles about the expediency of implementing zemstvo reform in the annexed territories, as the intensified anti-Polish policy after the uprising of 1863 gradually drove the Poles out of the financial and administrative centers of the South-Western region (Melnychuk, 2021, p. 35). In contrast to the central provinces, the introduction of zemstvos in Right-Bank Ukraine lasted for half a century in general. During the enactment of the Provincial and County Zemstvo Regulations of 1864, the government refused to introduce them in nine western provinces for purely political reasons. Zemstvos in Arkhanhelsk, Astrakhan and Bessarabian regions also demanded a special procedure for the application and implementation (PSZ-2. №40459).

The needs for socio-economic and cultural development of the country, growing political tensions, required the central government to improve the entire structure of a local public administration, and therefore the period of the 90s of the XIXth century became the time of heated discussions about the future of zemstvos. Opponents of its introduction were such influential tsarist government officials as the Minister of Finance S. Witte (1892 - 1903), who argued that, firstly, "self-government does not correspond to the autocratic system of the state" and secondly, "zemstvo cannot be considered a model institution for the local economy" and can be replaced by special government bodies easily (Karelin, 2006, p. 191). The latter was also against the introduction of zemstvos in the western provinces. On the contrary, the supporters of the expansion of zemstvos public administration on the territory of Right-Bank of Ukraine were the Minister of Internal Affairs I. L. Horemykin (1895 – 1899), Kyiv Governor L. P. Tomar (1885 – 1898), Volyn Governor S. P. Sukhodolsky (1892 – 1896), and the others. The young Russian Emperor Nicholas II (1894-1917) was also positive about the introduction of zemstvos in the western provinces. The point of view of those statesmen who considered it expedient and necessary to extend zemstvo practice to the western lands of the empire won, albeit with certain restrictions.

The compromise resulted in a draft regulation elaborated by the new Minister of the Interior, D. S. Sypyahin (1900 – 1902), who shared S. Witte's view that the introduction of electoralbased provincial institutions on the western outskirts was premature. Instead of zemstvo assemblies and administrations, it proposed provincial and county committees, as well as provincial and county councils for zemstvo affairs consisting of the nobility and councilors from among the local residents of the taxable state, appointed by the administration. The provincial committee included the governor (chairman), provincial and county leaders of the nobility, whose positions in the province were replaced by government appointments, representatives of the main departmental administrative structures, essential members of the provincial presence, members of the provincial council and the mayor, as well as zemstvos (two from the county), appointed by the Minister of the Interior on the recommendation proposal of the governor. County committees consisting of the nobility (chairman) leaders, administrators, all zemstvo chiefs and tax inspectors, representatives of departmental institutions, mayors, zemstvo county leaders and parish elders, who were appointed by the governor, met only for a preliminary discussion of the most important matters of zemstvo affairs.

Executive power relied on the provincial and county zemstvo councils. The first ones consisted of a chairman and three members – all appointed by the Minister of the Interior, the second ones – of the county leader of the nobility (chairman), a clerk, a tax inspector, two zemstvo leaders and indispensable members of the board, appointed by the governor. That is, zemstvo institutions in this case were under the close care of the local administration.

County committees were deprived of the possibility of the least influence on the activities of the provincial committee and control over the expenditure of zemstvo taxes collected in the counties.

The draft was adopted by the majority of votes after discussion at the meeting of the State Council. Under the new Minister of the Interior, V. K. Pleve (1902 – 1904), the draft came into force. On April 2, 1903, Nicholas II approved the "Regulations on the Management of Zemstvo in the Provinces of Vilno, Vitebsk, Volyn, Grodno, Kyiv, Kovenska, Minsk, Mogilev and Podolsk". However, in the draft it was not specified the exact date of its entry into force, but there was only a special permit (PSZ-3. №22757). In Volyn province, the law on zemstvos of 1903 model came into force on July 1, 1904.

With the establishment of new zemstvos, local orders of public care were abolished, as well as the positions of clerks and their assistants in the provincial administrative committees. The department of zemstvo management included: 1) management of local zemstvo duties in cash and natural duties; 2) management of capital and other property; 3) taking care of providing enough food to the local population and providing them with food aid; 4) maintenance of roads and other road constructions and piers on rivers in a proper condition; 5) arrangement and maintenance of zemstvo post office, assistance in the development of telegraph and telephone connections; 6) management of mutual provincial insurance; 7) arrangement and maintenance of the medical unit, care for a proper sanitation and prevention of epidemics. Managing God-pleasing institutions and caring for the poor; 8) arrangement and maintenance of the veterinary part in the counties, protection of animals from infectious diseases, etc.; 9) care for fire prevention; 10) organization and development of primary and vocational education; 11) promoting the development of agriculture, trade and industry, environmental protection, etc. (Bortnikov, 2015, pp. 242–243).

In 1904, the introduction of zemstvos in Volyn province was not fully legal and organizational in the beginning. However, it cannot be said that there were no documents regulating the work of zemstvos. Thus, in 1904 the report #3 at the first annual meeting of the Volyn Provincial Committee for Zemstvo Affairs is devoted to this issue: "On Determining the Procedure for Actions of Institutions and Persons Subordinated to the Department of Land Management" (State Archives of Zhytomyr Region (SAZhR), f. 183, d. 1, c. 11, pp. 92–96). This report also contained a document regulating the activities of institutions subordinate to the Department of Land Management of Land Management of the province – "Temporary Instruction on the Procedure of Institutions and People Subordinate to the Department of Land Management of Volyn Province" In particular, the instructions defined the responsibilities of the provincial administration and county administrations, as well as their procedure.

Under conditions of a revolutionary upsurge, during the first bourgeois-democratic revolution in Russia, the existence of zemstvos of this type in the western provinces no longer corresponded to the new socio-political realities understood by the majority of farsighted politicians. Therefore, in 1906, under the leadership of P. A. Stolypin, a new draft law was developed for the nine western provinces, which, under conditions of proportional representation, guaranteed the Russians at least half of the zemstvo positions. This draft also takes into account the main shortcomings of the Regulations of 1903 in terms of improving the financial situation of zemstvos and cities: it was proposed to abolish the law on the limits of zemstvo taxation, to transfer to zemstvos and cities the right to collect real estate tax, as well as part of the income tax, etc. All this was to strengthen the material base of local governments. However, during the discussion of the draft in the State Duma, discussions and debates on the expediency and democracy of some of its provisions, as well as the election procedures in zemstvos lasted for almost five years. At the same time, in addition to the draft of P. A. Stolypin, there were the others.

Finally, on March 14, 1911, in the form of zemstvo supreme decree, already on a new more democratic legal basis, as bodies of public self-government, it was introduced in six western provinces: Vitebsk, Volyn, Kyiv, Minsk, Mogilev and Podolsk (Svod zakonov Rossijskoj imperii, 1915, pp. 3–11).

The decision to introduce elected zemstvos in the annexed territories was caused, first of all, by the need to change the procedure of electing members of the State Council (upper house of the State Duma). Traditionally, large landowners were elected from the western provinces – the Poles, and that could not satisfy the ruling circles. It was assumed that giving the majority of seats in zemstvos to the Orthodox population would ensure the election of the required number of members of the State Council from among the representatives of the Russian nobility.

According to the election legislation, instead of the estates of the curia, as in other zemstvo provinces, national curias were introduced there. For the election of zemstvo leaders in Volyn, Kyiv and Podilsk provinces, county election meetings and congresses were divided into two departments: "Russian" and "Polish". The norms of the number of leaders elected by each branch were established in such way as to guarantee the superiority of the representatives of the Orthodox population in the administrative bodies of the zemstvo self-government – county and provincial assemblies. Thus, in three Right-Bank provinces, only 13.9% of county departments were elected from "Polish" departments, while 86.1% were elected from "Russian" departments and rural communities, and 15% and 85% from provincial branches, respectively (Reznychenko, 1999, pp. 143–144). The superiority of the Orthodox population representatives was guaranteed by the law requirement in the election of executive bodies – zemstvos – to provide an absolute majority of seats to people from the first ("Russian") department and rural communities.

In order to avoid misunderstandings in Right-Bank Ukraine, where a significant part of the population were also the Jews, the Senate Decree of March 14, 1911 included Art. 87, which deprived them of voting rights.

On September 11, 1911, on the day of P. Stolypin's death, Kyiv Governor A. Hirs had a conversation with the latter about the introduction of zemstvos in the South-Western region. From the conversation it becomes clear how much P. A. Stolypin was aware of the situation and was in favour of zemstvos speedy introduction in Right-Bank Ukraine (Girs, 1991, p. 92).

On August 7 and 8, 1911, the first extraordinary session of Volyn Provincial Zemstvo Assembly was held, devoted to the formation of public administration bodies of Volyn Zemstvo. The minutes of the session give a complete picture of this historical event in the life of the population of Volyn province. The meeting was chaired by P. A. Demidov, a provincial leader of the nobility, a provincial zemstvo speaker of Kremenets district. The members of the meeting were county leaders of the nobility, heads of county zemstvos, provincial officials and representatives of various departments. The honorary right to open the meeting was entrusted to Volyn governor, Count O. P. Kutaisov (1909 – 1912). The executive body of zemstvo was the provincial administration in the number of four people: the chairman and three members. By voting the chairman of the provincial council was established a salary of four thousand rubles per year, members – three thousand rubles. V. E. Dvertsytsky was elected the chairman of the provincial council (Protokoly zasedanij Volynskogo gubernskogo sobraniya, 1911, p. 30).

The election was held by closed ballot in black and white. The same way there were held of three board members. Subsequently, there were elected the Deputy Chairman of the Provincial Council, a member of the Provincial in Zemstvo and city affairs of the presence, two members of the Provincial Commission for Land Management, two members of the Provincial School Council, a member of the Agronomic Council and a candidate for it, four members to the Council for Local Economy, two members of the Peasant Bank. The commissions of the provincial zemstvo assembly were also elected: audit commission (12 people), road (7), medical (5), school (5), agricultural (6), insurance (5) and general (4).

The activity of Volyn zemstvo is clearly divided into two periods: from July of 1904 to August of 1911 and from August 1911 until their liquidation in 1919. On December 8, 1904, Volyn Provincial Presence in Peasant Affairs received a governor's circular dated No 948, addressed to Volyn Provincial Administration and all county administrations for land affairs, city administrations and elders, police departments, peace mediators and the township board of Volyn province. Its content is of fundamental importance to understanding the role of zemstvos in the social life of the province. In addition to the exact date of the implementation beginning of the above-mentioned provision on zemstvos in Volyn, the level of the powers becomes clear, for example, in such a vital issue as pricing. The document emphasized the following: "In the province, with the introduction on July 1 of this year (1904) .... of the law of April 2, 1903 on the management of the zemstvo, the county councils for land affairs are obliged to determine the prices of bread, fodder, etc., in the county every month, from September to May" (State Archives of Volyn Region, f. 3, d. 1, c. 100, pp. 400–400v.).

According to N. Polonska-Vasylenko, on Right-Bank Ukraine, "zemstvos spread only in 1911, because the government was afraid to allow the Polish nobility to influence the self-government of this region" (Polonska-Vasylenko, 2002, p. 315). Some contemporary Ukrainian and Russian authors claim that in the South-Western region "resolving the issue of the formation of zemstvos in Right-Bank Ukraine began with the legislative act of 1904, and its actual implementation in practice took place in 1911" (Sharavara, 2005, p. 4), the others emphasize that "there were no zemstvos here until 1911" (Berezhnaya, Budnickyi & Dolbilov, 2007, p. 295).

It is obvious that the zemstvo as a state institution (not an institution of local selfgovernment!) was introduced in Volyn province in 1904, not in 1911. An explanation of this issue can be found in the report No 53 "On the Rights of the Provincial Committee for Zemstvo Affairs to Appeal the Orders of Central Administrations" at a session of Volyn Provincial Administration in 1909. The report stated that Minsk Provincial Committee for Zemstvo Affairs authorized its provincial administration to appeal to the Senate against the Minister of the Interior's order to abolish the provincial committee on the payment of money for the lower ranks during the mobilization. The Senate, appealing to the decree of August 8, 1908 No 9267, rejected this complaint, "due to the fact that the Provincial Committees for Land Management in the provinces of Vitebsk, Volyn, Kyiv, Minsk, Mogilev and Podolsk consist of officials of various departments and zemstvos appointed by the Minister of the Interior, who are equated with officials, and therefore are government agencies (italics. - the authors), which operate only in accordance with a special Regulation, and secondly because the Provincial Committees for Land Management are not granted by law the right to appeal against orders of central administrations" (Doklady Volynskoj gubernskoj upravy, 1909, p. 69). Thus, the document leaves no doubt about the nature of the zemstvos of 1903, as public authorities, and therefore we have no reason to deny the existence of the institution of zemstvos in Volyn during the period of 1904 – 1911.

The fundamental difference between zemstvos of the model of 1911 was the method of forming their composition, which was based on democratic principles, as the administrative and executive bodies of zemstvos were elected by the local community. That is why, zemstvos of 1911 were called "elected zemstvos". Thus, in his speech, at the opening of the second extraordinary session of Volyn Provincial Zemstvo Assembly, its chairman P. A. Demydov emphasized: "Gentlemen, *the elected zemstvo in Volyn* – a new matter – a difficult matter – a difficult matter" (Zhurnal Volynskogo gubernskogo zemskogo sobraniya, 2012, pp. 2–3).

The Conclusions. Thus, the zemstvo reform of the second half of the 1860s took place on the western outskirts of the Russian Empire with a delay of several decades, and the introduction of elected zemstvos – half a century. During their formation, a considerable focus was on limiting the Polish influence in favour of Russia. From the time of the First Russian Revolution of 1905 – 1907, the same norms and rules were already in force in Volyn province as in the central regions of the empire. Despite the shortcomings and limitations due to the nature of the tsarist autocracy, zemstvos were an effective means of organizing many spheres of local communities life, and the experience of their work enriched the world palette of public administration at local places. Perspective is studying zemstvos positive experience in solving a wide range of problems of local communities on the basis of subsidiarity, their distancing from the central government and the specifics of tax policy.

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