

TECHNOLOGIES INTRODUCES IN RUSSIAN STATE IN MODERN TIME

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Abstract: This article attempts to discuss the new technologies introduced in Russian state earlier in the state formation. In the second half of the last century, a well-defined and stable historiographical tradition was formed, proceeding from the fact that the early-modern Russian state was centralized, unified in administrative and institutional aspects. However, recently this fact has been criticized. In this article the authors propose to look at the essence of the early-modern Russian state from the inside. In their opinion, the Russian state of this time was undecentralized. Developing in an evolutionary way about relying on antiquity, it preserved many relics of the past. They imposed certain restrictions on the supreme power, preventing the buildup of power infrastructure. Weak institutionally, early modern Russian state was forced to rely on the support of society. As a result, the authors summarize their reasoning, the processes of centralization in Russia were still far from complete by the end of the early New Age.

Keywords: Early New Time, political regime, composite state, centralization, Russian state, autocracy, Ivan the Terrible, bureaucracy.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Russian historical tradition has established (and continues to follow) the point of view on the Russian state of early modern times as the centralized one. The Russian historian, A.I. Filyushkin means it as “the primarily understood state, unified in administrative and institutional terms ...” [1]. Traditionally, the honor of creating this state is attributed to Ivan III, and the completion of this process dates back to the time of his grandson Ivan IV. The latter, according to the German adventurer Heinrich Staden, “achieved that because throughout the whole Russian land, that is, under his power, there is a single faith, a single weight, a single measure, that he alone rules that everything that he commands must be done, but everything that he prohibits should be refused” (“dahin gebracht dieweille im ganzenn Ruslande oder in seiner Regirung ein glaub, ein gewichte eine masse ist das her auch alleine Regirett, das alles was her gebeut geschlegenn mus unndt alles was her vorbebe vorbe lassenn mus Darwieder iast weder geistlich noch weltlich”) [2].

However, this opinion is far from unanimous. So S.O. Schmidt noted that “in Russia of XVI – XVII centuries there was not so much centralization as bureaucratization of management, unification of legal norms, the financial system, military service relations” [3]. The historian accurately noticed the main directions of the domestic policy of the last Rurikoviches on the Moscow throne. With the adoption of the Laws of 1497 and 1550 court procedures throughout the Russian state were gradually standardized; the financial reform of the government of Elena Glinsky brought the Novgorod and Moscow monetary systems in line; Reforms of the late 40s – 50s of the XVI century allow us to talk about a certain unification of the procedure for serving children by the boyars; orders within the Russian church were brought to a single model. And, of course, one cannot ignore the formation of the order system during the reign of Ivan IV. However, is it worthy to straightforwardly bulge out bureaucratization to the fore instead of centralization? Or is it worth talking about the internal institutionalization of the Russian state, the elements of which were both centralization and bureaucratization?

2. METHODS

For a long time, analyzing the processes of political genesis, historians have paid attention primarily to the external manifestations of this process. However, if we consider the evolution of the state as an institutional formation, the situation changes. As noted by the Russian historian K.V. Petrov, “the state of the XVI – XVII centuries is a weak social institution compared to the modern state.” He continues that “the power of Ivan III or Vasily III over the boyars was not weak, the state was relatively weak in the ability to implement coercive measures against the population”. Therefore, “the state, being unable to enforce law and order in the country, to solve this problem, the society itself was involved ...” [4]. It is interesting to compare these observations with those made, for example, by K. Barkey in relation to the Ottoman Empire of the early New Age. She noted that the imperial authorities, trying to maintain control over their possessions, were forced to “share control with a variety of intermediate organizations and with local elites, religious and local governing bodies, and numerous other privileged institutions” [5].

Developing this thesis, we emphasize that, in our opinion, these observations can be fully correlated with other modern European countries of Russia and Turkey – at least with the same France, the country of classical absolutism. Meanwhile, as S. Carroll noted, in the early New Age “France was a composite polity, a state which imperfectly melded together regions with distinctive and varying identities” [6], a country in which, according to N. Henshell, “the French kings did not rule a nation-state, nor was nation feeling a significant force in it, a nation in the political, racial or linguistic sense was too nebulous to command loyalty – a key determinant in this period. Men were loyal to their family, their lord, their town, their province, their class, their religion or their king. Rarely they were loyal to their country ... Without the bonding agent of significant national feeling, administrative and legal unity was absent” [7].

In such public entities, which J. Elliott aptly called composite monarchy [8], centralization processes were very far from complete. The supreme power, lacking the necessary resources and influence, was forced to compromise with local elites, agreeing to preserve traditional freedoms in exchange for the loyalty of new subjects. This led to the preservation within the framework of antiquity of the remnants of the traditional internal structure, incompatible with the very essence of centralization. At the same time, it is easy to notice that gradually, in an evolutionary way, the supreme power expanded its sphere of influence, increased what J. Brewer called sinews of power [9], the muscles of power or, even better, the infrastructure of power.

Describing it, N. Kollmann noted that those were “new taxes and bureaucratic institutions to administer territory, collect revenues and mobilize human and material resources”, which were legalized through “new codifications of the law and new centralized judicial systems”, as well as the corresponding confessional politics and the new political ideology [10]. At the same time, the supreme power in its creeping transformations had to act slowly, in accordance with the interests of those same “local elites, religious and local governing bodies, and numerous other privileged institutions”. Without their support and loyalty, the actions of the authorities were doomed to failure. For Russia, this was all the more important because, according to N. Kollmann, “in early modern Russia, the state had too few officials on the ground in its vast and sparsely populated empire to accomplish its needs without relying on local villagers to staff and support centrally assigned officials” [10].

3. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

So the general trend in the development of early-modern European states consisted in the development of bureaucratic structures capable of mobilizing the necessary for the implementation of an active expansionist policy (and the 16th century, which constituted the most important part of the period of interest to us, according to the apt observation of R. MacKenney, was the century of expansion [11]) potential; improving the fiscal system; active codification of the supreme power; religious unification and the creation of a new ideology. All these areas can be identified in the activities of the Russian government in the era of the reign of the last Rurikovich. From the middle of the XV to the end of the XVI centuries, the Russian state, while maintaining its external form, underwent major changes inside. The most significant of them, in our opinion, was the bureaucratic reform.

The essence of this most important reform was primarily in the formation of an order system with all its inherent features, external and internal. A review of opinions, which allows us to give an idea of the degree to which questions are studied and the opinions existing in the scientific community on this subject, can be found without much difficulty in modern literature (See, for example: [12]). Without dwelling on this question, let us try to answer the question: was the reform an instantaneous act or did the orders slowly sprout through the thickness of antiquity? The answer to this question can be only one – orders were the result of a long evolution of the sovereign palace administration, which was formed under the first Moscow princes in the first half of the XIV century. This process enters the final stage under Ivan the Terrible, when the command system takes on a largely completed form. By the end of his reign, there were about a dozen orders (without taking into account the orders of the metropolitan and court), the order of clerical work was established (with a simultaneous increase in paper circulation (See, for example: [13]), their area of competence, etc.

However, perhaps this does not even seem important in the whole story with orders. M.M. Krom noted in his last work that a characteristic feature of the formation of a new vertical of power was its depersonalization, an increasing concentration of real power in the hands of ordered people [13]. “The delegation of authority by the sovereign to his advisers and the gradual bureaucratization of governance has been noticeable in the Moscow state since the second half of the 15th century,” he notes, emphasizing that this tribal trait is characteristic of any modern state – both France and the Ottoman Empire, and for Russia [14]. In fact, the boyars came and went, but the secretaries, and especially the governmental officials remained in the orders, and the uninterrupted and effective work of orders depended on them in the first place. An indirect symptom of the growing influence of the secretaries and their political significance was their introduction into the Boyar Duma (through the establishment of the rank of the Duma clerk). It is curious to note in this connection that this strengthening of the positions of commanding officials in the ruling elite of the Russian state to the detriment of the interests of the old aristocracy was noticed by Prince A.M. Kurbsky and his confidant fugitive streletsky head-monk unfrocked priest T. Teterin. They harshly

criticized Ivan the Terrible for the preference that he makes mandatory over old burly surnames.

And one can't ignore another aspect of the service, which K.V. Petrov drew attention to. He noted that "the principles of the functioning of the system of central (order) management of Russia of the XVI – XVII centuries to a greater extent brings it closer to a modern understanding of the principles of public service than the development of the state mechanism of European countries of the indicated time" [15], and in this sense, Russia was in many ways ahead of France, with its archaic practice of selling posts. An active foreign policy was not possible not only without the creation of an appropriate and administrative apparatus capable of mobilizing the country's resources for successful foreign expansion. Finance played a significant role in solving this problem. In order not to go deep into the details of the financial policy of the last Rurikovich (see about it, for example: [16]), we note only two of the most important, aspects. The first is the establishment of the practice of regular land descriptions. Reliably recorded in the sources, the beginning of this practice dates back to the end of the 15th century (although it can be assumed that scribe books and / or their analogues appeared much earlier).

Another aspect of the financial policy of the Moscow government in these decades is the unification of the monetary system in the reign of Ivan the IV's mother, Elena Glinskaya, and the process of switching in-kind duties to money (which has been gaining momentum since the campaigns of Kazan by Ivan the Terrible (see, for example: [16])). However, due to the evolutionary nature of the development of state institutions noted above, complete unification and standardization of payments and duties in favor of the treasury was not possible to achieve in the Russian long XVI century – this was prevented by the preservation of a significant number of immunity letters granted by the supreme authority [16]. The strengthening of the sovereign's power and the expansion of his sphere of competence was naturally promoted by an active codification policy. True, here it is worth noting the gradual, evolutionary changes. Apparently, the well-known Code of Laws of Ivan III, published in 1497, was of little use, and if it suppressed the local legal custom, it was only partially [See: 17]. However, he laid down a tradition that will be further developed and to a large extent will contribute to the development of the processes of centralization in the Russian state of early modern times. It is about the unification of judicial procedures throughout the Russian state (See: [18]). As noted by N. Kollmann, "the 1497 code was primarily a handbook for judges, defining fees for services, describing procedure", но при этом он "establishing capital punishment for highest crime (theft of church property, treason, arson, kidnapping and recidivist theft) and corporal punishment for lesser crime, as well as compensatory fines for injury" [10].

The Tsarskiy Code of Laws of 1550 continued this line, focusing on the further development of the regulation of judicial procedures. However, at the same time, he expanded the scope of competence of the royal court. In particular, the code more thoroughly and in detail described the procedure for punishing officials who exceeded their authority (it is obvious that this innovation was due to the consequences of the turbulent events in Moscow in the summer of 1547 [19]). And if both of these judges concerned issues of secular law, then the decisions of the so-called The Stoglav cathedral (Stoglav), adopted at the same time, concerns problems associated with the unification of canon law throughout the territory of the Russian state. We note in this connection that the Stoglav Council played an extremely important role in the standardization of the norms and rules that determined the internal life of the Russian Church in the long 16th century and, in this sense, fits perfectly into the general line of government policy under the last Rurikovich, aimed at the achievement of that notorious centralization through equal gathering of lands (completed generally and generally at the beginning of the 16th century) and gathering of power (but this process was delayed and even in the second half of the XVI century was far from completion).

Speaking about centralization and gathering power, it seems to us that the second term more succinctly and correctly reflects the essence of those political processes and the policies pursued by the government of Ivan the III, his son and grandson [20]. At one time, the grand-ducal authority by an explicit procedure (within the framework of the family law of the Rurikovich) was scattered between many specific princes and the grand duke was master only in his domain. Now Moscow sovereigns, appealing to the antiquity, slowly, gradually, step by step, gathered power in their hands. "The autocracy and autocracy of Moscow sovereigns was the result of the gathering of fragmented power over the territory of Great Russia and its population," A.E. Presnyakov [21]. And this gathering of power was carried out primarily in the very forms that were discussed above. But at the same time, it's hard not to notice that, speaking of all this, we are in one way or another talking about centralization. Is it possible to say, in this case, that centralization is an integral part of the process of gathering power? In a certain sense, it is perhaps possible with the only amendment that centralization also includes the process of gathering land under the authority of Moscow sovereigns. In a way, both of these terms, centralization and gathering power, thus complement and overlap, but do not replace each other, being part of the same process of forming an early-modern Russian state.

4. CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that the Russian state that arose at the end of the XV century as a result of the consistent unification policy of the Moscow Grand Dukes was different from the loose, unconsolidated, possessing the scattered sovereignty of the medieval predecessors. Can it be called centralized? In a sense, it can be called that way. However, one should not exaggerate at the same time the degree of its internal consolidation and centralization. Centralization itself was a multi-level and multi-speed process. In the military and political spheres, centralization was achieved earlier than in the legal field. However, despite some successes in the gathering of power by the last Rurikovich, it would be premature to consider them truly genuine autocratic autocrats. Yes, Ivan III, his son and grandson were powerful monarchs with considerable power (this fact astonished foreign observers so much, for example imperial diplomat S. Herberstein), but did the state itself have the strength necessary to impose its will on society? Perhaps not yet. And in our opinion, it is worth agreeing with the opinion of K.V. Petrov, who emphasized the institutional weakness of the early-modern Russian state [4].

This weakness, in turn, was a consequence of the incompleteness of the processes of gathering power and centralization. The same incompleteness was determined by the evolutionary path of development of Russian statehood: its novelty slowly sprouted through antiquity, thereby acquiring the legitimacy necessary for its perception by society. Nevertheless, shifts imperceptible, at first glance, were rather significant. So, already in the infancy of Ivan IV, the degree of depersonalization of power was large enough so that the growing bureaucratic apparatus could take on a considerable share of the daily administrative routine and prevent the state machine from stopping under conditions of disruption in the upper echelons of power. However, to conclude this article, we emphasize once again that we should not exaggerate the successes of the supreme power in the gathering of power and centralization in the long 16th century. The institutional weakness of the Russian state almost put an end to it at the beginning of the XVII century. Only with the help of Zemstvo self-government, constituted under Ivan the Terrible, he managed to get out of the crisis. Only with Peter the Great's rule the state felt strong enough to get rid of this support.

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