

Peculiarities of Development of Information and Communication Space of the Russian Empire in the Period of Reforms (Second Half of XIX-Early XX Centuries)

Antonina Fedorovna Nevostrueva

Perm National Research Technical University, Perm, Russia

Abstract: The second half of the XIX century had a history importance for Russia, therefore the reforms of the 60-70s launched the intensive development of capitalistic economic relations, established the principles of civil society and the burst of industry. All of these circumstances have affected the content of information processes and social essence of the communicative space. We have analyzed the changes of classical education, the informational support of events occurred during that period such as press, new public social organizations and institutions, public charity and others. The influence of migration processes, development of communications and transport, modern for that time on the development of the information-communication space of Russia in the conditions of imperialism have been evaluated. Considerable attention is paid to contradictions and difficulties socio-economic and political condition of the country, which resulted in the three revolutions at the beginning of the XX century and their effect on the information processes.

Key words: Russian Empire • Reforms • Alexander II • Russian revolution of the beginning of XX century • Imperialism • Local government • Civil society • Information • Education • Information space

INTRODUCTION

The reforms of 60-70s of XIX century, so-called “*the Era of Great Reforms*” became the most important factor in development of the information and communication space of Russian society [1, pp. 32-34]. This opinion is righteous therefore this period characterized by change of the century way of life of each social class, determined the prospects of development and entailed numerous tragic conflicts due to contradictory character of the reforms. Considerable interest to the reforms of the 60-70s and the changes affected the prospective development of the Russia [2] is reflected in modern national and foreign scientific literature. The number of studies provides condemnatory conclusions and notes the negative consequences of reforms [3]. We assume that the changes were revolutionary because the Russia has survived the transition from agricultural (traditional) to industrial civilization acquiring new qualities. Therefore, *the effect of these reforms had the deep social and civilized character signifying a transition from the past to the future that is different from modernization.*

First of all, this has affected the social and class structure of the society related to the abolishment of serfdom, changes in economic principles and the rapid expansion of the new, capitalistic relations. Moreover, these processes in the industry have acquired comprehensive character. However, the transitional forms of exploitation related to private (land-owning) property in the village have remained for a long time. However, the cardinal and irreversible step towards a new relationship has been made.

Inconsistency of agrarian reform of 1861 in the Russian society became the main knot of contradictions, so-called “time bombs”-one of the reasons of the revolutionary conflicts in Russia in the beginning of XX century. It seems that this is a tragedy of the Emperor Alexander II, the initiator of the reforms, who was generally hated by the nobility since he had deprived them of free labor resources and traditions related to their serfs. A peasantry was deeply convinced that the reform has robbed them and they became the slaves for the state instead of slavery from the landlord meaning the state redemption payments for the land, the prohibition of exit from the communities and others.

Only two main values-slogans remained in the minds of the peasantry: "Land and Liberty". Memories of the past constituted a significant part of the information field of the country, the local nobility crowded with Russian conservatism and emerging social protest eagerly of peasantry.

The reform of local self-government, which resulted in creation of the first municipalities (*zemstva*) (since 1864) in the Russia and the municipal government (since 1870) created on a new representative (elected) basis, which caused the broad social transformations of towns and villages were paid a special attention in our study. The elucidation of nature of these authorities of local governance as the basis of the changes in Russian civil society became the scientific achievement in the past decades [4]. Municipalities (*zemstva*) and municipal government involving the public in local regions and creating regional legal base form the social framework of the regions, which has no analogues in the world history. The medicine, education, distribution of agronomic knowledge, statistics and other areas of activities in the municipalities resulted in an expansion of the social base for these institutions through the increasing of provincial intelligentsia, which has become the main generator of civil activity in the country. It is important that the organization of new key nongovernmental forms of social life was notable step in development of local governance.

It is the regional intelligentsia became the general bearer of civil consciousness and initiatives, when the government bewareing the influence of supporters of the local government has attempted strictly control the work of the municipalities and municipal governments during governmental counter-reforms after the death of Alexander II in March of 1881.

Municipalities and the local governments of Russia have considerably contributed to the organization and development of a classical education system, which has become a basis for further development of information and communicative space. The demand for more intensive industrial production and capitalistic development of the rural economy resulted in more complex and extended management in the school education. Sufficiently bureaucratic structure of the state and departmental educational institutions became universal and consisted of all levels of education: primary, secondary and higher. The changes in the primary education were more extended that allow the raise of the elementary level of education of the people, where local authorities and intelligentsia played a significant role. By the beginning of XX century,

the number of local schools in the villages reached approximately 73,5 thousand, which educated more than 3 million 730 thousand people and approximately 35% of these studied in primary schools (more than 9 million people) [5, pp. 13-14].

Secondary education was represented by 2887 male and female gymnasiums, real professional schools, theological seminaries and specialized schools, attended by approximately 430 thousand people. Private secondary schools, which number exceeded the number of the public institutions (1808 against 1079) have been opened in the beginning of XX century [5, p. 24]. Universities, specialized institutes (commercial, technical, women medical and other) and theological seminaries were included into the system of higher educational institutions. The number of universities increased until 20 and 14 institutes were open, which educated more than 51 thousand students [6, p. 88]. However, at the beginning of the XX century, a literate population in Russia was very small-21% of the total number of inhabitants of the Russian Empire despite of all impressive figures and Western European countries. In most cases, the secondary and higher education was paid and available for the wealthy classes and nobility.

Information and communication space of towns and villages intensively replenished by new ideas, organizational and social structures such as local museums, public theatres and libraries, numerous societies and organizations reflecting the diverse interests of the people. Public charity was widely developed. For example, by the beginning of the XX century, more than 11 thousand public charitable societies and institutions were organized in Russia, 80% of which were created before reforms [7, p. 26].

Mass media (newspapers and magazines) have actively developed. Totally, They 318 publication were counted by 1868, 427 by 1873 and reached 919 magazines and 576 newspapers by 1913 on a permanent basis [8, p. 311; 6, p. 11]. Along with the official publications, illegal publications occupied the significant place in the information and communication space as an exponent of the interests of particular classes and social groups that revealed another peculiarity in transformation of communication tools. Socio-political orientation of the illegally printed materials reflected the radical goals of the programs of the political parties, formed public opinion and discredited the government as structure incapable to solve the relevant problems of development of Russia according to the criteria accepted in the European society. Only the library of the Police Department of the

Ministry of Internal Affairs consisted of more than 5000 revolutionary publications by the beginning of XX century and the modern funds of the State Archive contained more than 33.5 thousand of leaflets and more than 8 thousand brochures of revolutionary content related to the activities of the two most influential political parties: social-democrats and socialist-revolutionaries [9, pp. 40-47]. Another new social feature was the extension of an information field of Russia due to the rapid growth of the provincial press: the part of these publications accounted about 33% of all issued newspapers and magazines by 1868 and up to 50% of the press was published in provincial and district centers by 1913. Moreover, the highest growth of production (by 4 times) occurred due to the publication of newspapers. We believe that this is related with the rapid commercialization of the local press, the wide introduction of advertising and PR materials in newspapers, as well as the publication of the operational information of local centers of capitalistic economy (industry, banking, trading and other).

The use of already established communication and information facilities was extended. The construction of the longest railway line in the world-the Trans-Siberian Railway from Chelyabinsk to Vladivostok with the length 7420 km began in 1891 and completed in 1916. Total length of railways in Russia by the beginning of the First World War exceeded 80 thousand km, leaving ahead only the United States and United Kingdom. Net profit of rail transportation reached 320 million rubles as well as passenger traffic significantly increased by 1910 and reached approximately 210 million people [6, pp. 26-28]. Water and motorway transportation were also important and have been developed.

The volume of postal service and telecommunications has increased. The number of letters reached almost 900 million by 1910 that replenished the state treasury with more than 63 million rubles of net profit. The length of telegraph lines counted more than 900 thousand miles by 1910 and a number of telegrams exceeded 142 million. These communication sectors replenished 35 million rubles of net income to the state treasury [8, pp. 171-173; 6, p. 86, pp. 94-96].

Telephone circuit (one of the first in Europe) was activated on July 1, 1882 in the capitals of the Russian Empire. This line connected only 154 subscribers and by 1913 there were more than 14 thousand telephone stations owned by municipal and district self-governments. By this time, telephone communication accounted approximately 100 thousand subscribers that

in conditions of rapid commercialization of this type of communication resulted in the growth of profit up to 4.5 million rubles.

The turn of the XIX and XX centuries was extremely important for both the world community and Russia, which likewise the developed Western countries entered a new phase of capitalist transformation, imperialism. Its main distinguishing characteristic is the absolute power (economic) of monopolistic associations aspiring to subordinate the whole society to their narrow corporate interests. Russia was one of the first in the world economy according to the monopolization level in the country. There was a broad framework for the formation of the oligarchy, the close union of industrial and financial capital, -another distinctive feature of the imperialistic stage of capitalistic development. In Russia, unlike the other world countries, officialdom and the highest governmental bureaucracy widely participated in this process, what promoted the development of corruption among the high-ranking officials and that time has been called-*"clique"*. Moreover, the most evident features of corruption appeared during the economic crisis of the beginning of XX century, the Russo-Japanese War of 1903-1905 and the First World War. We assume that the most convincing semantic characteristic of these processes was provided by the Soviet scientist A.Ya. Averkh: *"In this situation, the state approach is completely displaced by the personal, the service by careerism, the honesty by servility, intellect by slyness, united coordinated policy by enmity and competition of separate groups and cliques. Universal cynicism and indifference justified by inability to change anything are dominated"* [10, p. 43]. This is deadly to the authorities and honest, in fact, conclusion about the transformation of the Russian bureaucracy and some representatives of the government.

Revolution of 1905-1907s in Russia revealed another peculiarity, which had dire consequences for the national bourgeoisie, which failed to fulfill the leading role in solution of the problems of the peasantry and working class, national questions, changing of the context of autocratic power, successfully solved by the bourgeoisie of Western European countries in the middle of the XIX century. This revealed the slighting and mercenary character of the Russian capital, which was availed to the power of absolute monarchy providing the uncontrolled exploitation of workers and surplus profits that outweighed all other interests including the class interests.

Global changes of the information and communication space resulted in the appearance of fundamentally new features in the social life of the population changing its content.

One of these changes was the beginning of the wide migration processes in post-reform Russia. Freedom of movement of people is convincing indicator of capitalization of the country's workforces and an important resource of intensity of informational flows. Migration was significantly important for development of information flows in Russia with enormous unexplored Eastern regions and influence of immigrants from the European provinces on the new territories, where they settled. Migration processes began from XVII century and reached the maximum in the period of reforms that evidenced the growing "land hunger" in the Central regions of the country. The general migration centers included Ural, Western and Eastern Siberia, the steppe regions (Akmolinskaya and Turgaiskaya regions-North Kazakhstan regions, in present). Only for the period 1893-1907s, these regions were settled with more than 1.5 million people. The particular intensity of internal migration flows enhanced during the Stolypin's agrarian reform of 1906-1913s.

The understanding of the scale of emigration to Western Europe and the United States, which was registered only in 1904, was more important to study the communication processes. These first data evidence the development of communications. For example, every year for a period of 90s of XIX century, approximately 60 thousand people left for the United States and in the first decade of the XX century, this figure reached 156.5 thousand [11, pp. 105]. The available data indicate the regular relations of Russia with other countries of the world. Thus, in 1911, according to the data of the Russian customs, 440 thousand people arrived to the Russia with the long stay permission in the passports [11, p. 111].

There is another important peculiarity of the Russian information and communications space during period of reforms.

From the second half of XIX century, the communication processes developed in Russia acquiring the European importance and are related, first of all, the influence of Russian literature and journalism on the European culture. Russian writers, poets and dramatists have developed the new genres of literature and culture and became the ancestors of the "modernist style" in culture, which predetermined the future development of the entire world culture in the XX century. Among these

were L.N. Tolstoy (epic novels), F.M. Dostoevsky (psychological novels), A.P. Chekhov (lyric dramas), I.A. Goncharov and I.S. Turgenev (Russian novels) and K.S. Stanislavsky (modern theatre).

The beginning of the XX century triggers a new step in the European history, splitting Europe and the rest of the world for the years of the First World War to the confronting parties and late uniting entire European space into the new organizational structures (for example, the League of Nations). For Russia, this period was the most severe whereas the country was not ready for a new type of war. The combination of the burden of the war with significant challenges in the preceding period ultimately resulted in a social burst in 1917 and the elimination of the political status of the Russian Empire.

Thus, the post-reform period of the second half of XIX-early XX century was critical for the information and communication space of Russia and transformations processes of this became the wide and gradually resulted in the significant qualitative changes in society. Despite of all attempts to resist the historical process, Russia had developed on the way of a new type of civilization. This conclusion is confirmed by M. Veber written after the Russian revolution of 1905-1907s: "Present Russia embarked on the path of European development despite of the possible severe relapses in closest time" [12, p. 51].

At this stage of development of Russia, the general structural elements of the information and communication space specific for the developed world countries have been formed. In addition, Russia has played an important role in the development of the European community, which allowed it further take one of leading positions among the powerful countries in the world history.

REFERENCES

1. Dzhanshiev, G.A., 2008. Era of the Great Reforms. Moscow: Territoriya Budushchego, pp: 1.
2. Mironov, B.N., 2000. Social History of Russian Empire (XVIII-the beginning of XX Century). St. Petersburg: Dmitriy Bulanin, vol. 2.; Gregory, P., 1982. Russian National Income, 1885-1913. New York: Cambridge University Press.; Hosking, G., 2011. Russia and the Russians: A History. Cambridge, MA: Belknap.; Politic and Society in Provincial Russia: Saratov, 1590-1917, 1989. Ed. Rex, A. Columbus: Wade and Scott J. Seregny.
3. Ekshtut, S.A., 2010. Russia before Golgotha: Era of Great Reformatations. Moscow: Veche.

4. Nevostuev, N.A., 2005. Education and Development of the Elements of Civil Society in Ural in the Second Half of XIX – beginning of XX Century. Perm: PGU.; Tumanov, A.S., 2002. Autocracy and Public Organization in Russia in 1905-1917s. Tambov: TGU.; Geller, E., 1994. Conditions of Liberty. Civil Society and Its Rivals. London: Hamilton.; Howard, M., 2003. The Weakness of Civil Society in Post-Communist Europe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.; Russia in the European Context, 1789-1914: A Member of the Family, 2005. Ed. McCaffray, S.P. and M. Melancon. New York: Macmillan.; Warren, M., 2001. Democracy and Association. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
5. Statistical Atlas of Russia of A.F. Marks, 1907. St. Petersburg: IZd. A.F. Marksa.
6. Statistical Yearbook of Russia of 1913. 1914. St. Petersburg: Tsentr Stat. Komiteta MVD.
7. Philanthropy in Russia, 1907. St. Petersburg: Tipogr. N.Ya. Nyrkina, pp: 1.
8. Livron, V., 1874. Statistical Review of Russian Empire. St. Petersburg: Tipogr. Obshchestvennaya Pol'za.
9. Sidorova, M.V., 1993. Historians from Fontanka Street 16. Otechestvennye Arkhivy, pp: 4.
10. Averkh, A. Ya., 1989. Tsarism the Day before Dethronement. Moscow: Nauka.
11. Anniversary Statistical Bulletin of the Central Committee on Statistics of the Ministry of Internal Affairs: 1863-1913, 1913. St. Petersburg.
12. Veber, M., 2007. About Russia: Selected Articles. Moscow: ROSSPEN.