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## SYSTEM OF PARTY GUIDANCE OF LOCAL COUNCILS IN THE UKRAINIAN SSR (ON THE EXAMPLE OF LUTSK CITY COUNCIL)

The practice of the existence of democratic states of the world proves that local self-government is an important political institution that can significantly influence the harmonization of socio-political relations. The question of retrospective analysis of the functioning of local self-government is of particular relevance in the modern period – the time of intensive intellectual and practical work in the direction of realization of the tasks of political reform in Ukraine, deprivation of the center not peculiar to it functions, creation of conditions for the effective solution of local problems in the principles of decentralization and subsidiarity.

The study of the socio-political tradition of the establishment and development of local self-government institutions fits into the context of modern historical science with its emphasis on localizing the subject of knowledge, explaining the content and historical prerequisites for the formation and development of local democracy.<sup>1</sup> This is all the more important, since the practice of local self-government in Ukraine in the Soviet times, limited by the tenets of the dominant Marxist-Leninist ideology, hindered the formation of local communities as full subjects of the political process and, consequently, the development of democracy.

The purpose of the article is to analyze the forms, mechanisms and procedures for exercising comprehensive control of the Communist party over the activities of local governments, in particular the Lutsk City Council in 1939–1990.

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<sup>1</sup> A.V. Bortnikova, *Local Self-Government in Volhynia: Socio-Political Traditions and the Modern Decentralization Process*, Lutsk, 2018, p. 6.

The broad chronological framework of the proposed study, covering a 50-year period of national history, required the use of *sensitization* with a large number of sources and scientific literature. So the sources of the article are being the documents and materials of the State Archives of the Volhynia region, which are mostly unpublished.

The materials used from the P-4 Foundation – the Executive Committee of the Lutsk City council of workers' deputies, descriptions 2, 6, at which point the protocols of the Lutsk City Executive Committee and the orders of its chairman are of particular interest. Valuable information regarding the organizational structure, qualitative composition, features of management decisions of the Volhynia Regional committee of the Communist party of Ukraine, Lutsk City committee of the Communist party was obtained from the P-1 Foundation, op. 17. Extensive and diverse material was found in the newspaper "Soviet Volhynia" (organ of the Volhynia regional committee of the Communist party of Ukraine, Lutsk city committee of the Communist party of Ukraine and the Executive committee of the Volhynia regional council).

The materials used in the work of intelligence from the history of Volhynia by scholars of the Soviet period.<sup>2</sup> Certain information about the activities of the power institutions in Volhynia region can be found in the memoirs of people who have worked for many years in the power structures of Volhynia region or have been active participants of that time events.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, contemporary Ukrainian historiography is not rich in scientific studies on the political history of the Soviet period.<sup>4</sup>

The Second World War and its geopolitical changes had a profound effect on the fate of Volhynia. After the invasion of the Soviet troops in Poland in September 1939 and the annexation of the territories of Western Ukraine and Western Belarus to the USSR, the establishment of Soviet power began with the corresponding deployment of local self-government bodies. On December 4, 1939, Volhynia, Drohobych, Lviv, Rivne, Stanislav, and Ternopil regions were created. On December 9, 1939, the Bureau of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (Ukrainian SSR) approved the composition of regional executive committees of all western regions, and the latter, in their turn, approved the composition of consisting of all sections of the population authorities. Subsequently, the elections to the newly created local councils of workers' deputies took place.

<sup>2</sup> *Volhynia Soviet (1939–1965): Coll. Dock. and Materials*, ed. N.L. Alekseeva, V.O. Zamlynskyi, L.M. Minaeva, Part 3, Lviv, 1971; *History of Cities and Villages of the Ukrainian SSR: In: Twenty-Six Volumes. Volhynia Region*, ed. I.S. Klimash, N.L. Alekseeva, A.I. Verbvivska, I.S. Gaidai, Ye.B. Gordon et al., Kyiv, 1970; *Essays on the History of the Volhynia region Party Organization*, ed. I.S. Gaidai, V.O. Zamlynskyi, Ya.E. Ilyashenko et al., Kyiv, 1968, p. 254; *Essays on the history of the Volhynia Regional Party Organization*, ed. P.A. Borkovskiy, N.V. Burchak, B.I. Zabrovarnyi et al., 2nd ed., Lviv, 1981; *Lutsk is 900 Years Old. 1085–1985: Coll. Dock. and Materials*, comp. N.O. Boldyreva, N.V. Galyi, I.V. Kolesnyk, M.R. Myts, V.A. Nakonechnyi et al., Kiev, 1985; O.G. Mikhailuk, I.V. Kichyi, *History of Lutsk*, Lviv, 1991; O.G. Mikhailuk, I.V. Kichyi, M.D. Pivnitskyi et al., *History of Volhynia. From Ancient Times to the Present Day*, Lviv, 1988.

<sup>3</sup> V. Vorobei, *My Position is Unchanged; Reflections on Experiences: Historical and Local History Essays*, Lutsk, 2009; P. Shafeta, *Regional Committee Through the Eyes of the Editor: A Documentary Story*, Lutsk, 1993.

<sup>4</sup> V.I. Bortnikov, A.I. Parkhomyuk, *Essays on the History of State Authorities and Local Self-government in Volhynia (1944–2009)*, Lutsk, 2009; *Volhynia in the Conditions of Democratic Transformation (End of 20<sup>th</sup>. – Beginning of 21<sup>st</sup>. Century): Coll. Monograph*, ed. N.N. Kotsan, V.Ya. Malinovskyi, N.V. Pavlikha et al., Lutsk, 2012.

The principles, and content of the political regime, the one-party political system established in the USSR, were noted by the nature of activities, functions and order of formation of local self-government institutions in the territory of Volhynia. By all indications, this political regime belonged to a totalitarian one, where the single ruling Communist party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) actually created a symbiosis in the form of a “party-state”. Having gained the power, the totalitarian party created within its apparatus bodies that duplicated and controlled the activities of all state institutions of government and administration, including local ones, which in fact turned into mechanisms for implementing party directives.

## CONSTITUTIONAL CONSOLIDATION OF THE INSTITUTION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

At that time the organization of local self-government (self-governing councils of the time can be considered only with a certain degree of conditionality) was carried out on the basis of the so-called “Stalin” Constitution, adopted by the Extraordinary VIII Congress of Soviets of the USSR on December 5, 1936.<sup>5</sup> It was the Constitution of “socialism that won”. Accordingly, the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat went down into history.

In the Basic law of the USSR of 1936, the Soviets of workers’, peasants’ and Red army deputies were renamed into the Soviets of workers’ deputies, who formed the political basis of the USSR and were recognized by state bodies at the local level (Articles 2, 94). For the first time in the history of the USSR, the Constitution formally granted all citizens the right to vote: universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot (Articles 135–140). The Basic law regulated the term of activity of councils – two years. A deputy could be recalled as from the advice of his constituents (Article 142). The All-Union Communist party of the Bolsheviks (A-U CP (b)) proclaimed itself the “governing core” of all state and public organizations of workers (Article 126) (it is significant, that the 1924 Constitution the Communist party was not mentioned). The congresses of councils of all levels, including local ones, have been replaced by session meetings, which have given them the features of the parliamentary democracy.

The Constitution of the Ukrainian SSR, approved by the 14th Extraordinary Ukrainian congress of Soviets on January 30, 1937, generally, with minor changes, reproduced the norms of the Union constitution.<sup>6</sup> Although the Constitution of the Ukrainian SSR of 1937 gave voters the right to offer alternative candidates and the possibility of their support in secret ballot, in practice it proved to be impossible. Immediately after the adoption of the Constitution, election commissions were obliged to register only one candidate and only one surname was included in the ballot.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Constitution (Basic Law of the USSR)*. Approved by the Extraordinary Congress of Soviets of the USSR on December 5, 1936, <http://www.hist.msu.ru/ER/Etext/cnst1936.htm>, accessed 7 II 2017.

<sup>6</sup> *Constitution (Basic Law) of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic: January 30, 1937 History of the Ukrainian Constitution / Order*, A.G. Slyusarenko, M.V. Tomenko, Kyiv 1997, pp. 208–235.

<sup>7</sup> I.M. Pankevych, *Tradition of Election of Power in Ukraine*, Lviv, 2015, p. 169.

The changes that took place in the Soviet Union in the 1950s and 1970s in economics, social relations, and socio-political life, as well as the general trend of democratization in the world, which marked the beginning of its “third wave”, necessitated the reform of the political order of the USSR. It is a condemnation of the cult of Stalin’s personality and the transition from a rigid totalitarian regime to a more moderate one, that got the title “the command-administrative system”. These changes *de jure* enshrined the new Basic Law of the USSR in 1977 and the corresponding constitution of the Union republics.

According to the new Constitution, the Councils of workers’ deputies remained the state bodies, instead they were renamed into the Soviets of people’s deputies, which were to certify the transition of Soviet society to a higher level of social development, and their term of office was increased from two to two and a half years (Article 90). A citizen, as a rule, could not be elected in more than in two Councils of people’s deputies (Article 101). An imperative mandate was introduced for deputies of all levels – voters’ orders (Article 102). The deputy was supposed to carry out his powers “without interrupting with production or service activities” (Article 104). A unified hierarchically organized system of councils was established when local councils “enforced decisions of higher (‘further up the ladder’) state bodies and governed the activities of subordinate Soviets of people’s deputies” (Article 146). That is, in building of the councils system, as in party building, the principle of so-called democratic centralism prevailed. The executive and governing bodies of the councils were to be formed from among the elected deputies (Article 149).<sup>8</sup>

After the tradition to reproduce the main provisions of the Constitution of the USSR, the Constitution of the Ukrainian SSR of June 20, 1978 in Art. 6 set out the provisions on the leading role of the CPSU in the life of Soviet society. With the adoption of the Constitution of the Ukrainian SSR in 1978, the process of “obtaining” the institute of local self-government in Ukraine has actually ended.

In the late 1980s, the political leadership of the USSR, under pressure of the liberalization process, succeeded in a belated attempt to reform the country’s political system. The policy of *perebudova* (*perestrojka*, reconstruction) and *glasnost* (publicity) became the reaction to the nationwide socio-political crisis. This policy, which took place in the conditions of intense political struggle, envisaged the reform of the USSR as part of the declarative rejection of the CPSU monopoly for power and the democratization of the basic principles of local self-government. At the same time, the party leadership made desperate attempts to leave the levers of the CPSU’s decisive influence over all social processes, using the propaganda slogans of the omnipotence of Soviets. Embodied in the call “All Power to the Soviets!”, this idea allowed the Bolsheviks to defeat in due time their political opponents.<sup>9</sup>

In the structure of representative bodies of state power, which was enshrined in the Constitutions of the USSR and the Ukrainian SSR in the edition of 1989, new political institutions appear: Congresses of people’s deputies of the USSR, Congresses of people’s deputies of Union and Autonomous republics, at the local level – Presidiums of Soviets,

<sup>8</sup> *Constitution (Basic Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Adopted at the extraordinary seventh session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on the ninth convocation, October 7 1977, Moscow 1980, p. 46.*

<sup>9</sup> V.I. Bortnikov, A.I. Parkhomyuk, *Essays on the History of State Authorities...*, p. 124.

which organized the work of regional, district, city, district and city councils of people's deputies, headed by the heads of councils, and the city (cities of district subordination), settlement and village councils – the heads of these councils (Article 80, 128).

However, the reform clearly had a propaganda character, since it has not concerned the main subject – the CPSU monopoly on political power (Article 6). The organization and activities of the state remained to be built on the principle of democratic centralism, which provided: “the election of all bodies of the government from the bottom up, their accountability to the people, the responsibility of the decisions of the higher authorities for the subordinate ones”. This principle declaratively proclaimed the combination of a unified leadership “with initiative and creative activity on the ground” (Article 3). It is significant that the divisions and departments of the executive committees of the councils in their activity are subordinated to the respective council, its executive committee, and the highest sectoral body of state administration (Article 138).<sup>10</sup>

The process of the new system of councils constitutional consolidation has received a logical continuation at the level of legislative and other regulatory and legal assignment – from central ones to the local authorities and administration. In April 1990 the Law of the USSR “On General Principles of Local Self-Government and Local Economy in the USSR” was adopted.

According to the Law, local councils of People's deputies “as representative bodies of state power” (Article 3) were recognized as the main link in the system of local self-government. One of the important changes in the system of local self-government in the law was the freedom from the principle of democratic centralism, proclaimed in the 1989 Constitution of Ukraine. The principles of local self-government had to be based on the following principles: the will of the people through the councils of people's deputies, local referendums and other forms of direct democracy; legality; self-dependence and independence of councils of people's deputies, their responsibility for solving issues of local importance; protection of the rights and legitimate interests of citizens; election of councils of people's deputies, bodies of territorial public self-government, their accountability to the population; publicity and consideration of public opinion; combination of local and state interests (Article 4).<sup>11</sup>

In the connection with the adoption of the law, the resolution of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR abolished a number of legal acts: Law of the USSR of June 25, 1980 “On the Basic Powers of Regional, Regional Soviets of People's Deputies, Soviets of People's Deputies of Autonomous regions and Autonomous Districts”; Decrees of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dd. March 19, 1971 “On the Basic Rights and Responsibilities of the District Soviets of People's Deputies”, “On the Basic Rights and Responsibilities of City and District in the Cities of Soviets of People's Deputies” in the edition of decrees dd. November 28, 1978, as well as the Decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the

<sup>10</sup> *Constitution (Basic Law) of the Ukrainian SSR: amended and supplemented. October 27 1989*, Kyiv 1989, p. 61.

<sup>11</sup> *On General Principles of Local Self-Government and Local Economy in the USSR: USSR Law of April 9, 1990 no. 1417-I*, <http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/v1417400-90>, accessed 5 II 2017.

USSR dd. April 8, 1968 “On the Fundamental Rights and Duties of Settlements and Rural Soviets of People’s Deputies”, last revised or amended by the decree dd. November 28, 1978. The abolition of these legal acts proved the irreversibility of the process of moving away from the then model of local self-government and creating the preconditions for the adoption of a better legal framework that would meet the new socio-political realities.<sup>12</sup>

The absence of mechanisms for the legal regulation of councils and the declarative nature of the aforementioned Law of the USSR “On General Principles of Local Self-Government and Local Economy in the USSR” required further efforts to democratically reform the entire system of local self-government bodies. However, this was not possible without dramatic changes in the entire social order of the Soviet Union. The adoption of the “Declaration on State Sovereignty of Ukraine” on June 16, 1990, was a crucial step at this path. This important political act determined strategy of democratic progress of the country and created public preconditions for gaining in half a year of Ukraine’s independence.

On December 7, 1990, the Law of the Ukrainian SSR “On Local Councils of People’s Deputies of the Ukrainian SSR and Local Self-Government” was adopted. By this act, the concept of “local self-government” has been brought closer to its European understanding. The law abolished subordination of councils and their executive committees vertically, confirming the freedom from the principle of “democratic centralism”. Instead, a number of principles, that have determined the democratic orientation of local self-government: democracy; legality; the self-independence and independence of the Soviets of People’s deputies within the limits of their powers in solving issues of local importance; protection of the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of citizens, social justice; election of councils of people’s deputies, bodies of territorial public self-government, their control, accountability to the population; publicity and consideration of public opinion; combination of local and state interests, interests of the individual and the entire population of the respective territory; economic and financial independence of the territories; interaction of local self-government bodies with labor collectives, public organizations and movements; self-financing and self-sufficiency; optimal decentralization; real management of the territory have been declared. One of the innovations of the law was the decision to combine the posts of the chairpersons of the councils and the heads of their executive committees (Article 42). At the same time, the councils have been exempted from the guardianship of the committees, the exclusive powers of the councils of each level have been defined, and the expenditures from local budgets have been withdrawn from state subordination – the local self-government bodies could independently determine the directions of use of the funds of their budgets, spend the budgetary funds (Article 12). However, the Soviets of people’s deputies remained state bodies (Article 2).<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> A.V. Bortnikova, “The evolution of the legislative, regulatory and legal framework of local self-government in Ukraine”, *S.P.A.C.E. Society, Politics, Administration in Central Europe* 2018, Electronic Science Practice. Nat. University of Law Academy of Odessa, no. 8, p. 10.

<sup>13</sup> On Local Councils of People’s Deputies of the Ukrainian SSR and Local Self-Government: Law of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic / [adopted at the second session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of the twelfth convocation, December 7. 1990], Kyiv 1991, p. 64.

**The procedure for the forming of local councils.** After the “reunification” of the western and eastern regions of Ukraine, elections to the local Soviets of workers’ deputies took place only the year later, on December 15, 1940. In particular, 145 deputies were elected to the Lutsk city council.<sup>14</sup> As a result of the deployment of full-fledged activities of local governments; Nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union. Lutsk was in the occupation zone from June 25, 1941 to February 2, 1944.

After the liberation of the Volhynia region in February 1944 from the Executive committee of the Lutsk city council of workers’ deputies came back to work. The first elections to local councils after the war took place in December 1947. The procedure for their organization and holding is regulated not by law, but by the “Regulations on Elections to the Regional, District, City, Rural and Town Councils of Deputies of the Workers of the Ukrainian SSR”.<sup>15</sup>

The high above mentioned Regulations determined the procedure for organizing elections until 1979 – the time of adoption of the Law of the USSR “On Elections to Local Councils of People’s Deputies of the Ukrainian SSR”.<sup>16</sup>

It is known that these were not elections in the ordinary sense, but voting in advance of candidates elected by the party bodies and at the same time a means of showing citizens’ loyalty to the then political regime. The Communist party attached great importance to them, carefully selecting candidates for election and providing mass media during the election campaign. Propaganda and mobilization appeals have taken a huge turn, turning voting day into a “national holiday”.

The explanation that only one last name is included in the ballot papers was the misleading thesis that there is no soil in the country for different parties and groups, because “all the life and activities of the Soviet people are governed by the most tried, the most devoted to the cause of the workers of the Lenin-Stalin Party”, and at election meetings representatives of labor collectives, party and public organizations “agree on common candidates and come out with candidates of district election commissions to register these candidates”.<sup>17</sup>

Another “logical” explanation on the part of scholars contained the thesis that it is “a tradition that naturally developed [...] And who can a candidate compete with if there are no conflicting interests in Soviet society?”, asked the rhetorical questions the author of the propaganda publication.<sup>18</sup>

The peculiarity of the formation of the composition of the deputies of the local councils of that time is their large number, which was a tribute to the Soviet tradition when the level of political regime democratism was measured by quantitative indicators. Thus, if

<sup>14</sup> O.G. Mukhailuk, I.V. Kichyi, *History of Lutsk*, p. 123.

<sup>15</sup> “Election Regulations for Regional, District, District, City, Rural and Settlement Councils of the Deputies of the Workers of the Ukrainian SSR”, *Soviet Volhynia* October 12, 1947.

<sup>16</sup> On Elections to Local Councils of People’s Deputies of the Ukrainian SSR: Law of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic dd. June 27, 1979 no. 4830-IX, <http://zakon0.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/4830-09>, Accessed 13 V 2017.

<sup>17</sup> “Why is one candidate included in the ballot?”, *Soviet Volhynia* February 28, 1950.

<sup>18</sup> V.I. Yevintov, O.I. Shcherbak, *Democracy: Real and Imaginary* (Kyiv, 1985), p. 15.

in 1953, 147 deputies were elected to the Lutsk representative body, more than 200 were elected in the 1960s, and then more than 300 have been elected since the second half of the 1970s. 330 elect.<sup>19</sup>

The number of the deputy corps of Lutsk city council increased with the increase of the population of the regional center of Volhynia region (table 1).

**Table 1. Dynamics of the population growth in Lutsk (1939–1989)**

Year	Population
1939	38 600
1959	55 663
1970	93 863
1979	137 344
1989	19 774

Source: <http://pop-stat.mashke.org/ukraine-cities.htm>

An important direction of leadership and control of the party by the local councils was the active participation in the formation of the social composition of the deputy corps. Its structure was to be consistent with Marxist doctrine and the notion of socialist democracy as the participation of the masses of workers (the Communist and non-party blocs) in governing the state under the leading role of the working class and the CPSU as its avant-garde.

For example, according to some estimates, the number of non-party ones ranged from 50% to local councils, to the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR within 30%, to the Supreme soviet of the USSR within 25%. In addition to the general composition of councils at all levels, party officials considered each nomination in person at the meetings of the bureau of committees, city committees, district committees of the Communist Party. It was here that the fate of each deputy's mandate was decided; often not the business qualities of the candidate, but the questionnaire data and his loyalty to the authorities were decisive. Each council (district, city, region, Supreme soviet of the USSR and the Supreme soviet of the Ukrainian SSR) was informed about the percentage of workers, collective farmers, women, non-party and party members, its youth wing – All-Union Lenin Communist League of Youth/Lenin Communist League (AUCLY/LCLU), young people under 30 and older people, individuals awarded with orders and medals, etc., who were to be nominated as the candidates.

<sup>19</sup> State Archives of Volhynia Region, Lutsk, F. R-4. Executive Committee of Lutsk City Council of People's Deputies (City Executive Committee), op. 6, Ref. 20a, List of deputies of the Lutsk City Council of Workers' Deputies, elected on February 23, 1953, sheets. 1–42; *ibidem*, cf. 270, sheets. 5–34; *ibidem*, cf. 400, sheets. 3–18; *ibidem*, cf. 446, sheets. 1–9; *ibidem*, cf. 848, sheets. 1–34; *ibidem*, cf. 1386, sheets. 1–11; *ibidem*, Spr. 1783, sheets. 1–14.



One of the main principles of the formation of legislative and representative bodies of power was social – class, gender and party approaches. Evidence of this is the regulation of the percentage of such social categories as workers, women, and members of the party and the AULCU and non-party members in councils of different levels. For example, the deputy corps of the Lutsk city council, following the election of 1953, consisting of 147 deputies, numbered 55 workers, 92 officials and representatives of the “Soviet intellectuals”, 56 women, 81 members of the CPSU.<sup>20</sup> Explaining why there were many intellectuals and officials in the Lutsk City Council deputy corps in the early 1950s, and not the workers (as Marxist doctrine implies), the author of the article sees that at that time the members of the city council necessarily included the heads of the regional committee of the CPU, regional executive committee, Lutsk city committee of the CPU, LCLU, representatives of court, prosecutor’s office and security services.

The number of workers in the deputy corps of the Council of 1975 had been already 74,6%, of women – 46,9%, and of the CPSU members and candidates – 49,2%. In 1982 these had been 73%, 48,8 and 43,6%.<sup>21</sup> In 1985 these had been 73 – respectively 73%, 49 and 46%.<sup>22</sup> Thus, in the 1970s and 1980s, workers typically comprised about 2/3 of the council, CPSU members – less than half of the council, women – more than 40% enforcement agencies, which related to the intelligentsia and officials.

Another important area of party control was the desire of the party leadership to ensure maximum (real and virtual) citizen participation in the election of deputies of all levels. According to official press reports, which were frankly propagandistic, the level of electoral activity of the Soviet people showed unknown to the world figures – more than 99 and even 100% turnout at polling stations and the same “sky-high” indicators of voting for “indestructible bloc of communists and non-party”.

The active participation of citizens in elections at all levels, according to the Soviet tradition, was to demonstrate the high ideological and political level of the Soviet people, their mass support for the leadership of the Communist party and its leadership. At the same time, such masses had to demonstrate the advantages of Soviet socialist democracy over the so-called bourgeoisie. Voting “against” was considered atypical for the Soviet people and was viewed ideologically as a “betrayal” to the ideals of socialism, and therefore extremely undesirable for the party officials responsible for the election results.

Thus, according to the information of the city election commission on elections to Lutsk city council of deputies of workers in 1950, 99,99% of the total number of registered voters allegedly took part in the elections of deputies of the city council. At 129 voting stations, 99,75% of the total number of voters who took part in the ballot voted for candidates of the “bloc of Communists and non-party”. 0,25% of the total number of voters who took part in the vote voted against the candidates. According to the press release, there were no invalid ballots in the “Regulations on Elections to the Regional,

<sup>20</sup> “The first session of the Lutsk City Council of Workers’ Deputies”, *Soviet Volhynia* March 29, 1953.

<sup>21</sup> State Archives of Volhynia region, f. P-4, op. 6, cf. 848, fol. 42; *ibidem*, cf. 1599, sheet 21.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, cf. 1783, sheet 14a.

District, District, City, Rural and Settlement Councils of Deputies of the Workers of the Ukrainian SSR". Basis of Art. 99.<sup>23</sup>

If to look at the activity of citizens in absolute terms, in the 1965 elections in Lutsk of 59 056 voters' only nine citizens did not appear in the polling stations, and 88 voted "against".<sup>24</sup> But the "record" result was documented in the elections to the Lutsk City Council in June 1977, when voter turnout was 100%, "for" – 99,99%, and "against" – only five voters.<sup>25</sup>

In this context M. Duverger's thoughts, who wrote that the introduction of actual co-optation instead of election becomes a ritual that has a transparent practical meaning: this is how they try to suggest the futility of any attempt at resistance, the omnipotence of a system that requires unanimous submission, are of extreme interest. A 99,9% majority proves regime efficiency; its false nature is obvious, but only a perfect mechanism can provide such a result. On the other hand, such a system "may provide some democratic preparation for the future: however it may be, the fraudulent election is used to draw the ballot to a people whom it did not know before; rituals that are devoid of inner meaning teach at least democratic procedures".<sup>26</sup>

The illusory nature of the Soviet election system was clearly demonstrated by the results of the first democratic elections in 1990, when the Communist Party no longer had a decisive influence on the composition of the Soviets. For example, in the local elections in March 1990, 106 of 122 ones were elected to the Lutsk city council on the day of voting, (elections were conducted by a majority voting system of the absolute majority, so all the deputies could not be elected and the repeated elections in a number of constituencies were appointed). Of these, only 16 were women, 24 were workers, 82 were employees, and 61 were CPSU members.<sup>27</sup> That is, the results of the 1990 local elections were confirmed artificiality of structural structures of social and gender composition of the city council in previous years. The real social composition of Lutsk's representative body was no longer in line with the ideological matrix of Soviet democracy at that time.

**Forms and methods of party leadership of councils.** The Soviet system of local self-government was determined not only by the order of its formation, but also by the nature of its activities – the implementation of the CPSU/CPU program guidelines. The work of local councils was closely monitored by the party, which provided relevant party institutions directly, as well as through communists, members of primary party organizations within the council structure.

For example, accusing the employees of Lutsk city council of bureaucracy, the newspaper "Soviet Volhynia" (an organ of the Volhynia Regional and Lutsk City Committees of the Cp (b) and the Regional Council of Workers' Deputies) in one of the publications of 1947, emphasized that "irresponsibility, bureaucratic complacency, disregard for the

<sup>23</sup> "Message from the city election commission", *Soviet Volhynia* December 21, 1950.

<sup>24</sup> State Archives of Volhynia region, f. R-4, op. 6, cf. 390, sheets 1–22.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*, cf. 1002, sheet. 15

<sup>26</sup> M. Duverger, *Political Parties*, trans. from French (Moscow, 2002), p. 448.

<sup>27</sup> State Archives of Volhynia region, f. R-4, op. 6, cf. 2104, sheet 1.

needs and demands of the workers, **lack of fair and accurate implementation of party and government directives are the most dangerous and malicious manifestations of bureaucracy**” [italics – A.B.] The publication was accused the party organization of the city council and municipal utilities and their leaders, who allegedly “got away with these inconveniences and did not respond to them”<sup>28</sup>

The party leadership was also exercised through the election of employees of regional committees and city committees to the composition of city councils, their executive committees, and chairmen of city councils and their executive committees, respectively, in party bodies – the bureau of regional committees and city committees of the CPU. In addition, joint meetings of leading city party and Soviet bodies were practiced, and joint decisions (resolutions) of executive committees of councils and city committees of the Communist Party on the most important issues were approved. City council executives reported periodically to city committees of the CPU about their activities, elimination of deficiencies in work and fulfillment of requests and wishes of the population.

Thus, in October 1955, the Lutsk city bureau of the CP of Ukraine and the executive committee of the Lutsk city council adopted a joint resolution “On the State of Physical and Fitness Work Among the Population of the City”, that stated about the extremely unsatisfactory work of the relevant institutions and their leadership and outlined ways to improve it.<sup>29</sup>

In March 1956 the resolution “On the preparation for placement of the State Loan for the Development of the USSR National Economy”, and in July of the same year the resolution “On Measures to Implement a Plan to Recruit Labor for the Most Important Structures and Enterprises of the Eastern and Northern Regions of the Country and the Donbas” were adopted.<sup>30</sup>

In January 1959, the Lutsk city bureau of the CP of Ukraine and the executive committee of the Lutsk city council adopted another joint resolution – “On Strengthening of Control Against Drinking and Keeping Order in the Trade of Strong Liquor”.<sup>31</sup> In January 1961 the resolution “On the Relocation of Families from the city of Lutsk to the Kustanaisk and Jambul Region” was adopted. The solution provided sending of 40 families to Kazakhstan.<sup>32</sup>

In 1966, due to the reduction of study of one year in secondary schools and the simultaneous graduation of students from grades 10 and 11, as well as the increase of graduates of grade 8, there appeared the problems with their employment and further education. Accordingly, the Lutsk City Committee of the Communist party and the Executive Committee of the City Executive Committee make a decision “On measures to expand education and employment of the youth, which finished the city’s secondary schools in 1966 into economy”.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>28</sup> A. Goloshchapov, “Bureaucrats and bailiffs from Lutsk City Council”, *Soviet Volhynia* September 4, 1947.

<sup>29</sup> State Archives of Volhynia region, f. P-4, op. 6, cf. 65, sheets 12–17.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, sheets 60–61, 39.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, cf. 176, sheets 3–11.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, cf. 249, sheet 1.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, cf. 400, sheets 3–18.

The adoption of joint decrees of Lutsk city CPU and executive committee of Lutsk city council has ceased since April 1979, which, probably, had to show more independent character of activity of local self-government.

Obviously, the city council and its executive committee had some leeway in making local decisions. In this context, is of interest, to research the experience of adopting the so-called “obligatory resolutions” of the executive committee of Lutsk City Council, which had existed until 1970.

Among the many decisions, these resolutions differed in that they were not targeted, but concerned the entire population of the city. So, in April 1948, in the conditions of absence of budgetary funds, the Lutsk executive committee of the City executive committee adopts a mandatory decree: “On Holding a Collection from the Owners of Vehicles and Collecting from the Owners of Livestock”. In particular, for registration of bicycles and motorcycles it was necessary to pay 15 rubles, cars registration – 25 rubles, boats used for industrial purposes and for transportation of people registration – 50 rubles, cattle – 50 rubles, horses – 250 rubles.<sup>34</sup> In March 1955 – “On the Prohibition of Trade of Meat, Meat Products, Milk and Other Agricultural Products in the City Outside the Markets”; in September 1956 – “On Streamlining the Trade of Alcoholic Beverages and Enhancing the Culture of Trade in Catering”.<sup>35</sup>

It should be noted that the practice of adopting “binding resolutions” had its start in the time of the existence of the Lutsk City Duma (council) during the stay of Volhynia within the Russian Empire. In particular, the city дума instituted fixed prices for bread, bakery products and meat of different categories by adopting obligatory regulations. Therefore, we have reason to speak about the imitation and tradition of certain elements of organization of activity of Lutsk city council from the city дума of tsarist times.

A peculiar form of control of the party over the behavior of the deputies of the Lutsk city council, the direction of their activity in a certain ideological direction was the acceptance by deputies of socialist obligations. For example, members of the Nineteenth Convocation Council (1985–1987) were required to fill out a form that stated that they were participating in a socialist race for the early completion of the eleventh five-year tasks with appropriate commitments in certain directions. Among them:

- production plans, production standards;
- social and industrial discipline;
- rationalization work; nature of socialist commitments: slogan, deed (early commitments to the 115th anniversary of the birth of VI Lenin, the 40th anniversary of the Victory, the 8th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of the USSR, etc.);
- saving materials;
- mentoring, raising the production level;
- community service, patronage, etc.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, cf. 86, sheet 6.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, sheets 112, 151–152.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, cf. 1677, sheets 1–152.

According to various definitions, the administration of states is carried out by a certain circle of governors, who identify as bureaucracy, political elite, ruling elite, ruling class, oligarchy, nomenclature, etc. After N. Davis, all totalitarian regimes need a large “army” of bureaucrats to complete the bloated and duplicated organs of the party-state. This new bureaucracy “creates opportunities for rapid advancement of entire flocks of adapters of diverse social backgrounds. Depending on the party, the bureaucracy is undoubtedly the only social group whose interests coincide with those of the regime”.<sup>37</sup>

The majority of this bureaucracy, which held key positions in all spheres of public life and whose appointment to leadership required coordination with the relevant party body, was called in the Soviet Union “nomenclature”. The introduction of the nomenclature principle of appointing heads of enterprises, institutions and organizations, including in the system of local self-government, became at the same time an effective means of ensuring the domination and control of the Communist party over all spheres of life of Soviet society. In the 1980s, there were 577 nomenclature posts in the Volhynia region.<sup>38</sup>

The list of nomenclature included employees of the apparatus of the regional committee of the Communist party of Ukraine, city and district committees of the party and other party institutions, heads of security structures of the region, heads of departments of the executive committee of the Volhynia regional council of people’s deputies, heads of leading industrial associations, factories, trusts, enterprises and organizations of industry and agriculture, educational and cultural institutions, editors of newspapers and magazines, other mass media, public control bodies, trade unions, secretaries of the regional committee of the LCL, the first secretaries of the city committees and district committees of the LCL of Ukraine and others.

Nomenclature posts in Soviet bodies in cities included: the chairman of the executive committee of Lutsk city council of people’s deputies, the chairmen of executive committees of city councils of other cities of the region, the first deputies and deputy heads of executive committees of city councils, heads of city planning committees, heads of departments of executive committees and other committees.

If, in the first decades of the Soviet rule, the nomenclature elite had an open character, it eventually turned into a closed one, since it had been reproduced on its own basis. M. Duverger notified, that in a one-party system of totalitarian type, to join the party and to abide in it, the dictator’s devotion means far more than personal qualities or leadership abilities. One single party tends to turn into a dictator’s clientele associated with the benefits that its members enjoy. Only the technical side of the organization of the specified clientele is new, and its very existence is a common attribute of all tyrannical systems.<sup>39</sup>

According to the Soviet scientist E. Starikov’s accurate assessment, not personal competence and high morality, but personal devotion as the main selection criterion, protection and kinship as his main method, the inclusion in the caste of the elected

<sup>37</sup> N. Davis, *Europe. History*, trans. from English P. Tarashchuk, O. Kovalenko (Kyiv, 2001), p. 974.

<sup>38</sup> State Archives of Volhynia region, f. P-1, op. 17, cf. 971, sheets 114–130.

<sup>39</sup> M. Duverger, *Political Parties*, p. 321.

through the dismissed Komsomol work, the actual invariance is the cycle of nomenclature units within the closed elite corporation, the actual irresponsibility, of the accountability of the higher to the lower, the intra-corporate division not by professional specialization, but by the “level of leadership” (in fact, the “rank chart”) – all this contributed to the transformation of nomenclature into anti-elite.<sup>40</sup>

Thus, the entry of the territory of Volhynia in 1939 into the USSR was marked by the collapse of the democratic foundations of local self-government activity and their transformation into state bodies under the leadership of the Communist party. In the Soviet period, a non-democratic state model of local self-government was actually implemented, when local councils at the constitutional level were being recognized as the state power bodies. In addition, they were in fact transformed into an institute for implementing the Communist party’s program guidelines. The republican form of government in the USSR and the Ukrainian SSR required the implementation of democratic principles of formation and activity of local self-government, which, in the presence of totalitarian and authoritarian regimes and a single-party political system were barely impossible.

The control over self-government institutions in cities was carried out through a system of measures and procedures that included careful selection of candidates for deputies, nomenclature principle of selection of city council leadership, their executive committees and other structural subdivisions, practice of holding of the joint meetings of party committees and executive committees, local councils self-government instead of democratic elections, etc. Despite the turning of the councils into a tool for implementing the CPSU guidelines and effectively stripping them of their political subjectivity, the system of councils and their executive bodies has proven itself as the effective organizational structure capable of performing local socio-economic and cultural-educational tasks. The evidence of this is its continued existence after the gained independence by Ukraine.

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<sup>40</sup> Je.N. Starikov, *Marginals, In Human Dimension*, ed. and with a foretaste A. Vishnevsky (Moscow, 1989), p. 189.

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## System of Party Guidance of Local Councils in the Ukrainian SSR (on the Example of Lutsk City Council)

The purpose of the article is to analyze the forms, mechanisms and procedures for exercising comprehensive control of the Communist Party over the activities of local governments, in particular the Lutsk City Council in 1939–1990. The source of the article consists of the documents from the State Archives of the Volhynia region, press publications, and the memories of the events' participants. It has been proved that the nature of activity, function and order of formation of local self-government institutions in the territory of Volhynia determined the totalitarian political regime of the Soviet Union with a one-party political system. Based on a study of the problem of political and legal consolidation of the institute of local councils, it has been found out that in the Soviet period it was actually implemented an undemocratic state model of local self-government when local councils at constitutional level were recognized by state authorities.

Much attention has been paid to the specifics of the formation of local self-government bodies. It has been shown that these were not elections in the ordinary sense, but in fact voting in advance of the candidates for election by the party bodies and at the same time a manifestation of citizens' loyalty to the dominant political regime. The process of control of the CPSU over self-government institutions in cities was monitored through a system of measures and procedures that included: selection of candidates for deputies on political, social-class, gender grounds, etc., nomenclature principle of selection of city council leadership, their executive committees and other structural units, practice of holding joint meetings of party committees and executive committees, system of co-optation of representative government institutions, and seats of local representative offices.



**KEYWORDS**

Soviet Union, Communist party of the Soviet Union, Volhynia, local self-government, Lutsk city council

## **System partyjnego przewodnictwa rady lokalnej w ukraińskiej SRS (na przykładzie Rady Miejskiej Łucka)**

Celem artykułu jest analiza form, mechanizmów i procedur sprawowania kompleksowej kontroli partii komunistycznej nad działalnością samorządów, zwłaszcza Rady Miejskiej Łucka w latach 1939–1990. Podstawą źródłową artykułu są zasoby Archiwum Państwowego Obwodu Wołyńskiego, prasa i wspomnienia uczestników wydarzeń. Udowodniono, że charakter działalności, funkcja i porządek tworzenia instytucji samorządowych na terenie Wołynia determinował totalitarny ustrój Związku Sowieckiego z jednopartyjnym systemem politycznym. Na podstawie studium problemu politycznej i prawnej konsolidacji instytutu rad lokalnych stwierdzono, że w okresie sowieckim realizowano w nim faktycznie niedemokratyczny państwowy model samorządu terytorialnego, gdy uznano samorzady lokalne na poziomie konstytucyjnym przez władze państwowe.

Dużo uwagi poświęcono specyfice formowania się organów samorządu lokalnego. Wykazano, że nie były to wybory we właściwym rozumieniu tego słowa, ale w istocie głosowanie na kandydatów wystawionych przez organy partyjne i jednocześnie akt lojalności obywateli wobec dominującego reżimu politycznego. Proces kontroli KPZS nad instytucjami samorządowymi w miastach był monitorowany za pomocą systemu środków i procedur, które obejmowały: selekcję kandydatów na posłów ze względów politycznych, klasowych, płciowych itp., nomenklaturową zasadę wyboru kierownictwa rad miejskich, ich komitetów wykonawczych i innych jednostek strukturalnych, praktykę odbywania wspólnych posiedzeń komitetów partyjnych i komitetów wykonawczych, system kooptacji reprezentatywnych instytucji rządowych i siedzib przedstawicielstw terenowych.

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