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Staff Potential of the Kharkiv Imperial University at the Beginning of the 20th century (1900–1914)

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Abstract

Via analyzing ministry and institutional acts, the article defines some aspects of the Russian staff policy on the basis of the Kharkiv Imperial University in 1900–1914. Within this period, higher education was arranged according to principles of the 1884 Charter.

Sent to Russian imperial universities, the 1908 Academic Staff Draft Regulation by the Ministry of Public Education reduced their material support. This process affected academic and research activities with a subsequent staff lack and department tension at the Kharkiv Imperial University.

Reviewing the staff and its policy on the ministry and institution levels, we can note some peculiarities among faculties of the Kharkiv Imperial University. They differ in number of departments where the Medical Faculty leads.

Besides, another distinction between faculties of the Kharkiv Imperial University is a various department staff potential. Firstly, number of ordinary and extraordinary professors at departments was different. Most of them belonged to the Medical Faculty. Least of them worked for the Law Faculty. Secondly, there was an increasing number of common lecturers as well as part-time and overtime employees. The latter was obviously retraced among ordinary professors for all four faculties of the Kharkiv Imperial University.

Simultaneously, the Kharkiv Imperial University required more junior and middle-ranking lecturers (especially, privatdocents and auxiliary personnel – assistants, residents and laboratory workers). That exceeded the 1884 Charter norms and required a complex decision. One of promising mechanisms to settle the problem was the Academic Staff Draft Regulation by the Ministry of Public Education.

Keywords: education, higher education, education access, sustainable development in education, education policy, education reform, education potential.

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1. Introduction

In 1908, the Kharkiv Imperial University received an initial Academic Staff Draft Regulation by the Ministry of Public Education. The draft explanatory memorandum offered its staff and credit check via faculties and university administrations. The check mainly concerned clinical, laboratory or library assistants, keepers, residents, paramedics, supervisors. The same dealt with funds to maintain lecture rooms, laboratories, libraries and service buildings.

The Academic Staff Draft Regulation was considered by faculties and university administration. The results were sent to the Ministry of Public Education with a proper substantiation to raise certain aspects of staff and credits.

In spring 1909, the Kharkiv Imperial University received the revised document. In contrast to the previous version, it provided for no or almost no credits. The university administration reapplied to the Ministry of Public Education for credit increase at least to solve the most relevant staff problems (Bagalej, 1910: 4).

There was credit reduction to support junior lecturers via their discharge. Maintenance of service buildings were also underfunded. That could lead to bad consequences for academic, research and economic aspects of the university life.

Besides, members of some departments had academic overloads (as opposed to the university charter). For example, mathematic professors lectured for 9 instead of 6 hours while other departments had vacancies (Bagalej, 1910: 4-5).

Therefore, according to the draft, both whole universities and their staffs were underfunded. In such a case, institution maintenance required special funds while staff salaries were paid via university budgets. The obvious staff lack could be settled through a consolidated approach between authorities, ministries and universities.

2. Materials and methods

Apart from general works on higher education history in the Russian Empire, we used ministry and university materials. In particular, the 1884 University Charter was included. As a state act, this document regulated university activities in the Russian Empire. The new adopted charter reduced institutional autonomy.

Another important source was the Academic Staff Draft Regulation by the Ministry of Public Education. It coordinated organizational, procedural, financial and other aspects of universities in the Russian Empire.

Also, formal reports of the Kharkiv Imperial University defined main directions in its staff policy. Such reports describe the university structure, its faculty teaching staff, service workers, etc.

As a methodological basis, we used the historicism, objectivity and social approach principles. The first one analyzed the topic within the historical context (the 1884 University Charter, governmental initiatives, education policy, etc.). The second one based the authors' opinion on verifiable historical facts. The third one considered the research problem within a broad social practice (in particular, the university is interpreted via the social history categories).

Additionally, the article applied the system analysis methodology. Here, higher education was regarded as interrelated elements that have respective links to government policies.

The retrospective method defined reasons, consequences and tendencies in the staff policy of the Kharkiv Imperial University with its relations to the 1884 Charter and the Academic Staff Draft Regulation.

The idiographic method described the staff potential of the Kharkiv Imperial University at the beginning of the 20th century within real historical processes.

3. Discussion

Science, culture and education are important components of social history. They contribute to considering state transformations. As already ineffective, the Marxist history methodology is one-sided with economic determination of social processes. On the contrary, it is social history researches that are instrumental in understanding development directions of separate regions within the global context.

From this perspective, the Russian Empire history may be analyzed from various aspects: political processes and transformations, new territories, wars, scientific and geographic discoveries, etc.

One of such relevant aspects on the state, regional and local levels of the Russian Empire is education and science. For the Ukrainian areas within the Russian Empire, we can also regard universities and their communities as “soft power” and “representatives of enlightened bureaucracy” (Lebid, Shevchenko, 2021b).

The Kharkiv Imperial University is one of the oldest educational institutions in Ukraine. It laid a foundation of the domestic higher education and formed the imperial identity. Consequently, the home higher education history may be treated as an all-imperial, social-political or social-economic process (Lebid, Shevchenko, 2021a; Lebid, Shevchenko, 2021b; Lebid, Lobko, 2022; Rossijskie universitety..., 1998; Vishlenkova, 2013; Zhukovskaya, 2011).

The history of the Kharkiv Imperial University may be represented as an institutional evolution within the urban development. Surely, the university promotes the city development attracting intellectual and material investments. It is the university that produces a paradigm of values and social patterns as well as attracts innovations (Bagalej, Miller, 1993; Bagalej, Miller, 1903; Lejbfrejd, 1998; Olejnik, 2017; Zhukovskaya, 2011).

Some aspects of the Ukrainian higher education history can be analyzed via structural and functional features of study and research at university (Andreasov, 1952; Fiziko-matematicheskij, 1908; Istoriko-filologicheskij, 1908; Izmajlov, 1955; Lebid, 2021a; Lebid, Lobko, 2022; Mchedlov-Petrosyan, 2004; Yuridicheskij, 1908).

A great interest is hidden in the biographical approach to the higher education history. It may determine role of certain scientists, teachers, institutional and ministry managers, etc. in development of the university education and state policy (Bogdashina i dr., 2012; Krasovickij, 2004; Lebid, Shevchenko, 2021b; Lebid, Stepanov, 2023; Lebid, 2022a; Lebid, Lobko, 2022).

Another focus is the procedural element in the organization of study and research at university. Their review defines peculiarities of academic and public activities among professors and lecturers. The same deals with functions of laboratories, circles, workshops to upgrade skills of students and teachers. That demonstrates a high recognition of university graduates, a great social effect of the university as “a science temple” (Bagalej, 1910; Kucher, 1980; Lebid, Shevchenko, 2021a; Lebid, 2022b; Rossijskie universitety..., 1998).

A significant component of the university social history is analysis of the legal framework. It can retrace the creation and development of higher education from the governmental perspective, namely in terms of political and social features (Dneprov, 2017; Pamyatnaya knizhka..., 1862–1917; Protokoly zasedanij Soveta..., 1862–1912; Ustav..., 1911; Zanyatiya..., 1913; Zapiski..., 1902; Zapiski..., 1915).

4. Results

Before the wartime, the Kharkiv Imperial University comprised four faculties. They were the Historical-Philological, Physical-Mathematical, Law and Medical Faculties. The 1884 Charter defined structure, staffs, curricula and other issues of imperial universities. Respectively, four faculties at the Kharkiv Imperial University consisted of over 50 departments before the World War I began (Table 1).

Table 1. List of departments at the Kharkiv Imperial University (Pamyatnaya knizhka..., 1862–1917; Protokoly zasedanij Soveta..., 1862–1912; Zapiski..., 1902; Zapiski..., 1915)

Faculties	1901	1914
The Historical-Philological Faculty	10	10
The Physical-Mathematical Faculty	11	11
The Law Faculty	12	12
The Medical Faculty	24	23
Total	57	56

As we see, the department structure of the Kharkiv Imperial University was practically the same within 1901–1914. Most departments belonged to the Medical Faculty. The least number of departments was typical for the Historical-Philological Faculty. Simultaneously, the Department of Children’s Diseases was abolished within the given period at the Medical Faculty.

Besides, there was an all-university unit – the Department of Theology. It admitted Orthodox students of all faculties (Zapiski..., 1902: 2; Zapiski..., 1915: 2).

There was no separate department of foreign languages at the Kharkiv Imperial University. However, students could attend linguistic courses (German, French, English, Italian). They were taught by four lecturers from the Historical-Philological Faculty. Therefore, in 1901, the Kharkiv Imperial University comprised 57 faculty departments, one all-university department and linguistic courses. In 1914, the institution consisted of 56 faculty departments, one all-university department and linguistic courses.

Moreover, the 1884 Charter defined a precise number of teaching and auxiliary staff among university faculties (Ustav, 1911). That was provided for by Article 60 (Table 2):

Table 2. Staff at the Kharkiv Imperial University, according to the 1884 Charter (Pamyatnaya knizhka..., 1862–1917; Protokoly zasedanij Soveta..., 1862–1912; Zapiski..., 1902; Zapiski..., 1915)

Faculties	Ordinary professors	Extraordinary professors	Lecturers
The Historical-Philological Faculty	12	5	4
The Physical-Mathematical Faculty	12	5	–
The Law Faculty	11	4	–
The Medical Faculty	14	9	–
Total	49	23	4

Also, the Charter provided for prosectors, assistants, laboratory employees, residents and other auxiliary persons. Usually, they worked at the Physical-Mathematical and Medical Faculties.

In 1901, the Kharkiv Imperial University had the following staff situation (Tables 3-6):

Table 3. Staff of the Historical-Philological Faculty at the Kharkiv Imperial University (Pamyatnaya knizhka..., 1862–1917; Protokoly zasedanij Soveta..., 1862–1912; Zapiski..., 1902; Zapiski..., 1915)

Staff	1901	1914
Ordinary professors	14(3)	12(6)
Extraordinary professors	3	6
Privatdocents	7	10
Lecturers	4	4
Auxiliary employees	–	–
Total	28	32

The brackets indicate part-time and/or overtime employees. Staff of the Physical-Mathematical Faculty is represented in Table 4:

Table 4. Staff of the Physical-Mathematical Faculty at the Kharkiv Imperial University (Pamyatnaya knizhka..., 1862–1917; Protokoly zasedanij Soveta..., 1862–1912; Zapiski..., 1902; Zapiski..., 1915)

Staff	1901	1914
Ordinary professors	14(5)	19(8)
Extraordinary professors	2	6(1)
Privatdocents	12	19
Lecturers	–	–
Auxiliary employees	12	33
Total	40	77

Among auxiliary personnel of the Physical-Mathematical Faculty, there were laboratory workers, assistants, gardeners and astronomers.

Staff of the Law Faculty is represented in Table 5:

Table 5. Staff of the Law Faculty at the Kharkiv Imperial University (*Pamyatnaya knizhka, 1862–1917; Protokoly zasedanij Soveta..., 1862–1912; Zapiski..., 1902; Zapiski..., 1915*)

Staff	1901	1914
Ordinary professors	6(1)	6(2)
Extraordinary professors	2	9
Privatdocents	7	5
Lecturers	–	–
Auxiliary employees	–	1
Total	15	21

For the Law Faculty, there was one new auxiliary staff member in 1914. It was a study keeper. Staff of the Medical Faculty is demonstrated in [Table 6](#):

Table 6. Staff of the Medical Faculty at the Kharkiv Imperial University (*Pamyatnaya knizhka..., 1862–1917; Protokoly zasedanij Soveta..., 1862–1912; Zapiski..., 1902; Zapiski..., 1915*)

Staff	1901	1914
Ordinary professors	23(10)	20(11)
Extraordinary professors	6(3)	12(1)
Privatdocents	24	29
Lecturers	–	–
Auxiliary employees	69	89
Total	122	150

Among auxiliary personnel of the Medical Faculty, there were prosectors, residents, full-time and part-time laboratory workers, their assistants.

So, we see the quantitative differentiation of faculty teaching staff at the Kharkiv Imperial University. Most professors and lecturers belonged to the Medical Faculty. Least members worked for the Law Faculty. Both of them correlate with number of respective departments. The Medical Faculty units were twice as many. The same dealt with number of professors and lecturers at the Medical Faculty in contrast to other units.

Within the whole university structure, we should underline the Physical-Mathematical and Medical Faculties. Here, there were many auxiliary employees: laboratory workers, assistants, etc. Such a staff category was practically absent at other two faculties (except for the law one with a study keeper's position). It was determined by work peculiarities in mineralogical, physiological, surgical and other rooms of these units. Within them, auxiliary employees supported research and curricula among members of the Kharkiv Imperial University.

Besides, we see a stable staff rise (professors, lecturers and auxiliary persons) for the given period. In 1901-1914, there was a gradual increase of professors and lecturers among units: 28 to 32 (the Historical-Philological Faculty), 28 to 44 (the Physical-Mathematical Faculty), 15 to 20 (the Law Faculty), 53 to 61 (the Medical Faculty). However, there was no change of ordinary professors at the Law Faculty. A slight reduction was typical for the Historical-Philological and Medical Faculties. A small growth was at the Physical-Mathematical Faculty.

Meanwhile, there was a prominent increase of part-time and overtime ordinary professors among all units of the Kharkiv Imperial University. The same concerns extraordinary professors and privatdocents. The latter rose at all faculties (except for the Law Faculty with a smaller number of privatdocents till 1914)

The systematized data are shown in [Table 7](#).

Apart from the above-mentioned persons, the 1884 Charter and staff regulations of the Kharkiv Imperial University provided for positions of paramedic, deacon, linen keeper, student secretary, etc. In the table, we observe that institutional needs exceed the charter ones. That concerns the auxiliary staff, especially residents, laboratory workers, assistants. These positions were part-time (including privatdocents).

Table 6. Staff of the Kharkiv Imperial University (Pamyatnaya knizhka..., 1862–1917; Protokoly zasedanij Soveta..., 1862–1912; Zapiski..., 1902; Zapiski..., 1915)

Position	Number according to the 1884 Charter	Actually in 1901		Actually in 1914	
		Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Theology professor	1	1	–	1	–
Ordinary professor	49	37	19	28	27
Acting ordinary professor	–	1	–	2	–
Extraordinary professor	23	6	3	11	1
Acting extraordinary professor	–	7	–	20	1
Privatdocent	–	–	52	–	63
Lecturer	4	4	–	4	–
Prosecutor (acting one as well)	6	5	–	6	–
Resident	11	10	21	11	25
Assistant (acting one as well)	4	3	15	4	21
Astronomer	1	1	–	–	–
Pharmacist	1	1	–	1	1
Pharmacist student	3	3	–	3	2
Mechanician	1	1	–	1	–
Preparator	1	–	1	1	1
Librarian	1	1	–	1	–
Librarian assistant	3	3	–	3	–
Laboratory worker	12	12	5	13	26
Taxidermist	1	–	1	1	–
Gardener	1	1	–	1	–
Executor	1	1	–	1	–
Doctor	1	1	–	1	–
Treasurer	1	1	–	1	–
Accountant	1	1	–	1	–

Along with formal charter rules, current problems determined the staff situation of the Kharkiv Imperial University as well. In 1901, V.A. Ulyanitskiy, an ordinary professor at the Department of International Law and state councilor, moved to the Tomsk Imperial University. V.S. Gulevich, an extraordinary professor at the Department of Medical Chemistry and collegiate councilor, moved to the Moscow University. E.A. Neznamov, a privatdocent and collegiate councilor, was appointed an extraordinary professor at the Warsaw University (*Zapiski...*, 1902: 8).

Additionally, staff changes occurred because of death among employees: P.P. Semyonov-Tyan-Shansky (a privy councilor and honored university member), V.I. Lamanskiy (an academician). Some employees were discharged: M.F. Ivanov (a veterinary master), D.F. Garkushevskiy (a student inspector assistant). There were 30-year service retirees: P.E. Leykfeld (an honored ordinary professor), A.V. Reprev (an ordinary professor). Also, the staff visited foreign events (V.Ya. Danilevskiy, L.O. Struve, K.N. Yarosh), represented the institution as delegates (A.M. Lyapunov, V.A. Steklov, I.P. Skvortsov), headed examination boards (N.O. Kuplevaskiy, V.Ya. Danilevskiy).

5. Conclusion

Teaching and auxiliary staff of the Kharkiv Imperial University demonstrated active participation in research, study and public events. A significant potential and ambitions of the university community did not meet the 1884 Charter requirements to a certain extent. The latter especially concerns the institutional staff policy.

Academic activities of professors and lecturers, their relevant researches and public life demanded material support, proper tools for development of social and human capital. Moreover, the state and regional staff reserves had to be created.

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