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Ierusalimskiy, Yuriy Yu., Kharitonov, German P.

P. G. Demidov Yaroslavl State University, Yaroslavl, Russian Federation

The Importance of Secretary's Personality in the Focus of Development of Gubernia Statistical Committees in Post-Reform Period Exemplified in the Activities of V. G. Pirogov in 1867–1907

Abstract

The article examines V. G. Pirogov's activities as secretary of the Kostroma Gubernia Statistical Committee (KGSK), analyses his ideas and proposals for improving methodology for collecting statistical data, as well as quality of statistical information, and characterizes main directions of

the committee's work in 1867–1907. Studying Pirogov's biography, his professional qualities and initiatives permits to assess the problem of influence of the secretary's personality on effectiveness of the gubernia statistical committee's activities. The novelty of the research lies in examining the role of the secretary of the gubernia statistical committee as exemplified in Pirogov, an outstanding figure of the Kostroma land who gave forty years of service to provincial state statistics, and also in attracting previously unpublished archival sources from the fonds of the Russian State Historical Archive (RGIA) and the State Archive of the Kostroma Region (GAKO). The article focuses on the analysis of the KGSK activities carried out on Pirogov's initiative and aimed at improving the accuracy of data collected by the gubernia statistical committee. This problem remained acute and urgent throughout the period of gubernia statistical committees' activity. Using the example of the KGSK activities and those of its secretary, the article analyses the main methods used by gubernia statisticians to improve the quality of statistical information: conducting local city censuses; involving parish clergy and independent correspondents in statistical work; introducing mandatory submission of primary forms of statistical observation and references to sources; conducting comprehensive and monographic surveys of certain areas of the region's statistics. The authors conclude that secretary was a key figure of the gubernia statistical committee, and effectiveness of the committee's work, accuracy and quality of statistical data, and development of optional scientific work depended on his personal qualities, research interests, and hobbies. The results of the study may be used to characterize the activities of gubernia and regional statistical committees in particular regions and those of state statistics bodies of the Russian Empire.

Keywords

Statistical sources, V. G. Pirogov, Kostroma gubernia statistical committee, gubernia statistical committees, secretary of gubernia statistical committee, Kostroma gubernia, history of statistics.

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About the authors

Ierusalimskiy Yuriy Yurievich, PhD in History, professor, P.G. Demidov Yaroslavl State University, history faculty, department of Russian medieval and modern history, head of the department, Yaroslavl, Russian Federation, +7-4852-30-54-52, osniyar@uniyar.ac.ru

Kharitonov German Pavlovich, P.G. Demidov Yaroslavl State University, department of Russian medieval and modern history, postgraduate student, Yaroslavl, Russian Federation, +7-4852-30-54-52, german.kharitnv@rambler.ru

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