

The most important feature of a legal state, an indicator of its formation, is the state of the legal culture of society, which is largely determined by the level of its legal consciousness, the development of democratic institutions that involve the social and legal activity of citizens.

It is difficult to discuss the legal culture and legal awareness of the population of pre-revolutionary Russia. Due to historical factors, the Russian legal consciousness was formed specifically. Therefore, it can be noted that it differs significantly from the legal consciousness of residents of Western European countries. The processes of formation of the people's legal culture are still not completed.

What are the reasons for such a long-term path of the formation of legal consciousness and legal culture? In our opinion, one of the reasons is the illiteracy of the majority of the population of Russia, namely the peasants. Only the privileged class had the right to receive education, but they did not always receive it in full. The elimination of illiteracy continued for quite a long time. Not a less important reason for the late start of the development of justice is the long-term serfdom, which affected not only the peasants, but the nobles as well. As a result, the consequences are evident and can be observed nowadays.

The problem of low legal culture and the lack of legal consciousness among people are the topics that are of great importance. Often, people who do not have legally illiterate and do not work in a legal structure do not fully know their rights and obligations, which leads to a violation of existing legal norms and the corresponding penalties. The papers of such scientists as S. I. Ivanov, T. A. Chikayeva, R. S. Bayniyazov, K. V. Naumenkova, L. M. Gantseva, and others are devoted to the question under discussion.

Legal conscience is a set of views, ideas, attitudes, value orientations, expressing the attitude of individuals and social groups to the law, to what is lawful or illegal. [1]

The legal culture of a person is a combination of his legal knowledge, attitude to the law and legal behavior. [2]

Having analyzed the above mentioned terms, it can be concluded that legal culture is directly dependent on people's legal awareness, as it is made up of the general attitude of the population to law. The legal culture of the population serves as an indicator of the values of all phenomena and social relations regulated by law.

One of the Russian lawyers, I. A. Ilyin, considered legal consciousness as a set of views on the right, on the state, overall organization of social life. For example, he believed that the form of government in the state is determined primarily by the monarchical or republican sense of justice of the people. I. A. Ilyin emphasized that a person without legal consciousness will live by his own arbitrariness and tolerate arbitrariness from others.

For a long time, Russia was a monarchy, which was changed into autocracy, that is, the absolute power of the king. According to this fact, it is evident that it was not the right itself, but the will of the ruler that had the power in the state. Acting on behalf of the king and being endowed with power, including military power, governors and officials showed the people that it was not the law that defined public relations. The low level of legal culture, underdevelopment of legal traditions among the population, often turning into frank legal nihilism, denial of the need and values of law have deep roots in our society since the pre-revolutionary time of the past.

From generation to generation, disrespect for law and court, tolerance for arbitrariness and understanding is manifested in Russia. Before the revolution, most literary, art, and science figures were nihilistic about law. The moral aspect was of paramount importance for them. In conditions of serfdom in public relations, arbitrariness reigned, exacerbated by the low culture of the population. Serfdom in Russia was the system of legal relations that existed since Kievskaya Rus' of the 11th century, stemming from the dependence of the peasant farmer on the landowner, the owner of the land inhabited and cultivated by the peasant. From the end of the 17th century, and especially from the beginning of the 18th century, serfdom in Russia acquired a fundamentally different character than the one it had at its inception. It began as a form of state "tax" for the peasants, a kind of public service, and it came to its development that the serfs lost all civil and human rights and found themselves in personal slavery from their landlords. In the first place, this was facilitated by the legislation of the Russian Empire, which uncompromisingly defended exclusively landlord's interests. According to V. O. Klyuchevsky: "The law increasingly impersonalized the serf, erasing from it the last signs of a competent person."

Along with political rights, the peasants were deprived of social rights. For example, the right to education. For a long time in Russia, less attention was paid to education. Initial reforms in this area were carried out by Peter I. Until the 18th century, most of the changes took place in the polity, the reason for which was the formation of a centralized state.

Despite the fact that the first regulatory legal acts, such as *Russkaya Pravda*, Novgorod and Pskov Judicial Letters and many others, were created during the period of pre-Peter the Great reform, the lack of education of the majority of the population did not allow the laws to be operated in full.

The problems of education became part of the state policy, as the successful development of reforms required trained and competent personnel. However, the majority of changes in the field of education did not have the goal of eliminating illiteracy in the lower strata of the population and were aimed at higher society.

The problem of low legal awareness and legal culture in pre-revolutionary Russia left its mark on the current situation of the country. Negative attitude to the law and its complete or partial misunderstanding are characteristic features of the Russian society. The history of the Russian state shows that there is a need for legal education of the population. It must be built as a multi-level and continuous system of education. It must be started at school and continued throughout life. It is especially necessary to pay attention to the legal education of young people, because the future of Russia depends on how educated the young man is. Different social institutions — the family, educational institutions, government bodies, law enforcement agencies, public organizations, and cultural institutions — should take part in shaping the legal consciousness of young people. Their efforts should be combined and systematized, and the law should regulate actions and work.

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