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## **УКРАЇНСЬКА ЦЕНТРАЛЬНА РАДА ЯК РЕВОЛЮЦІЙНИЙ ПАРЛАМЕНТ УКРАЇНИ**

**Анотація.** *Яскравою сторінкою у багатомістовій історії українського державотворення є революція 1917–1921 рр. Особливе місце в ній належить Українській Центральній Раді (далі – УЦР), під проводом якої Україна пройшла складний шлях розбудови власної держави від автономії до проголошення Української Народної Республіки і врешті до її повної державної незалежності і суверенітету. При цьому УЦР намагалася запровадити демократичні інституції та парламентські форми правління. Актуальність дослідження обумовлена тим, що цей досвід залишив помітний слід у правосвідомості українців і спроба побудови парламентської моделі суттєво впливає на вирішення сучасних проблем державотворення. Метою статті є аналіз організації Української Центральної Ради як інституції парламентського типу в умовах революції. Ретроспективне дослідження досвіду УЦР віддзеркалює політичні інтереси різних груп суспільства, є корисним для розуміння сучасних проблем парламентаризму, взаємодії громадянського суспільства та держави. Методологічна база дослідження структури, складу УЦР, її правових форм діяльності ґрунтується на філософських, загальнонаукових та історико-правових методах наукового пізнання. Ці методи дозволили визначити головне завдання УЦР – державне відродження України. Зроблений висновок, що державне відродження як завдання установчого характеру могло бути здійснено лише представницьким органом, який би формувався на демократичних засадах, а його склад виражав волю народу, і за наявності у нього достатніх організаційних і правових ресурсів для втілення цього завдання у життя (сталі структури, організаційних та правових форм діяльності, дієвого допоміжного апарату, відповідного статусу депутатів, оптимального регламенту роботи)*

**Ключові слова:** *Українська Центральна Рада, Мала рада, представницький орган, виборча система, склад, сесії, комісії, партійні фракції, статус членів*

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## UKRAINIAN CENTRAL COUNCIL AS REVOLUTIONARY PARLIAMENT OF UKRAINE

**Abstract.** *The revolution of 1917-1921 is a bright page in the centuries-old history of the Ukrainian state. The special place in it belongs to Ukrainian Central Council (CCU), under the leadership of which Ukraine went through the difficult path of building its own state from autonomy to the proclamation of Ukrainian National Republic and its full state independence and sovereignty. Therewith, the CCU attempted to introduce democratic institutions and parliamentary forms of government. The relevance of the study is explained by the fact that this experience left a noticeable mark on the legal consciousness of Ukrainians and the attempt to build a parliamentary model has a considerable impact on the solution of modern problems of state creation. The purpose of the study is to analyse the organisation of Ukrainian Central Council as a parliamentary institution in the conditions of the revolution. A retrospective study of the CCU experience reflects the political interests of different groups of society, is useful for understanding modern problems of parliamentarism, the interaction of civil society and the state. The methodological basis for studying the structure, composition of the CCU, its legal forms of activity is based on philosophical, general scientific, and historical-legal methods of scientific knowledge. These methods allowed determining the main task of the CCU – the revival of Ukraine. It is concluded that state revival, as a constituent task which could be carried out only by a representative body that would be established on democratic principles, its composition would express the will of the people, and, if it had sufficient organisational and legal resources to fulfil this task (a stable structure, organisational and legal forms of activity, an effective auxiliary apparatus, the corresponding status of the deputies, the optimal work schedule)*

**Keywords:** *Central Council of Ukraine, Small Council, representative body, electoral system, composition, sessions, commissions, party factions, status of members*

### INTRODUCTION

The February Revolution of 1917 led to the fall of Tsarism, the transformation of Russia into a republic, and the beginning of the national revival of its national outskirts. The Central Council of Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as the CCU) became the driving force of this process in Ukraine. It was established in the spring of 1917 as a socio-political centre and very soon transformed into a representative body – a kind of revolutionary parliament of Ukraine. The CCU identified the national and state revival of Ukraine as its main task. Its fulfilment is constituent and could be ensured, firstly, only by a representative body that would be established on a democratic basis and express the will of the people, secondly, if there were sufficient organisational and legal resources to implement: a stable structure, organisational and legal forms of activity, an effective auxiliary apparatus, optimal rules of work, the status of deputies. These issues are extremely important in the context of the development of the state and have not lost their relevance since the emergence of the first parliaments. Therefore, the idea of V. Tatsiy and S. Serohina is quite appropriate: “The problem of choosing the optimal structure of the parliament, in particular, the decision on the number of its chambers, the order of their development and competence, belongs to the category of those that accompany the theory and practice of state construction since the appearance of the first parliamentary institutions and the concept of representative government” [1, p. 102]. From the standpoint of the importance of the creation and

functioning of the CCU for the development of the paradigm of constitutionalism, this body had the importance of the first parliamentary-type body in Ukraine [2, p. 38]. The Central Council of Ukraine received broad popular support and became an inspiration for the development of the National Liberation Movement [3].

The main task of the CCU in creating a state was formulated by M. Hrushevsky at the beginning of its activity and consisted in an active struggle for the national and state revival of Ukraine in those conditions, for its autonomy as part of the Russian Federal Republic. The development of events led to the proclamation of the Ukrainian People's Republic (hereinafter – UPR), and later its state independence and sovereignty. Such huge constituent changes were made possible by the transformation of the CCU into an all-Ukrainian revolutionary parliament, which represented and expressed the interests of the Ukrainian people and had sufficient organisational and legal means to create a state.

The first important step towards transforming the CCU from a socio-political centre into a representative body of power was the convocation in April 1917. The Ukrainian National Congress (hereinafter – the Congress), which became a representative body, elected a new composition of the CCU and, thus, gave it its representative character. However, the CCU was not elected based on universal suffrage, which would have given it irrefutable legitimacy in solving key issues of state creation. Researchers see the reasons for replenishing the CCU through co-optation in the following: first, holding general elections at that time was a political and technical utopia [4, p. 95]; secondly, the Ukrainian socialist parties and factions from which the Central Council was recruited, anticipating the unfavourable consequences of the general election, postponed this important matter from day to day, and such elections did not take place [5, p. 76]. The latter can be explained by the fact that the majority of CCU members defended the federal principles of building a state.

In the future, the CCU was replenished by co-opting representatives from all-Ukrainian congresses of peasants, military, workers, and other public associations. Describing the professional composition of the CCU, V. Yermolaiev notes that the deputies were mostly: peasants, military personnel, representatives of workers' and cooperative organisations [6, p. 268]. This made its composition even more representative, but not typical of the parliament since also general elections did not take place. However, the social, national, and party composition of the CCU gives grounds to assert that the Council sufficiently reflected the structure of Ukrainian society at that time and reflected its needs and aspirations.

Along with this, the structures and organisational and legal forms of activity of the CCU as a parliament were established and improved: sessions as a collegial form of work, a Small Council as a permanent body, commissions, technical apparatus, party factions, rules of work, and the status of members. At the beginning of the activity of the CCU, the procedure for the work of its general meeting was established. It was built on the model of parliamentary session work. The CCU was divided into factions based on party characteristics, proposals were made on their behalf, various commissions were created and worked. With the expansion of the CCU, the efficiency of the general meeting has decreased, which has made it necessary to create a permanent authorised body in the period between its general meetings. Such a body was the Small Council (until July 1917 – the CCU Committee), which absorbed the organic attributes of a parliamentary institution. An important structural element subordinate to the Small Council was the permanent and temporary commissions and the office. All this gave the CCU clear signs of a parliamentary-type institution [7, p. 20] and ultimately became the key to successful state creation in Ukraine.

In a short, almost year-long period of time, Ukraine has come a long way from autonomy and laying the foundations of a parliamentary form of government to the proclamation of the Ukrainian People's Republic, its state independence and sovereignty, and the recognition of the UPR in the international arena. The study of this experience fills a certain gap in the history of national parliamentarism and will be useful for relevant issues of the parliamentary form of government in the country.

## 1. MATERIALS AND METHODS

To ensure a comprehensive, complete, and objective analysis, the study used a set of methodological tools, namely philosophical, general scientific and special legal research methods; the set of methodological tools was determined by the subject and scope of research. Philosophical scientific methods are universal and are widely used in the study of any historical phenomena and processes. The leading place among them belongs to the dialectical method, which provides for the recognition of the existence of objective state-legal laws and the possibility of their cognition. The use of the dialectical method allowed establishing the relationship between parliamentarism and such categories as: a form of government, popular representation, political regime of exercise of power. Upon using the historical and genetic method, the socio-legal prerequisites for the appearance of the Ukrainian parliament of the CCU era are discovered, and its state-legal essence is substantiated.

The narrative method is used to comprehensively describe the facts and events that accompanied and determined the emergence of the CCU, and the process of turning the latter into a parliamentary-type institution. This method established that to solve the key task – the development of the autonomy of Ukraine – the transformation of the CCU from a socio-political centre to a representative body – the Revolutionary Parliament of Ukraine – began; the method of such transformation was the convocation of the Ukrainian National Congress and the election of the CCU by it and the expansion of the composition of the CCU in the future by co-optation. The analogy showed that the choice of this particular method of replenishment of the CCU is not associated with the political and technical impossibility of holding elections. The formal-legal and interpretation methods were used to review individual legal regulations and clarify the content of their prescriptions.

The use of the comparative analysis contributed to the identification of the most considerable factors in the organisation of the CCU as a parliamentary-type institution. Indeed, the CCU had the forms of work and organisational structures inherent in the Parliament: sessions as a collegial form of work, the Council as a permanent body, commissions, technical apparatus, party factions, rules of work, and the status of members. The synthesis of different opinions and the identified principles of functioning of the CCU allowed offering its new understanding as the Revolutionary Parliament of Ukraine, since: firstly, the main task of the CCU was to determine the national-state revival of Ukraine, which is a constituent task; secondly, the CCU was established on a democratic basis and expressed the will of the people, although direct elections did not take place.

When disclosing the organisational and legal forms of the CCU's activities, a structural and functional method was used, which determined that the organisational form of the CCU's work was the general meeting, which was based on the model of parliamentary session work; the CCU was divided into factions that made proposals, created various commissions; between the sessions of the general meeting, there was a permanent authorised body – the CCU Committee (Small Council). The sociological approach helped to establish the dependence of the CCU structure on the social conditionality of political, economic, and social phenomena that influenced the development and expansion of the Revolutionary Parliament. The statistical method contributed to the collection of materials on the representativeness of the national, social, and party composition of the CCU.

The content analysis of the main sources of research allowed giving a balanced assessment of various documents and studies, considering their appearance and writing in the difficult political situation in Ukraine in 1917-1921. The pluralism of scientific knowledge and an interdisciplinary approach to the study of the problem of giving the CCU a more representative character allowed identifying contradictory views, divergent ideas about the form of building a state, the structure of a representative body, its social orientation and development prospects. The theoretical basis of the research is official documents, regulations, considerable conceptual sources on the research subject, achievements of national historical and legal thought, in particular, on the problems of the history of the organisation and activities of the CCU, materials of representative sociological research.

## **2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The development of statehood is a complex and lengthy process associated with the need to address important issues, in particular the establishment of state institutions. Therewith, parliaments are in the centre of public life. The parliament embodies the forum of public opinion, where a consensus decision can be made that suits all parties to the political process [8, p. 84, 85]. The complex process of creating a representative body discovers the features of the historical moment, social and state existence of each particular country, national traditions, legal culture, and political will of the people. This is evidenced by the history of the struggle for the national and state revival of Ukraine in 1917-1921 [9].

The CCU, which was established as a Ukrainian socio-political centre, was gradually transformed into a representative body – a kind of revolutionary Parliament of Ukraine. “The starting point of the beginning of the era of revolutionary constitutionalism in Ukraine, – rightly notes O. Myronenko, – can be considered, perhaps, the moment of creation of the Central Council” [10, p. 23]. The implementation of the idea of the national revival of Ukraine was a problem of constituent importance and could be solved by a representative body that expressed the will of the people and had sufficient organisational and legal resources for this. Only under such conditions was it possible to respond to the challenges that arose on the way to the national revival of Ukraine.

The main task of the CCU in the field of state creation was formulated by M. Hrushevsky at the beginning of its activity. He spoke not in favour of passively waiting for concessions for Ukraine from the Russian Provisional Government, but for an active struggle for its autonomy as part of the Russian Federal

Republic. Organically, this task required changing the status of the CCU, namely, transforming it from a Kyiv city socio-political organisation into an all-Ukrainian socio-political body that would represent and express the interests of the Ukrainian people, primarily in the issue of state creation.

The convening of the Ukrainian National Congress in early April 1917 was an organizational means of transforming the CCU from an organisational and political centre into a representative body. "To give the Central Council the character of a true representation of the entire Ukrainian population, it was decided to convene a Congress of representatives of the organised Ukrainian population of the whole of Ukraine as soon as possible" [11, p. 7]. When establishing the Congress, deputies were elected from ethnic Ukrainian provinces. Territorial representation was supplemented by representation from various segments of the population, political parties, and public organisations, which made the Congress a representative body.

The central issue on the agenda of the Congress was the granting of a new, legitimate, indirect representative status to the CCU by electing a new Congress. Almost half (60 seats) of its members were to be elected on a territorial basis from the provinces, 20 seats were assigned to public, military, professional, scientific-educational, and cooperative organisations. Party representation was determined in 1-5 seats. The number of members of the CCU elected at the Congress is 118 people [12, p. 63-65].

The election of a new composition of the CCU by the Congress shows that the first step in the revival of Ukrainian statehood was taken: the CCU from a small group of Ukrainian intellectuals became a representative body, a kind of revolutionary parliament, which, reflecting the mood of much of Ukraine's population, demanded autonomy. In the memoirs, V. Vynnychenko wrote: "The Congress was the first step in the revival of the nation on the path of statehood. Being strong organising and campaigning tool, it became the first, preparatory stage in the creation of both the idea of Ukrainian statehood and in its partial implementation. Namely: the Congress, as a full-fledged body of national will, officially transferred all its full power to its chosen body: the new Central Council. From that moment, the Central Council became a truly representative, legitimate (according to the laws of the revolutionary time) body of all Ukrainian democracy" [13, p. 93-94].

Congress granted the CCU the right to co-opt new members, which continued the process of forming the composition of the CCU as a representative body. This right was detailed in the "Order of the Central Council of Ukraine" (hereinafter referred to as the Order), approved on April 23, 1917 [12, p. 71-73]. CCU used it extensively. During May-July 1917, the All-Ukrainian peasant, two military, and workers' congresses were held. They elected the All-Ukrainian Councils of the military, peasant, and workers' deputies, which like the CCU and the All-Ukrainian General Military Committee, co-opted its composition. These additions expanded the composition of the CCU to 588 people [12, p. 138-142]. After the agreements between the Provisional Government and the CCU, enshrined in Second Universal, representatives of national minorities were granted the right to elect 202 full members of the CCU and 51 candidates [12, p. 207, 208]. This action transformed the CCU from a national body to a temporary regional revolutionary parliament [11, p. 29].

According to the mandate Commission of the sixth session, the CCU had 798 mandates. From that moment, the main representation in the CCU was considered to be the councils of peasant (212 people), military (132 people), and workers' (100 people) deputies, and the General Military Committee (27 people). The territorial representation remained unchanged and amounted to 81 mandates, the rest was distributed among political parties and public organisations. Yet not all of these mandates were used. The mandate Commission of the sixth session registered 639 full members and 4 candidates [12, p. 233-241]. All these measures gave the CCU a more representative character, but it should be stated that it was never elected based on universal suffrage, which could only confirm its absolute legitimacy in solving such important constituent issues as changing the form of the state structure of Russia, declaring the autonomy of Ukraine, and determining the form of its government. Its leaders were well aware of this. In the summer of 1917, the CCU began work on holding a territorial congress, but it did not take place, as the idea of holding an All-Ukrainian Constituent Assembly arose in the fall. The fact that the CCU was not elected by the general will of the Ukrainian people, M. Hrushevsky saw its weakness. In his memoirs, he complained that he was not destined to "become a representative elected by universal suffrage" [14, p. 123]. And this failure to hold general elections was the "Achilles' heel" of the CCU in the revival of Ukrainian statehood [5, p. 76].

Today, it is difficult to determine why the CCU chose the option of replenishing its composition by co-opting and did not follow the path of holding general elections. As noted above, the researchers point to two reasons: first: the holding of general elections at that time was a political and technical utopia; second: the Ukrainian socialist parties postponed the holding of general elections for fear of adverse consequences for them. Recognising the right to exist behind such considerations, it is difficult to agree with them. Firstly, the allegations about the impossibility of holding elections in the summer of 1917 seem unconvincing, as elections to the All-Russian Constituent Assembly took place in the autumn of 1917, when decay and anarchy deepened, secondly, the CCU never rejected the idea of convening the Ukrainian Constituent Assembly based on

universal and equal suffrage; thirdly, in the spring and summer of 1917 it reached the apogee of its authority and it can be assumed that the vast majority of its members would receive convincing support from voters. The point was different: the overwhelming majority of CCU members defended the federal principles of building a state. Since the idea of federalism was very popular in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, in this form of state-building, figures of the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius, led by M. Kostomarov, leading public and political figures and lawyers of the time: M. Drahomanov, S. Podolynskyi, I. Franko saw the possibility of national development. The ideas of the federation were leading in the programme documents of Ukrainian political parties at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries. This idea was professed by the direct participants of the revolutionary events of 1917-1921, M. Hrushevskyi, S. Shelukhin, O. Eikhelman, et al [15, p. 333]. L. Kamarovskyi considered the federal principle “a further step in the development of the principle of nationality”, “without destroying the independence of states, it connects them into new political groups with certain goals and bodies” [16, p. 44]. Thus, being supporters of the idea of federalism, members of the CCU recognised the right of the All-Russian Constituent Assembly “to establish an autonomous system in national territories and a federal structure in the Russian republic, and this republic itself” [11, p. 100]. Therefore, holding elections to one's own supreme state body would run counter to this provision. The proof can be the CCU's defence of the idea of a federation in its first three universals. Even the Third Universal, together with the proclamation of the UPR, fixed the preservation of the federation with the Russian Republic. After the Bolsheviks seized power, the Russian People's Commissar began peace talks in Brest with the central powers, and the CCU was forced by the Fourth Universal to declare the independence of the UPR to consolidate its status as a subject of international law.

The above is the reasoning of today, yet in the context of the Congress and the election of a new composition of the CCU, it meant that the organisational period of the Ukrainian national-state revival was over: the struggle for its implementation was beginning. It was the CCU, having become a representative body, that took over the implementation of constituent functions in the field of Ukrainian state creation. The next question is whether the national, social, and party composition of the CCU was representative of the will of the Ukrainian people. According to incomplete data, it is known that 75% of the mandates belonged to Ukrainians, the rest – to national minorities. Yet it is more difficult to determine the distribution of mandates between Russians, Poles, and Jews since representation in the CCU was provided not based on nationality, but through quotas of the party and public organisations. As a result, Russians had 14% of places, Jews – 6%, Poles – 2.5% [12, p. 12].

The expansion of the CCU by representatives of various social and national groups continued. This was due to the division of representatives of national minorities into full members and candidates. The latter were part of the CCU with an advisory vote and established a reserve from which representatives of national minorities were selected. Thus, the mandate Commission proposed to introduce one representative from Belarusians and Czechoslovaks into the CCU at the seventh session. At the same session, the Maritime General Council of 20 members was included in the CCU and won one seat in the Small Council on November 21, 1917. On December 12, 1917, the Kyiv United Council of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies delegated 4 representatives to the CCU. The CCU added members with an advisory vote, elected deputies of the All-Russian Constituent Assembly in Ukraine.

Regarding the social status of CCU members, it is worth highlighting the following. Of the original composition – 118 people elected by the Congress, at least 100 were representatives of the intelligentsia. After the development of the CCU, 471 seats (out of 798) belonged to the All-Ukrainian Council of Military, Peasant, and Workers' Deputies. However, it is difficult to understand which representatives of social groups really stood for these mandates. The All-Ukrainian Council of Peasant Deputies was the first to join the CCU. They held 212 seats, but only 134 deputies were elected at the All-Ukrainian Peasants' Congress [17, p. 30-34]. It is likely that most of these members of the CCU represented the poorer peasantry, which constituted the social basis of the Peasant Union. Little is known about them personally, and they did not play a considerable role in the activities of the CCU. The All-Ukrainian Council of Peasants' Deputies was led by many well-known figures of the USDLP and the USRP (V. Vynnychenko, B. Martos, A. Levytskyi, M. Kovalevskyi, P. Khrystiuk, A. Stepanenko, M. Stasiuk, etc.). The peasants include a large number of delegates to the All-Ukrainian Military Council, at least soldiers, sailors, non-commissioned officers, and ensigns. Of the 132 elected members of the CCU, 60% were them. While the members of the Ukrainian General Military Committee were only two soldiers and one sailor, the rest were officers [18, p. 44]. In reality, only 100 members of the Council of Military Deputies took part in the work of the CCU, the rest returned to their units and lost contact with Kyiv.

As for the professional composition of the CCU, among the deputies, representatives of the intelligentsia constituted a small part of the CCU – 16 lawyers, 26 researchers, more than 30 publicists and journalists [6, p. 268]. The composition and activities of the All-Ukrainian Workers' Congress make it possible to characterize its representatives in the CCU only in fragments. The Congress was small in number, with 300 delegates representing about 40,000 workers, mostly the agricultural proletariat. Admittedly, this was a small part of the 3.5 million workers in Ukraine. During the election of the All-Ukrainian Council of Workers' Deputies, controversy erupted, but a compromise was reached: out of 100 members of the All-Ukrainian Council of Workers' Deputies, 75 were elected on a territorial basis, 25 – personally, with 70 seats given to USDLP and 30 to USRP [19, p. 38].

The composition of the CCU did not always correspond with the composition of the Small Council. Thus, if there were several workers in the CCU, then in the Small Council their interests were represented, respectively, by a doctor, publisher, cooperative, and process engineer [19, p. 39]. Even one of the leaders of the USDLP, V. Vynnychenko recognised that the congresses were used by the Ukrainian party democracy to strengthen its position in the CCU [13, p. 218]. If there was a party representation in the CCU, party factions were created in their infancy, which indicates the attraction of the CCU to classical parliamentary forms of activity. Formally, the parties had relatively little representation. When forming the composition of the CCU by the Congress, the Union of Federalist Autonomists won 5 seats, the USDLP – 4, the USRP – 3, and Independents – 1. According to the resolution of the fifth session on the reorganisation of the CCU, party quotas have not changed: the USDLP had 5 seats, the USRP – 5, the UPSF – 5, the Trudoviks – 5. However, in reality, the first three parties had a much larger number of mandates due to their membership in the CCU through peasant, military, workers' congresses and territorial representation. In general, the “Ukrainian political parties, mostly socialist”, determined the activities of the CCU [13, p. 79].

The minutes of the CCU general meetings give an idea of the fierce party struggle in which they took place. Thus, O. Holdenveizer once wrote: “Ukrainian deputies were divided into three main factions: Ukrainian SRs, Ukrainian Social Democrats, and Socialist Federalists. The Ukrainian SRs were the strongest party in the Council; M. Hrushevsky, who remained non-partisan for a long time, joined them at the end. Therewith, this faction was the poorest for people; even for the prime minister, it could not nominate anyone but Holubovych. The Ukrainian Social Democrats, to which Vynnychenko, Petliura, Tkachenko, Porsh, etc., belonged, were small in number, but the incomparably greater personal composition of this faction somewhat smoothed out the quantitative advantage of the SRs. Finally, the Federalist Socialists represented the most prominent and cultured element of the Ukrainian public. The leader of this party was the respected writer S. Yefremov, whose newspaper (Nova Rada) was edited by A. Nikovskyi. As the most prominent nationalist group, the Federalist Socialists lived relatively in harmony with the representatives of “minorities”. The most socially hostile to the Ukrainians, the opposition party, were the Russian Socialist-Revolutionaries, represented in the Council by the energetic and capable O. Zarubin. The Mensheviks, led by M. Balabanov, were independent and sometimes courageous. Rafes, who represented the Bund, spoke and acted the most; he was at this time in opposition to the Ukrainians, who were quite afraid of his sharp tongue. Other Jewish parties were rather poorly represented” [20, p. 31].

Therefore, the largest representation in the CCU was held by the factions of the parties of the Ukrainian SRs and Social Democrats. Throughout its existence, they set its activities, controlled all structures, starting from the Presidium, the Small Council, the General Secretariat and ending with individual commissions. The political experience of the leaders of the Ukrainian Social Democrats allowed them to play a major role in the SR-Esdek tandem during 1917. M. Porsh in talks with J. Stalin in November 1917 called himself a representative of the “party that occupies a governing position in the Council” [12, p. 455-459]. Having more or less agreed on positions in relations with the Provisional Government regarding the autonomy of Ukraine, these parties had quite serious differences in their views on socio-economic policy. Eventually, the Ukrainian SRs, using their numerical advantage in the CCU, took over the leadership of the UPR government in January 1918, and they succeeded in reorganising the Small Council, where they won an overwhelming majority. On this occasion, V. Vynnychenko recalled: “It was all the easier for the factions to fulfil my wish to leave the government, and at the same time the SR faction of the Central Council began to show a strong desire to take the leadership of all politics into its own hands. It had a formal right to do this every now and then because it covered all other factions with the number of its votes” [13, p. 224].

The transformation of the CCU into the Revolutionary Parliament of Ukraine in those conditions, in addition to the expansion of its composition, which made it a representative body of the Ukrainian people, an expression of their will, took place by the Central Council acquiring the features of a parliamentary institution through improving its structure, organisational and legal forms of activity, clear regulation of work, determining the status of members.

The development of organisational structures of the CCU in the area of acquiring parliamentary characteristics began from the first days of its existence. The report on the creation of the CCU referred to its structural divisions: Presidium (chairman of the Council, two deputies, scribe, and treasurer) and nine commissions [21]. On the day of the CCU's election as Congress, April 8, 1917, its first general meeting was held, which became the highest body and leading organisational form, which ensures collegial, democratic work. The order of work of the general meeting of the CCU was established in the first months of its activity and was based on the model of parliamentary session work. The CCU was divided into factions based on party characteristics, and if necessary, the factions were blocked. Proposals were made on their behalf, various commissions were created and worked. Decisions were made, as a rule, by a simple majority of votes [22, p. 299]. The meeting was convened both on a regular and extraordinary basis. They began with the approval of the minutes of the previous meeting, which allowed for mistakes and falsifications. Then, the general meeting proceeded to consider the issues on the agenda. The documents adopted by the Assembly were called universals, declarations, resolutions, decisions [23, p. 373]. At first, the laws had no names, although many of the documents adopted by the General Assembly were laws in their content and meaning and later acquired such force.

These developments in the work of the general meeting were included in the regulations of the CCU – Order [12, p. 71-72]. It noted that the general meetings “determine the area and character of all work” of the CCU. General meetings could be regular or emergency. The next meeting was to be called once a month. CCU members were invited to the general meeting by agenda and through advertisements in Ukrainian newspapers. Therewith, the agenda of the meeting was submitted. Emergency meetings were called by the Committee “out of urgent need”. The order did not establish a quorum for the competence of the next meeting, probably due to the uncertainty at that time of the final composition of the CCU. Emergency meetings were considered “valid for any number of people present”. During the existence of the CCU, nine general meetings (sessions) were held. Their competence was not defined but was established in the course of practical activities. It shows that the competence of the CCU as a parliament covered the most important issues of the state-legal, socio-economic, and cultural life of Ukraine, its actions in the international arena. The list of specific issues that were resolved at the general meeting proved their importance, and therefore a considerable contribution to the process of state creation in Ukraine.

The first general meeting (April 8, 1917) approved the list of members of the CCU and elected its executive body – the Committee [12, p. 65].

The second general meeting (April 22-23, 1917) considered the issue of the Ukrainisation of the army and adopted the regulations [12, p. 71-72].

The focus of the third general meeting (May 7-9, 1917) was on sending a delegation to Petrograd to negotiate on Ukrainian national-territorial autonomy [12, p. 82-84].

The fourth general meeting (June 1-3, 1917) heard V. Vynnychenko's report on the CCU delegation's visit to Petrograd and decided to appeal to the Ukrainian people to “immediately lay the foundations of autonomy in Ukraine”, which was done by the First Universal [12, p. 101]. After four general meetings of the CCU, they became known as sessions [24, p. 27, 28].

The fifth session of the CCU (June 20, 1917) approved the new composition of the government, supplemented its composition with representatives of national minorities, proposed to hold a congress of the peoples of Russia, expanded the rights of the Committee, and approved the Second Universal [12, p. 106-156].

The sixth session (August 5-9, 1917) discussed the situation that arose after the refusal of the Provisional Government to approve the “Statute of the Supreme Government of Ukraine” and raised the issue of convening the Ukrainian Constituent Assembly [12, p. 220-254].

The seventh session (October 29 – November 2, 1917) discussed the situation after the fall of the Provisional Government [12, p. 370-383].

The eighth session (December 12-17, 1917) discussed the issue of peace and land and the progress of preparations for the elections of the Ukrainian Constituent Assembly [25, p. 16-38].

The ninth session (January 15-25, 1918) approved the laws on land and the 8-hour working day, amended the law on elections to the Ukrainian Constituent Assembly, discussed the progress of peace negotiations in Brest, the situation due to the Bolshevik offensive, approved the reorganisation of the Small Council, approved V. Holubovych as the head of government, adopted the Fourth Universal [25, p. 108-125].

Despite the fact that the general meetings had broad powers, they were not always an effective structure of the CCU. Political emotions, demagoguery, and populism sometimes prevailed over constructive work. Individual meetings had a rally character, turned into verbal battles between representatives of numerous party factions, and sometimes almost reached the point of resolving cases with fists. The protocol presents the discussion of the Second Universal at the fifth session of the CCU in the following way: “After Kovalevskyi's

speech, there was an incident, the mood of those present was very nervous and elevated. Speaker Khrystiuk begins to talk about not holding any negotiations; proposes that the resolution be passed in the sense that the talks are considered suspended. The commotion in the Social Democrats' sector started. Exclamations are heard: "Enough! Don't! Get out!". M. Avdienko runs to the rostrum with clenched fists. Others are holding him up. The commotion continues. The head is spinning for a long time" [12, p. 151]. P. Khrystiuk recalled that when discussing the interim instructions for the General Secretariat at the sixth session, "an unprecedented heated and passionate debate took place" [24, p. 116]. A sharp political confrontation arose between the Ukrainian Social Democrats and the SRs during the discussion of the agrarian bill at the eighth session. S. Petliura gave a rather accurate general description of the meetings, congresses, and other forums that took place in Ukraine during the revolutionary events. It may well be attributed to the sessions of the CCU. In a letter to M. Udovychenko, he wrote that these forums "were for me not an indicator of the strength (real and organised) of our people, but a demonstration of national emotions, which millions of masses still had to realise and which must be transformed into certain volitional movements of the Ukrainian nation, in certain acts of struggle for their national-state competitions. At first, I had the illusion that these congresses could be used to organise a national force. But I quickly became convinced that it is necessary to look for those who are able to create certain real values through rough state work" [26, p. 222]. Further, S. Petliura wrote about the "blindness of parties and circles", which became an obstacle to state-building activities. The minutes of the general meeting (sessions) of the CCU provide many examples of this. The low efficiency of the sessions of the CCU became obvious to its leaders, and in the summer of 1917, the Presidium of the CCU, referring to the formal reason – lack of money, did not convene a regular session for two and a half months, although this was contrary to the rules of procedure, which provided for calling sessions on a monthly basis. Closing the eighth session, M. Hrushevsky believed that it would be the last, as January 9, 1918, was scheduled to open the Ukrainian Constituent Assembly. However, it happened that the elections to the Constituent Assembly were disrupted on January 11, 1918. The Small Council of the Fourth Universal declared the independence of the UPR, and to approve this historical act, the next ninth session of the CCU was convened. It was the last one. In February-April 1918, the activities of the Ukrainian revolutionary Parliament were provided by the Small Council.

The efficiency of the general meeting (sessions) decreased as the composition of the CCU expanded due to the low manageability of their work. Consequently, there was a need to create a permanent authorised body in the period between its general meetings. Such a body was the CCU Committee, which was its executive body and performed work between general meetings (sessions). The Committee quickly became the CCU's governing body, formulating initiatives on the agenda of the general meeting, drafting major political decisions, and even, as was the case with First Universal, adopting and proclaiming them on behalf of the CCU. The Committee's finances were concentrated in Committee, all current work was controlled and directed by it, communication with places was carried out [22, p. 300]. The initial composition of the Committee (20 people) was elected by the first general meeting of the CCU on April 8, 1917. It consisted of the Presidium of the Council (the chairman and two deputies) and 17 members. According to the order, the composition of the Committee was expanded to 33 people: the Presidium of the CCU – the chairman and two deputies; 17 members elected by the general meeting; 8 chairmen of commissions. The committee was granted the right to co-opt 5 more members.

The functions of the Committee, according to the order, were related to the organisational support of the activities of the general meeting of the CCU, in particular, the convocation of general meetings, the preparation of reports and materials to them, the management of the work of commissions and the office, and bringing documents adopted at the general meeting to the attention of provincial and county councils. In the period between general meetings, the committee also assumed certain powers of the CCU – it made changes to the composition of the General Secretariat, resolved issues of political and economic life in Ukraine, reporting on them at the next general meeting. The Committee met once a week. It was considered competent if there were 2/3 of the Committee members if regulations were considered, and at least half when considering other issues.

The development in June 1917 the General Secretariat was not excluded from the political life of the CCU Committee. Informing the fifth session on the establishment of the General Secretariat, M. Hrushevsky noted that the creation of a new executive body does not eliminate the Committee, which should be "Small Central Council, performing legislative functions between the two sessions" [12, p. 116]. At one of the next meetings, M. Shrag took the initiative to provide the Committee with "all functions belonging to the Central Council" between sessions. The initiative was supported on June 29, 1917, by the decision of the fifth session, the Committee acquired the right to decide "all the most important immediate cases that arise between sessions of the Central Council", namely: to convene regular and extraordinary sessions; prepare materials for them; renew the Secretariat-General between sessions; to resolve all immediate cases that fall within the competence of the CCU [12, p. 143-144]. By the same decree, its composition was expanded to 40 people. At the beginning

of July, the committee was replenished by another 30% (18 people) with political figures representing national minorities [12, p. 171]. In 1918, the committee became known as the Small Council.

Further organisation and activities of the Small Council took place on August 1, 1917, when the rules of procedure for the work of the Small Council and its commissions were approved [12, p. 208-210]. Its content indicates an even wider introduction of parliamentary forms of work in the activities of the Small Council. In addition to the existing provisions, mainly procedural issues were determined, in particular, during the meeting none of the members of the Small Council could speak in one case more than twice: the first time – 15 minutes, the second – 5. The speaker was not limited in time and was given up to 20 minutes for the final speech. During the discussion, the speaker had the right to submit remarks after each speech, no more than 5 minutes. The Secretaries-General could always take the floor out of turn, but not for debate. At the request of any member of the Small Council, one or another moment of the meeting was recorded in the minutes. Applications on the agenda were given 3 minutes. The meeting was led by the chairman, yet they had no right to speak out of turn when discussing the issue. The debate was suspended at the request of 5 or more people after voting. Proposals to resolutions were submitted in writing. When discussing them, the speakers had 2 minutes each. If the question was asked from the audience, it should be formulated in such a way that only “yes” or “no” could be said in response. If a discussion began about amendments or additions to resolutions, then the floor was given in turn: to the one who is “for”, to the one who is “against”. No one had the right to vote for the absent members of the Small Council. Closed voting was held at the request of at least 5 members of the Small Council, roll-call – 10. Decisions were made by a simple majority, and when the number of pros and cons was the same, the issue was removed from consideration. Amendments to the transcript of the previous meeting could be made within one day after they were submitted.

The regulations defined the powers of the head of the CCU. The head called and led the meeting, proposed the agenda, led the discussion, summarised its results, established the procedure for voting on proposals received from factions [12, p. 208-209]. The incumbent chairman of the CCU and the Minor Council, M. Hrushevsky, managed to keep the Council under his control and lead it in the chosen course. He was an effective chairman, a sophisticated politician, who, if necessary, was able to give the meetings of the Small Council “some parliamentary character” [20, p. 30]. Defending his views, M. Hrushevsky did not stop at the prospect of resigning. The regulations bypassed the issue of accountability of the Small Council. Although the reports of the Small Council were heard at 6-9 sessions, they were more informative than accountable. In fact, the Small Council played a leading role in the activities of the CCU. “The Council, only it mattered, since the CCU plenum met every few months and, reproducing the same balance of power on an expanded scale, did not introduce anything new” [20, p. 120]. Such detail is also interesting: when at the seventh session the Bundist Zolotarov submitted a proposal to confirm the decision of the Small Council on the riot in Petrograd, Chairman M. Hrushevsky, without proposing a vote, limited himself to saying: “Resolutions of the Small Council have the same force as the full Council”. The explanation was accepted without objections [12, p. 374-377].

The composition of the Small Council was established based on proportionality between the factions that constituted the CCU. The non-partisan Chairman of the Council had deputies from four Ukrainian parties, two executive secretaries of the Presidium belonged to the USRP, and two to the USDLP. In August 1917, out of 65 members of the Small Council, 35 belonged to Ukrainian parties, 15 to Jewish parties, 10 to Russian parties, and 4 to Polish parties [27, p. 44]. Most of the seats in the Small Council – 14 – were held by the USDLP and USRP. Quantitative parity in the Small Council between these parties was maintained until the beginning of 1918. On behalf of the faction of Ukrainian socialists-revolutionaries, Shrag proposed “re-electing the Small Council in proportion to the composition of the Central Council at the next plenary session” [25, p. 105]. This reorganisation took place at the ninth session. Commenting on this event, the newspaper *Narodna volia* reported on January 24, 1918: “In the reorganized Small Council, the factions of the Socialist Independents, the People's Socialists, and the Moldovans (Romanians) are given one seat each. The rest of these seats are given in the Small Council to the Socialist-Revolutionary Faction. In total, the Small Council should have 82 members in accordance with the factional composition of the large council”. Thus, at the beginning of 1918, the Ukrainian SRs doubled their representation in the Small Council, the leadership of the CCU was in their hands, and they headed the Council of People's Ministers.

The Small Council absorbed the organic features of a parliamentary institution, but its meetings were more productive than the general meeting (sessions). Most of the most important political decisions of the CCU were made by the Small Council. Only after the proclamation of the Third Universal, the Small Council adopted laws: on the establishment of a court in Ukraine on behalf of the UPR, on elections to the Constituent Assembly of the UPR, on amnesty, on the exclusive right of the CCU to issue legislation, on the establishment of the General Court, on the Ukrainian Academy of Arts, on UPR state funds, on the Ukrainian State Bank, etc. Legislative work was further developed after the declaration of independence of the UPR by the Fourth

Universal. The Small Council passed laws on the ratification of the Brest Peace Treaty, the UPR State Flag, the UPR Citizenship, the issuance of State Treasury insignia, the election of judges, the UPR administrative-territorial structure, the Gregorian calendar, and Central European Time. The quintessence of the legislative activity of the Small Council was the approval of the Constitution of the UPR (Statute on the state system, rights, and freedoms of the UPR) on April 29, 1918.

A sign of the CCU's attraction to parliamentary forms of the organisation was the status of deputies – members of the CCU. Firstly, the CCU was maintained at the expense of the UPR. Members of the CCU were not subject to responsibility for voting, for opinions expressed, or in general for activities related to the performance of the duties of CCU members both in and out of the parliament itself. Members of the CCU had immunity against arrest, prosecution, and trial without the permission of the CCU. In many ways, the effectiveness of the legislative body depends on its powerful internal system [28]. An important structural element subordinate to the Small Council was the permanent and temporary commissions of the CCU. They were established at the first meeting of the CCU: financial, legal, school, propaganda, editorial, printing, demonstration, and information bureaus [11]. At that time, the functions of the commissions were not defined, and only their heads were approved. The legal status of the commissions was outlined in the order. Commissions were established by the Small Council as needed to conduct and resolve specific cases and to prepare various issues for committee meetings and sessions of the CCU. They were under the guidance and supervision of the Small Council. Members of the commissions, their chairmen, may not have been members of the CCU [12, p. 72].

The organisational bases of the commissions' work were also improved. They were created if necessary in a composition that was determined separately each time. Depending on the importance and complexity of the problem, the main task of the commissions was to prepare decisions for the sessions of the CCU and meetings of the Small Council. Drafts of relevant decisions were distributed in advance to the members of the CCU. The first meeting of the newly established commission was convened by the Presidium of the Small Council. It elected the chairman and the scribe. The commissions were given the right, if necessary, to co-opt other members with an advisory vote. At the end of the work, a rapporteur was elected from the commission. The particular issue was considered at the session of the CCU or Small Council only after the report of the relevant commission. The commission meetings were open. If there was a need for closed meetings, the issue was decided by a two-thirds majority of votes. Only members of the Small Council, its deputies, secretaries-general, and individual specially invited persons could attend the closed meetings.

On August 9, 1917, the rules of procedure of the Small Council and its commissions were approved at the fourth session of the CCU. It absorbed all the previous practice of organising and operating the Small Council and commissions, contained two innovations regarding the technical aspects of the rules of procedure: first, speeches were not limited in time; secondly, it was established that the next session of the CCU is convened no later than one month after the previous one. The agenda is sent out in two weeks, in a shorter time it was reported by telegraph. Employees of the CCU were united in an office headed by the director and their assistant. The office was divided into 6 departments: general, codification, publishing, accounting, library, and economic. In turn, the general department consisted of 6 subdivisions (office, stenography, personnel, address, information, and expedition), economic – of 3 subdivisions (garage, printing house, commandant's office), and the publishing house had the editorial board of the newspaper “Visti Ukrainskoi Tsentralnoi Rady”. The office of the CCU operated based on the Statute [29, p. 30-31], according to which all its employees were members of the general meeting of the office headed by the staff committee. Such meetings were supposed to be convened annually, only they made changes to the Statute, removed employees from their posts, established monetary funds from employees' contributions, monitored working conditions, etc.

## CONCLUSIONS

The creation of the CCU marked the beginning of the era of revolutionary parliamentarism in Ukraine. The first effective steps on the path of state creation were the transformation of the CCU from a socio-political centre into a representative body. This transformation occurred as a result of the convocation in April 1917. The Ukrainian National Congress, which elected the CCU and granted the right to co-opt new members, continued the process of establishing the CCU as a representative body. In general, the CCU was established on general democratic principles, based on the specific historical conditions of the time, since its composition provided territorial representation, representation of political parties and socio-political movements, which made it a representative body, although it was never elected based on universal suffrage, which would give it indisputable legitimacy. However, this procedure for establishing the CCU made it a body that represented the will of the Ukrainian people, and therefore allowed solving constituent problems, such as the issue of changing

the state structure of Russia, declaring the autonomy of Ukraine, subsequently the UPR, determining the form of government, declaring its independence and sovereignty, adopting regulations of international importance.

The transformation of the CCU into the Revolutionary Parliament of Ukraine in those conditions, in addition to a kind of expansion of its composition, which made it a representative body of the Ukrainian people, an expression of their will, took place by the Central Council acquiring the features of a parliamentary institution through improving its structure, organisational and legal forms of activity, clear regulation of work, determining the status of members. The competence of the CCU as a parliament covered the most important issues of the state-legal, socio-economic, and cultural life of Ukraine, its actions in the international arena. The form of work of the CCU was the general meeting, and in the period between them – the Committee (Small Council). Thus, the Small Council adopted laws on ratification of the Brest Peace Treaty, on the State Flag of the UPR, on the citizenship of the UPR, on the issuance of State Treasury insignia, on the election of judges, on the administrative-territorial structure of the UPR. The quintessence of the legislative activity of the Small Council was the approval of the Constitution of the UPR (Statute on the state system, rights, and freedoms of the UPR) on April 29, 1918. Thus, the foundation of the Central Council of Ukraine, the difficult path to its transformation into a representative body – a kind of revolutionary parliament – ensured the development of state processes and contributed to the establishment of an independent Ukrainian state during the Ukrainian revolution of 1917-1921.

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