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Sukhova, Olga A., Inozemtsev, Ivan N.

Penza State University, Penza, Russian Federation

Ecological Culture of the Soviet Peasantry: Traditional Values and Modern Challenges

Abstract

The article analyzes the process of evolution of ethics and practices of social behavior that characterize reproduction of traditional values in the field of harmonization of man/nature relations in the 20th century. The thesis of specific formation of the source base has been substantiated: in the absence of a unified system of administrative regulations, most data

becomes dispersed, mostly reflected in the testimonies of contemporaries and sources of mass origin (materials of Oral history). The key identifier of the concept of ecological culture is system of ideas, meanings and values, symbols and myths of the rural community, which falls within the subject field of everyday history. The article is to provide source analysis of the problem of studying ecological culture of the Russian peasantry in the post-reform and Soviet eras as a system of social ideas and behavioral strategies reflecting perception of factors and means of ensuring the vitality of the rural world, "saving one's own place." The research ascertains the localization structure of ecological consciousness manifestations: ecology of mankind, habitation, settlements, and economic activity. Several major factors transforming the content of ideas have been identified: the need to adapt to the environmental crisis (depletion of the main resource of the traditional economic system of the Russian peasantry); the regulatory activity of the state; public initiatives in the field of environmental education. A periodization of the process of evolution and replacement of traditional ethics and behaviors in the field of ecology is proposed: 1861 – late 1920s; 1929 – late 1940s; 1950–1960s; 1970s – early 1990s. Periods of the Revolution of 1917 and the Civil War in Russia, as well as the 1930–40s are considered in the context of extreme destruction of peasants' ecological ideas. The division criteria are: change in technological patterns, formation of appropriate environmental strategies, formation and development of environmental education. Strategies of ecological behavior of peasantry in the field of health saving and land use are consistently considered. It is noted that the main trend in the development of environmental consciousness in the 20th century was a break in the historical continuity and desacralization of traditional values, which resulted in ecological absenteeism bordering on self-destruction of social identity.

### Keywords

Historical ecology, historical geography, sources, Soviet peasantry, agrarian policy, USSR, ecological culture, transformation of traditional values.

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### About the authors

Sukhova Olga Alexandrovna, PhD in History, professor, Penza State University, V.G. Belinsky Pedagogical Institute, faculty of history and languages, dean, Penza, Russian Federation, +7-412-66-60-01, +7-927-2-89-20-41, savtemp@yandex.ru

ORCID 0000-0003-0658-736X

Inozemtsev Ivan Nikolaevich, Penza State University, V.G. Belinsky Pedagogical Institute, faculty of history and languages, department of the history of Russia and methods of teaching history, post-graduate student, +7-412-66-60-01, Russian Federation, Penza, +7-964-874-16-24, kerskij@mail.ru

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