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Organization of Leisure in the Russian Pre-Revolutionary Provincial Assemblies at the Turn of the 20th Century in Archival Documents and Materials

Abstract

Societies organizing leisure of its members had an important place in the system of self-regulated organizations in the Oryol gubernia at the turn of the 20th century. The article studies forms of leisure activities and free pastime in public, officer, and other assemblies in documents of these organizations. The study object is document complex from the State Archive of the Orel Region and Russian State Library. It includes charters of public and officer assemblies, reports and other correspondence on their activities, publications in press. It is sufficient for this research. The author concludes that the tsarist government adopting the

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so-called “normal” (i.e. exemplary) charters of public and officers' assemblies stifled the initiative of the founders of public organizations. At the same time, the state balanced intents and interests, combined hedonistic pastimes with cultural and other entertainment. However, as documents testify, members of public assemblies gave preference to the former to the detriment of their cultural growth. Such were the stereotypes of business communication in the periphery, and this leads to the conclusion that, in this case, the state (in person of its legislator) was more enlightened than provincial public. However, officer assemblies were different, as their charters obliged not only to organize the officers' pastime, but also to maintain combat traditions of the unit. Soldered by strict discipline and high martial spirit, officer assemblies could provide a model of leisure organization to the citizens, were it not for corporate isolation.



Keywords

Archive, source, “normal” charter, report, leisure, entertainment, communication, public assembly, officer assembly.

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