

Date of publication: January 12, 2019

DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.2529704](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.2529704)

Historical Sciences

HISTORICAL ASPECTS OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY OF THE POPULATION IN RUSSIA IN THE XIX CENTURY

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Abstract

The article deals with the economic activity of the main part of the Russian population in the first half of the XIX century. Special attention is paid to the life of peasants, their homes and customs.

Russian peasants were quite modest in household use. Also in the article it is spoken about food which in the conditions of natural, consumer character of country economy was result of production activity of the farmer.

The article describes the everyday and celebration clothes, which preserved the traditional, archaic features formed in ancient times. Attention is paid to the shoes worn by peasants. An impressive shift in the existence of Russian society was the state, almost most of which were in slavery, but at the beginning of this period they became free. However, the latest trends often did not displace the old ones, which, in turn, hindered the development of the country. All this helps us to more accurately imagine the life of the peasants of the XIX century.

Keywords: peasants, life of peasants, hut («izba»), outfits, food, crafts.

I. INTRODUCTION

The relevance of the study of the sphere of life of peasants, customs, traditions is justified by its scientific, practical and theoretical significance. Modern Russia, having ceased to be a peasant on a demographic basis, remained in her spirit.

When we study the history of Russia in the XIX-th century, we see all the primitiveness of the life of the peasants, their oppression, and the underdevelopment of rural peasant production. However, strong traditions, foundations, and community values, always characterized the Russian people, and especially the peasants and their way of life. Therefore, we, as a modern generation, need to remember this and try to preserve the features of the Russian people that have evolved throughout its history. This explains the relevance of this topic.

II. METHODOLOGY

The materials for writing the article were various extracts from books, encyclopaedias, a collection of information, materials from the state archive, as well as scientific publications from the modern periodicals.

In the process of the study, the historical-genetic method was used, the use of which includes a detailed description, the saturation of facts.

The methodological basis of historical and comparative research was made up by the principles of objectivity and historicism, which imply an unbiased approach to the analysis of the topic being studied. We also used general scientific methods in our work, namely: a logical method, a classification method, a factor analysis method.

III. DISCUSSION

Currently, there is a large amount of scientific material affecting the problem of studying the life of the peasants. Nevertheless, special studies devoted to the conceptual analysis of modern ideas about the life of the peasants are not given.

Ethnographer F. Polikarpov, investigating in the early twentieth century the life of the peasants of Nizhnedevitsky district of the Voronezh province, said: «The dandies appear, who put on «Gaspod» shirts - calico shirts from calico, light boots, cease to wear «gaman» on a belt. Even within a single county, ethnologists have identified a variety of clothing for rural residents. «In some places they wear «panovy» - black checkered skirts, in other» skirts «of red flowers, with wide trim at the hem - of ribbons and braid. Girls wear mostly sundresses. From outerwear in the southeast of Nizhnedevitsky district wear «zipunik», and in the northeast of district «shushpany». Everywhere shoes were sandals with «anuchi» and «footcloths». On holidays, Russian peasants wore heavy and wide savvy boots. Peasant shirts are cut carelessly - wide and long, the belt was tied up under the belly, clinging to it «haman».

The opinion of scientists according to the problems of the origin of peasant legal ideas and the factors that influenced their education, was divided. Certain scientists insisted on the originality of the genesis of popular relations in Russia. For example, F. Barykov, a specialist in the family life of peasants, believed that folk customs were formed unconventionally, under the influence of specific economic and material relations.

I. Tyutyumov believed that there was an uninterrupted relationship among the modern customs of the peasants and the customs of the Old Russian everyday life. According to his judgment, the specifics of the legal relations of the people are determined by the elementary laws of historical development, the peculiarity of the origin of official legislation, and, moreover, by the conditions for the existence of estates.

IV. RESULTS

In this article, we study the life of the main part of the inhabitants of Russia in the first half of the XIX century, which retained features characteristic of all peasants. Peasant's house («izba») is the traditional housing of Russian peasants, the construction of which was a significant step in their lives. Manor under the new building was given the decision of the village gathering. Peasants together with their neighbours harvested logs. Wood is the main building material.

Since ancient times, our ancestors used a rich set of plant and animal food. They cooked porridge and jelly from millet, peas, buckwheat and oats. They also consumed many vegetables, potatoes. The peasants ate meat only on Christmas and Easter, as it was a rather rare and expensive food product.

The modest village church did not surprise at all with its own size or structure, but it made the village the centre of the whole neighbourhood. Any peasant, when he was still a child, fell under its vaults during the period of christening and attended church many times during his life. When a person died, he was also brought to church before being buried. The church was practically the only public house in a rural district and surrounding area. The priest was practically the only literate person in the village. All parishioners came to him for confession, despite their personal relationships.

Russian peasants were quite modest in household use. Alien person, above all, was impressed by the abstinence of the interior decoration. Most often, «izba» consisted of a heated room and a canopy, which served as a room separating heat from the cold. In the household, the canopy was used as a utility room, where a piece of clothing, household items, and accessories for a harness were placed. In the summer, everyone loved to sleep there where was cold. And in the big hall there were organized gatherings of girls. A small door, consisting of only one leaf and made of two or three broad strips of solid wood, led into the house. The door was inserted into the door deck, made up of two thick oak planks with high threshold. Threshold made it difficult to enter the housing of cold air. The staircase, which stood in the entrance hall, led to the attic room under the roof of a peasant house.

This also left an extensive exit, carrying smoke from the stove up through the chimney to the roof. Opposite the canopy, a warm compartment was arranged, the «khatyn» - the shelter of the elderly, children and women from dust. The large huts included a special solemn room - an upper room («gornitsa»). The corner far from the door was completely occupied by the stove, in some cases making up the fourth part of a small hut. The furnace was formed from raw. The stove was decorated with clinkers, circles, crosses and flowers, painted with blue or ordinary ocher. The Russian stove until the middle of the 19th century was «blackened», in which case it did not have a chimney. The smog from the furnace in these houses went directly into the room and, spreading along the ceiling, stretched out to a window with a gate and went into a wood chimney, a «dymnik».

Furnaces were used to dry grain, clothes, shoes, hemp, horse harness, and, in addition, it was used as a rest area for the whole family. A small nook was near the stove on the other side. In it, as a rule, there was a calf.

A large number of representations, superstitions, customs and rituals are associated with the furnace. In a traditional dwelling, the stove was an indispensable constituent. If there was no stove in the house, then it was considered uninhabited, as it was the second most important «center of holiness» in the house after the «red corner».

The red corner, as well as the furnace, was considered to be a significant reference point of the internal space of the hut. His main decoration was the goddess with icons and a lamp. As a rule, in it, apart from the god of God, there was a table. All the important activities of home life were noted in this corner. At the table, there were both daily meals and ceremonial feasts.

From the holy corner along the entire side wall there was a bench, called the «lavka». Next to it in the direction of the stove departed short, called the «zalavok». There was preparing food. And there were buckets of water, some dishes.

The lower boundary of the residential place of the peasant house was the floor. The sanitary situation of village housing depended on its coverage. If the floor had a wood covering, it was much cleaner in the hut. In the huts with land floors there were covered with dry grass, it was a universal floor covering.

On the land floor, toddlers and unhealthy family members fulfilled their own natural needs, from time to time the straw was replaced with a new one.

The ceiling was the upper boundary of the house. Its basis was a dense quadrangular bar, called the «matitsa», on which ceilings were laid. A variety of objects was hung up to the «matitsa», including the cradle.

In the Russian villages, there were no baths for washing the body. For this reason, the peasants bathed only in the summer season in ponds or rivers, of course, and in this case, underwear. Strangers, especially to expose their bodies, embarrassed them. On Saturdays, the peasants changed their laundry and washed their heads. On the cleanliness of the beds in the peasant houses, you can only talk relatively. As a rule, the bed was a «solomennik» - a bag filled with rye or spring grass. In some cases, it has not changed all year. Consequently, there was a lot of dust and dirt, and sometimes bugs were even there.

It must be emphasized that the prerequisite for the spread of many contagious diseases was the lack of personal hygiene. The main part of the researchers, as well as the past and present, are unanimous in the fact that infection with syphilis in the village was done directly because the rules of personal hygiene were not observed.

In rural life, there was no adequate food hygiene. The peasants dined in the village families from common dishes, there was almost no cutlery, and they drank from mugs according to the order. After eating, the peasants did not wash the dishes, but only rinsed them in cold water and put them in place, and in this way the dishes were washed no more than once or twice a year.

The main area of the Russian economy in the XIX century was considered agriculture. The degree of formation of the agricultural economy was characterized by the material well-being of almost all residents of Russia.

For the purposes of agricultural production created in individual territories, it was possible to use hired labour, use improved tools and machinery, fertilizers, and produce products to the market. These were farms that are being formed according to the farmers' path. The archaic concept of crop rotation dominated, called the three-field. Its essence was that in the first year, the region was sown with winter crops, in the second year - spring crops, and in the third year, the land remained uncultivated and was intended for pasture. Of the main agricultural crops, rye was in the first place, then - oats, grain, barley, buckwheat and millet appeared. Potatoes were not widespread.

The main share of market agricultural products provided peasant farms. The efficiency of peasant farms was rather low, often yielding twice the yields in landowner areas, where fertilizers, agricultural implements, etc. were used much more. Since the peasants had little money, the acquisition of modern tools was difficult. The peasants did not have the opportunity to pay for iron products and used, as before, a sack, a wooden plow and a harrow.

In the context of the natural, consumer nature of the peasant economy, food was the result of the production activity of the farmer. The peasant was fed his labour.

Purchased food in the village was a wonder. Since there was a lot of housework, the cook had almost no time to cook various pickles, so everyday food was monotonous, quick to prepare. Only on holidays, when the hostess had enough time, various dishes appeared on the table. A rural woman was conservative in ingredients and cooking. Peasants were primitive in food, so all recipes for its diversity were perceived as overkill.

The main food products were rye bread and dishes prepared on its basis: kvass, kutya, kulaga, kissel. To brew used horseradish, radish, hot peppers, seasonings. Millet, peas, buckwheat, oats cooked porridge and jelly. According to N. Brzhevsky, the food of the peasants did not satisfy the basic needs of the organism quantitatively and qualitatively. Chronic malnutrition - this was a common occurrence in a peasant family.

Fish as food was more affordable. The peasants had daily drinking water; in the summer period they made kvass. At the end of the XIX century, tea was not very common in the villages of the black earth region, they drank it only when they were sick, brewed in a clay pot in the oven. However, in the early twentieth century, from the village reported that the peasants loved this drink, began to drink on holidays and after the meal. The richest began to acquire samovars and tea utensils. For intelligent guests laid forks for dinner. The level of culture of life of the peasants depended on the degree of social development of the village.

In the second half of the XIX century, stable observance of food restrictions in the rural environment was observed. An integral part of the public consciousness was the idea of clean and unclean food.

The cow, according to the peasants, was a pure animal, and a horse was unclean, unsuitable for food. In the peasant superstitions, there was a notion of unclean food: the fish swimming with the current was considered clean, and against the current — unclean.

This is how P. Fomin, a resident of the Bryansk district of the Oryol province, described the traditional order of eating in a peasant family: «When people sit down for lunch and dinner, everyone starts to pray to God at the owner's beginning, then sit down at the table. Forward to the owner, no one dish can start. Otherwise, it will hit with a spoon on the forehead, although it was also an adult. If the family was large, the children were put on shelves and fed there. After eating again, everyone gets up and prays to God. Meal in the peasant family was common, the exception was family members who performed urgent work or were away.

Typically, the order of food among the peasants was as follows: in the morning, when they woke up, everyone ate snacks in different ways: bread with water, baked potatoes, yesterday's leftover food. At nine or ten in the morning, we sat down at the table and had breakfast with a brew and potatoes. About twelve, but not later than two o'clock in the afternoon, everyone dined, ate bread and salt in afternoon tea. The peasants had dinner in the village at nine o'clock in the evening, and in winter even earlier. Field work required considerable physical effort and, as far as possible, the peasants sought to consume the most nutritious food.

The food of infants was milk. During the haymaking, the baby was left for the whole day under the supervision of older children. The lack of breast milk in the diet of babies made them vulnerable to digestive infections, most popular in the summer. A large number of infants under the age of one died due to diarrhea.

The class differences were more distinct in clothing. The bulk of the country's population was committed to the same standards in clothing. The clothes of the peasants mostly retained the classical, archaic features that had been formed in ancient times. Men's clothing was of the same type, but women's clothing was the most diverse.

The clothes of the men were shirts and ports, while the boys only had shirts. Women's shirts were sewn down to the heels. In order that the shirts did not interfere with the work, they were tied up at the waist with laces. Flax linen shirts were decorated with embroidery. In men's shirts, dummies and collars were embroidered with patterns, while in women's shirts, mainly hose. In the axillary part of the sleeves, as a rule, the patches of scarlet calico were stitched in, thereby playing the role of an amulet.

According to superstitions, the scarlet colour at the edges protected the body from the entrance of unclean forces. In everyday life, women constantly walked in linen or linen shirts, and married women and widows were obliged to wear a special type of skirt, called «paneva», over their shirts. They also wore an apron, with sleeves called «zaveski». The lower part of the «zaveski» is often embellished with embroidery or colour tape. The girls wove braids with ribbons and walked bareheaded. Women hid their hair under the cap.

Peasants wore daily shoes: bast shoes («lapti»), «onuchi», frills. They wove bast sandals from rye straw. The main clothing during the winter and autumn was «svita». In the winter, instead of a trench coat, the peasants wore a «zipun» of hard cloth, extended to the bottom. He had geometric patterns at the bottom and two belt buckles. Three major events were in the life of any person: birth, wedding and death. Thus, all entries in the church metric books were divided into three parts. In that period of time in a variety of families, babies were born almost every year. The appearance of the child was perceived as the will of the Lord God, speaking out against which it rarely occurred to anyone. More children — more labour in the family, therefore, more income. Based on these views, the birth of male children was preferable. You grow up a girl you grow up, and she goes into a strange family. But it does not matter: the wives from other yards replaced the working hands of those daughters who were married. Therefore, the appearance of children has always been a holiday in the family, so it was covered by one of the main Christian sacraments - christening. Parents carried to baptize the baby with the godfather and mother. The priest, together with the godfather, read out a prayer, then immersed the child in a font, put on a cross. Returning home, they organized baptisms - a dinner for which all the relatives were going. The child was usually baptized on his birthday or the next three days. The name of the priest gave, mainly using the holy calendar.

However, it was not necessary to give a name according to the calendar date. Godfathers were mostly residents from their ward. Russian peasants got married and got married only in their own community. If in the XVIII century, married in thirteen - fourteen years, then from half of the XIX century the official age for creating a family was eighteen for men, and for women - sixteen years.

Early marriages among the peasants encouraged the landowner, as this contributed to an increase in the number of workers and, consequently, the profits of the landowners. In serf times, peasant girls were often married without their agreement. After the abolition of serfdom, they began to listen to the bride's opinion gradually, before marrying her. Strict rules were also applied to minor suitors. When someone was against marriage, father forced. In case the groom or bride «sat up», they were dishonoured.

Weddings, as a rule, were played in the fall or in the winter, when the main agricultural works ended. Often, due to the hard work of the peasants and their early demise, secondary marriages existed. The number of secondary marriages after epidemics grew rapidly.

Men served in the army. Folk proverbs and sayings reflected the difficulties of serving in the army. These sayings existed about recruits and their wives. «To the recruit - to the grave», «Merry grief - soldier's life», «The soldier is a grief («goremyka»), he is worse than a bast shoe», «The wife of a soldier («soldatka») is neither a widow nor a husband's wife», «The whole village is father for soldier's children».

The peasants served in the army for twenty-five years. Without documents officially confirming the death of her husband, who served in a military unit, the wife could not remarry. In this case, the entire service life of the soldiers lived in the family of her husband, being completely dependent on the head of the family. Already after the military reform in 1838, the period of service was reduced to four years. After this reform, men who had reached the age of twenty-one and were fit for service were required to serve in the military. Legislation provided for marital status benefits. Russian peasants were considered completely separate from the landowners and the nobility of the class, almost all considered their subordinates subhuman. Many peasants were, in fact, serfs.

Death overtook a man in any case, but in the cold winter period this was accomplished much more often. They buried the deceased in the church graveyard until the beginning of the XIX century. However, due to the threat of infection by various infections, a special instruction was signed - to arrange cemeteries outside settlements. People prepared for death in advance. Before death, they tried to call the priest for confession and communion. After death, the women washed and disguised the dead. Men made a coffin and dug a grave. When the body was carried out, the mourners began lamentations. All formalities, without exception, were limited to writing in a metric book, where a local priest indicated the cause of death according to the words of loved ones of the deceased. The coffin was carried to the temple on stretchers. The church guard rang the bell. Forty days after the funeral, they commemorated the dinner, which they brought to the priest for service. The well-known writer Maxim Gorky in his letter «On the Russian Peasantry» described their opinion about the city, that is, the civilization of Europe, in a letter. «And in conclusion, after a long, harsh criticism of urban «fun», the bearded man said, sighing: we ourselves did a revolution - it would be quiet on earth long ago and order would be...» Sometimes the attitude towards citizens is expressed in such a simple, but radical form: «All those educated must be cut off from the earth, and then it will be easy for us, fools, to live...». «Now we can with confidence say that at the price of the death of the intelligentsia and the working class, the Russian peasantry came to life», - Maxim Gorky noted.

V. CONCLUSION

Therefore, we saw the life of the peasants of the XIX century in Russia. Somewhat unusual for us are ideas about the life of our ancestors. Russian peasants were very unassuming in household items.

However, it should be noted that some traditions of our ancestors are preserved. Moreover, peasants in the 19th century were the driving force that provided their families with everything they needed. Even after the so-called liberation, their daily lives have not changed much. They still needed a place to work, and the earth to live, so the newfound freedom was more a formality than something tangible, material.

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