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Main Sources for Studying Institutional and Social Aspects of the Black-Earth Villages
Collectivization: Materials from Regional Archives 1928–1932

Abstract

The article is devoted to the socially significant and debatable theme in the Russian history – collectivization in the Black Earth village. Extensive historiography is devoted to this problem; therefore, the authors draw attention to the study of the least studied aspects of the agrarian transformations carried out by the Soviet government in 1928–1930. In their opinion, analysis and study of social and institutional factors will determine the causes, identify the mechanism, and establish the consequences of the collectivization. The publication strives to identify key archival sources on the issue in the Black Earth region archives. The geographical framework is the Central Black Earth region gubernias, that is, modern Lipetsk, Belgorod, Tambov, Kursk, Oryol, and Voronezh regions. The study takes into account administrative and territorial reforms in the Central Black Earth region, as well as subsequent acquisition and reforming of archival fonds. Traditionally, Soviet historiography on collectivization focused on the creation of collective farms and struggle with against the kulaks. Contrariwise, modern historiography on the problem of the prosecutor's office activities, the courts, the OGPU in the Black Earth village is still emergent, as many fonds were classified under the Soviet period and some remain so at least partially to this day. In preparing the article, documents have been identified in the regional archives of the Tambov, Kursk, Oryol, Belgorod, Voronezh, and Lipetsk regions, which have been previously unpublished and never introduced into scientific use. They reveal various aspects of the activities of main state institutions and social groups in the village. They detail the activities of the prosecutor's office, MTS political departments, district control commissions, the struggle against the kulaks, and some other subjects. The study of the sources on the topic permits to assert that the fonds of these archives contain documents and materials of some interest. Introduction into scientific use of this wide range of sources enables to conduct critical analysis of the socio-political realities of 1928–30 and to construct a dynamic model of the Black Earth village development.

Keywords

Collectivization, Black Earth village, socio-political changes, sources, archives, fond.

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