

*Contents and Abstracts**No. 4(42)/2021**Nature and Society*

Anton I. Kogan. On the Origin and Functions of Artificial Kinship in the Pamir-Hindukush Region (pp. 3–19).

The paper examines some important aspects of functioning of artificial kinship among the peoples of the Pamirs, Hindukush and Karakoram. There is an attempt to identify the factors of the genesis of this institution. Two types of artificial kinship are distinguished: hierarchical and non-hierarchical. The author concludes that one of the main reasons why fictive kinship ties were so widespread and some of them were so remarkably viable, was that they were an effective tool to resolve conflicts and to maintain a certain level of social cohesion, thus ensuring that the traditional economic systems characteristic of the Pamir-Hindukush region would not be interrupted.

Keywords: artificial kinship, highland peoples, the Pamir-Hindukush region, mountain agriculture, mountain pastoralism, ethnic ecology, socio-natural history.

Vladimir I. Pantin. West and East: Socio-ecological Crises in the Past and Present (pp. 20–38).

The article considers the concept of ‘socio-ecological crisis’ as applied in the human and social sciences, analyzes two types of socio-ecological crises as well as their connection with global climate and other natural changes. The crises of the first type are more likely to occur in the Eastern civilizations, whereas the crises of the second type are more typical of the Western ones. The distinctive features of the socio-ecological crises of the first (‘Eastern’) type are agrarian overpopulation as a result of rapid, unbalanced demographic growth, as well as the depletion of land and other natural resources. By contrast, the distinctive features of the socio-ecological crises of the second (‘Western’) type are the slowdown of demographic growth and aging of the population as a result of degradation of the family institution, family relations and other social relations, the gradual transformation of the value and moral standards towards strengthening of individualism and hedonism, and the dominance of hedonistic morality accelerates the decay of society. The author shows that socio-ecological crises of the first type were typical for Ancient and Medieval China, Medieval India and some other Eastern societies. At the same time socio-ecological crises of the second type eventually resulted in the decline of Ancient Greece and Hellenistic states and several centuries later to the decline and

destruction of the Western Roman Empire. The modern era witnesses crises of both types. The crises of the first type are the most severe in Africa, Central America and some of the Central and South Asian states, and the crises of the second type occur primarily in the United States and EU states. On the basis of this analysis, it is predicted that the US and EU countries will gradually lose their leadership positions in the world, and that the centre of economic and political development will shift from the West to the East. The author concludes that Russia in modern conditions needs to counter the socio-ecological crisis of the second type, to preserve and gradually modify traditional Russian system of values, and to pursue a balanced domestic and foreign policy, which should be focused on the Asian countries rather than on the U.S. or the EU.

Keywords: socio-ecological crisis, system of values, technological shifts, social changes, East, West, China, India, Western European countries, USA, Russia.

A Century of Global Changes

Sergey Yu. Malkov. On the Forecast of World Dynamics in the 21st Century (pp. 39–57).

The article analyzes macrostructural changes in the world that have taken place over the past 50 years. It is shown that they mark the beginning of a fundamentally new phase of historical development for the humanity. Under these conditions it is not a question of forecasting the future, but projecting it in the new historical conditions. The struggle between world projects begins. The one whose world project proves more successful will be the winner. A number of Western projects have already been announced (*e.g.*, Klaus Schwab's 'stakeholder capitalism', the Pope's 'inclusive capitalism'). In fact, these are projects of a totalitarian society governed by a 'world government'. Russia's mission is to offer a vision of the future, which is attractive to most peoples, alternative to Western projects and based on the primacy of the principles of cooperation over the principles of domination.

Keywords: world dynamics, projects of a future world order, 'inclusive capitalism', World-Organism.

Valentina V. Kuznetsova, Olga A. Mashkina. Pre-school Education in China: State and Perspectives (pp. 58–84).

The analysis of the China educational policy transformation in the field of pre-school education indicates that in recent years Chinese leadership have increasingly focused on the early intellectual and creative potential development of the individual. In China the enhancing of human capital has been considered

as an essential factor in the country's socio-economic development towards global innovative and educational leadership. Expanding access to early childhood education, eliminating disparities in the development of pre-school education and improving its quality are identified in policy documents as important ways to overcome social inequality. These measures are seen as an essential policy element in promoting a culture of lifelong learning. They are aimed at increasing the population's confidence in the government's policy of creating a middle-income society – 'xiaokang' (小康), educating the young generation in the spirit of national values, combining Chinese traditions and current ideological principles.

Keywords: pre-school education, development, education policy, development policy, personality, accessibility and quality of education, China.

Scientific Discussions

Boris M. Kondorsky. Some Aspects of the Theory of Social Systems (pp. 85–115).

In the process of historical development, in addition to the key stages, the basis of which the certain types of revolutions are traditionally considered, the author proposes the introduction of two epochs – social and societal, which implies a thin dividing line between the categories of 'society' and 'socium'. The society is based on a set of social systems (SSs) corresponding to certain typological modes of social activity. In the middle of the 20th century, in addition to political and economic social systems, other systems began to actively manifest themselves in the spheres of mass culture, media, sports, ecology, religion, *etc.* The main regularities of the SSs are considered and analyzed. The modern period is characterized, on the one hand, by the processes of SS politization, and on the other hand, by more than noticeable (often decisive) influence of certain SSs on domestic and foreign policy. Social systems are the arena of hybrid war waged by the West against Russia. The greatest danger for Russia is hybrid civil war at the level of major national SSs, especially using the capabilities of the Internet.

Keywords: the process of historical development, revolutionary period, socium, society, social systems, politization, hybrid war.

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