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Original Article

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HISTORICAL AND LEGAL ASPECTS OF HEREDITARY AND PROPERTY RELATIONS OF THE MORDOVIANS BASED ON MATERIALS BY V. N. MAINOV

The focus of the study is the property and hereditary relations of Mordovian peasants who lived in the Volga region in the second half of the 19th century. This problem, as well as the issues of contractual and family relations of the peasant population of Russia as a whole, was reflected in pre-revolutionary science. At this stage, the research expanded significantly the amount of sources on this topic and introduced abundant data from the relevant legal practice. The present article is based on “An Essay on the Legal Life of the Mordovians” by Viktor Nikolaevich Mainov published in 1885, which includes all the information he collected in 1877 during ethnographic research in the provinces of the European part of the country (Kazan, Nizhny Novgorod, Penza, Samara, Simbirsk and Tambov). The monograph addresses important elements of family law (in particular, the forms and conditions of marriage, property division, relationships between family members) and considers hereditary, property, material and contractual law in the life of Mordovians on a large factual material. The author of the article highlights the significance of V. N. Mainov’s work for studying the history of the legal culture of the Mordovians, since many of its aspects, in particular, the hereditary law of Mordovian peasants, still remain understudied in Russian historical and legal science.

Keywords: Volga region, Mordovian peasants, hereditary relations, property relations

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