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Historical changes of the pasturage and the natural resource use in Almaty Region, Republic of Kazakhstan

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This paper aims to clarify the historical changes of the human society and the natural resource use in Central Eurasia in the latter half of the 20th century.

In recent 100 years, Central Eurasian people experienced the drastic changes in their surroundings. Especially, it is pointed out that the development during Soviet Era changed their traditional lifestyle, regional community, economy, and the way of the use of natural resources. In this study, we aim to clear about the impact of socialist modernization on the pasturage and the natural resource use through the analysis of the statistics, documents, and the interview with the local residents. The survey area is the Almaty region, Republic of Kazakhstan.

The results are as the follows;

After the collectivization in 1929-33, the pasturage of this region had changed in quality and quantity. The total number of livestock increased. And also the percentage of daily cattle and poultry increased.

However, from the point of view of the natural resource use, big changes had occurred in 1960-70's. Because of construction of Kapshagai reservoir in 1970's and increase of irrigation area, natural grassland was decreased. In order to supplement the shortage of the natural resources, new irrigation area had expanded. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, agricultural production and total number of livestock was reduced in radically.

Historical changes of society and development policy in the 20th century, greatly changed the pasturage and the use of natural resources in Almaty region. It is important to understand the natural environmental changes from the viewpoint of human environment.

Keywords: human society, the use of natural resources, Socialist Modernization, environmental history