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Legal culture and justice in township courts of Kazan province in late Imperial Russia

The thesis will examine peasant justice, legal culture, a formation of peasants’ legal consciousness and a problem of incorporation peasants into a nation in late imperial Russia. In particular, I study township courts in multi-ethnic Kazan province’s countryside.

Township courts were a simplified form of justice designed for illiterate and uneducated peasants. Judges of township courts were obliged to make decisions based on the customary law and conscience. In this connection, the key issue of the research is the problem of conflicts legal regulation between peasants in diverse multi-cultural and multi-ethnic rural societies of Kazan province. In addition to this, I am also interested in the formation of legal culture in Kazan province and how this local process interacted with the imperial context.

**Keywords:** Russian empire, peasants, rural society, legal culture, customary law, local self-government, local courts