

ABSTRACTS

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HISTORICAL-SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE THEORIES OF AGING

This paper discusses the perceptions and attitudes of society to the problems of aging since ancient times. Two opposing views on human age are given: gerontophilia (positive attitude) and gerontophobia (negative attitude to old age). In a number of ancient and traditional societies in the period when old age was difficult to achieve, it was considered a desirable stage in human life; old people were respected and had privileges. It is indicated that in traditional societies, in the center of social life was a mature, healthy, and hard working person while the children, the sick, and the old were pushed to the periphery of public life. Using these facts, a historical analysis of theories of aging is presented.

In the article, attention is paid to the ethnic culture, through which a special attitude towards aging people is formed. This attitude is considered with the inclusion of traditional Russian culture. Studies by M. M. Gromyko and N.I. Kostomarov, describing complex, deep, and original, but contradictory attitudes to ageing and older people, are quoted.

Special attention is given to consideration of theories of aging at the present stage of scientific knowledge development. Biological, pedagogical, social, and philosophical approaches to the problem of aging are considered. The features of formation of gerontology as a science are defined.

Key words: gerontology, gerontophilia, gerontophobia, health, old age, aging, age, ontogeny, vitality, social problem, stages of life.