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Confronting nuclear tyranny: role of eco-nationalism in development of environmental movement in Ukraine

Being the republic of the Soviet Union, Ukraine became the main springboard for the implementation of the ambitious nuclear plans of the Communist party: in early 1970s – late 1980s, on its territory were built 5 nuclear power plants (NPP) which covered 40% of electricity produced in the USSR. The belief in the safety of nuclear energy has affected the specific places of their location (near big cities and large water arteries) and low culture of prevention the nuclear disasters. This created threats for life and health of many Ukrainians. Chernobyl disaster of 1986 showed the consequences of such Soviet nuclear tyranny and caused development of nuclear activism in Ukraine, as well as in Russia, Latvia, Armenia and other Soviet republics.

The author will investigate the peculiarity of the post-Chernobyl nuclear activism, particularly, its connection with eco-nationalism. Our hypothesis is that eco-nationalism became a platform for the development of environmental movement in Ukraine in late 1980s. The author will answer the questions: how long nationalistic element dominated in the environmental movement of Ukraine? Why did it disappear after gaining the independence of Ukraine in 1991? Has eco-nationalism potential to appear again if in Ukraine will develop authoritarian regime?