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“Do Not Allow Common People ... to Saunter Abroad without Purpose Year on Year”: The Privy Councillor A. I. Temnitsky’s Note on Russian Pilgrims (1910)

Abstract

The article introduces a note about Russian pilgrims, written by the privy councillor A. I. Temnitsky on January 26, 1910. The original text is stored in the files of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society in the Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire. Substantial analysis of the source accompanies its publication. The document is being introduced into scientific use for the first time with minor abbreviations that do not affect its style or content. The identity of the note’s author has not been established; it is known that Temnitsky owned land in the Minsk gubernia and lived in Kiev for a time. The article is to characterize this source on the pilgrimage

policy of the Russian Empire found in the archival file “Correspondence on transportation of pilgrims and on pilgrims’ daily routine en route to Jerusalem, 1897-1914.” The hypothesis about the crisis of the pilgrimage policy of the Russian Empire on the eve of the First World War has been tested with traditional methods of historical science: comparative, historical, problem-chronological, retrospective. The note of Temnitsky enables to correct the existing ideas on pilgrimage practices of the Orthodox believers from the Western gubernias of the Russian Empire. The document offers a different view on the Russian pilgrimage policy of the early 20th century, undermines the researchers’ arguments that it was the conservative part of that Russian society that supported the activation of pilgrimage activities in Russia. The publishers underscore the value of the suggestion made by Temnitsky: Russia should have its own chapel in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and extend the activities of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission to Egypt. The publishers conclude that Temnitsky’s note gives researchers an alternative point of view on the organization of Russian pilgrimages on the eve of the First World War and demonstrates systemic problems in the implementation of the Russian pilgrimage policy that contrast with increased statistics on the entry of Russian subjects in Palestine.

Keywords

Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society, Archive of Foreign Policy of the Russian Empire, historical source, Russia, Holy Land, Palestine, pilgrims, pilgrimage.

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