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Documents on the History of the Revolution of 1917 the Archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences

Abstract

The article reviews documents from the personal provenance fonds and those of academic institutions on the history of the revolutionary events in Russia in 1917 that are stored in the Archive of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAN). The article strives to add to the source base on the history of the Russian revolution of 1917, as documentary collections from the Archive of the RAN (Moscow) have hardly ever qualified as sources of the history of the revolution of 1917 (chiefly, unpublished). Documents deposited in the Archives of the RAN date from 1917 to 1987. By late 1980s interest in the revolutionary events of 1917 plummeted due to the adverse effects of Perestroika, collapse of the Soviet Union and changes in socio-political system of Russia, as well as following a general trend to revise national history. There have been little, if any, publications on the history of the revolutionary events of 1917 based on the documents of the Archive of the RAN over the past 25 years. Documentary collections of the

Archive of RAN on the history of the revolution of 1917 in Russia can be divided into two groups: documents pertaining to the events of February and those on the October Revolution of 1917. Documents in the first group date from 1917 to 1967, which corresponds with the scientific practice to time the research to coincide with anniversaries of the revolutionary events. These documents were deposited both in the personal provenance fonds and those of academic institutions. Documents in the personal provenance fonds of scientists have a distinction of being written, if not by participants, at least by contemporaries of the revolutionary events. Personal provenance fonds of scientists also store documents of institutions and organizations from the days of the revolution. Documents in the second group can be divided into several subgroups: the first containing documents drawn up during the revolutionary events of October-November 1917; the second including research papers of scientists on the revolutionary events of October 1917; the third comprising of papers prepared in academic institutions and organizations. Diaries, memoirs and photographs of the revolutionary events contemporaries form a stand-alone complex of documents. Identification of documents on the history of the revolutionary events of 1917 has been carried out in the "Catalogue" section of the "Accounting" directory in the database of the Archive of RAN information system. Currently, this section includes up to 29% of the Archive of the RAN files and documents titles, chiefly from personal provenance fonds of scientists. Thus, the Archive of the RAN provides a wide information field for studying the history of the revolution of 1917. These documents allow expand the source base on the history of the Russian revolution and can be used in research and for educational purposes.

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Keywords

Sources, Archive of the RAN, Russian revolution, 1917, history, documents, archive, Russian Academy of Sciences, fonds review.

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