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A.F. Kerensky: Documentary Evidence from Foreign Archives

Abstract

The aim of this article is to inform researchers of documents of A.F. Kerensky kept in the foreign archives. Life of A.F. Kerensky, his role in the history of the Russian revolutions and his place in the post-revolutionary emigration can be traced in various sources, not just written accounts, but also audio and photo documents. These sources include official documents, police dossier files, personal documents, records of conversations and interviews, articles in periodicals, published books, posters, photographs, visual materials. The sources can be arranged chronologically into three groups: those from the period before 1917; those relating to the events of 1917; those from the emigration period. Documents which can be of interest for researchers are kept in numerous collections containing information about the pre-revolutionary period, the events of crucial 1917, and the post-revolutionary emigration; there are personal provenance fonds of Kerensky himself, and those of famous Russian emigrants, political and public figures, writers,

and also collections of famous foreign political and public figures, historians, journalists. More often then not, the documents are dispersed in different archives. Memoirs represent a substantial part of sources containing information about A. F. Kerensky. Memoirs vary in size and information content, but are often the only source of information about events and persons, and on the whole they descript facts differently from official documents and include details that can be found in no other type of documents. Private letters form a significant part of Kerensky's archival heritage. The importance of correspondence for reconstruction of historical realities can hardly be overestimated. The article informs of archival documents from foreign archives and libraries that disclose life and activities of A.F. Kerensky on the eve of the Revolution of 1917, during the Revolution of 1917 and in emigration. A. F. Kerensky maintained active correspondence with politicians, public persons, writers, historians. His letters are stored in the Bakhmeteff archive in personal provenance fonds of V. M. Zenzinov, writer and one of the socialist revolutionaries party leaders, of diplomat E.V. Sablin, of Russian and American historian and essay writer M. M. Karpovich, of political and public person A. V. Baikalov; in the Goover archive in the fond of V. M. Maklakov, envoy of the Provisionary Government in France in 1917-1924; in the New York Public Library in the collection of writer Vladimir Nabokov and that of Alfred Anthony Williams, theologian, writer, educator, one of the Baptist movement leaders, of Ralf Thompson, American writer, teacher and editor, who worked in New York Times, Time Magazine, etc.

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Keywords

Historical sources, A. F. Kerensky, history of Russia, revolution of 1917, archives, archival documents, archival collection, Foreign archival Rossica, Russian emigration.

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