

Review

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Archival Research on the Local and Family History: The City of Omsk City and New Research of Its Past

Abstract

The article is a review of the monograph “The history of the Batyushkins, an Omsk family” by the Omsk historian Dmitry I. Petin. The book was published in Omsk in 2021. Some interesting and important pages of the regional history and culture of the 19th–20th centuries are

associated with the Batyushkin family and the so-called Batyushkin's House (also known as Kolchak's House). Using the example of the life of this family's head, Kapiton Batyushkin, the author shows how "social elevator" operated in the Russian Empire of the 19th century. In 1918–19 the Batyushkin's mansion was the residence of the Supreme Ruler of Russia, Admiral Alexander V. Kolchak. D. I. Petin, an expert in archiving and an experienced researcher, has used documents from many archives, both federal and regional. He has also found valuable information in personal archives. The result is an exemplary research. A wide variety of sources have been used and new sources have been identified; they have been analyzed both in local and national context; methods characteristic of modern research have been used. The monograph contributes to study of microhistory, family history, Siberian local history and culture. The author uses historical and anthropological approach to his material. Twists and turns of human destinies are expounded, involving various historical and cultural data of Omsk and all-Russian pertinence. The book is a valuable contribution to the history and practices of archiving in Western Siberia: firstly, it analyzes many newly found archival sources; and secondly, the Center for Study of the History of the Civil War—scientific and educational unit of the Historical Archive of the Omsk Region—is located in the Batyushkin's House. History of the functioning of this unique place is also considered in the book.

Keywords

Sources, archives, everyday life, Omsk, Revolution, Civil War in Russia, Batyushkin family, Admiral A. V. Kolchak.

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