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To Publication History of Nikolai I. Kareev’s Brochure “Southern Slavs and Italy on the Adriatic”

Abstract

The article publishes correspondence concerning publication of a pamphlet by the famous Russian historian, Nikolai Ivanovich Kareev (1850–1931) “Southern Slavs and Italy on the Adriatic.” It was to be published in the series “World War and Slavic Questions.” The compilers

intended the series to increase the knowledge in the Russian society about the "Slavic question" and its prospects after the war. In particular, they supported the idea of uniting the Czechs and Slovaks into a Czechoslovak state and expanding the borders of Serbia, both at the expense of Austro-Hungarian territories. Kareev held to a similar point of view in his brochure, based primarily on historical facts. Written in the summer of 1916, this work reflected his views on the course of the war and the future post-war world order. In the question of the fate of Austrian Istria and Dalmatia, Kareev actually supported the Serbian side, seeing no reason for Italy to acquire these lands after the victory over the Central Powers. At the stage of censoring, the essay encountered some obstacles. According to the existing procedure, the Petrograd Committee for Press Affairs (which also dealt with military censorship) sent essays on foreign policy topics to the Press and Information Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for review. In August 1916, Kareev's manuscript was received there. After reviewing it, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Anatoly Neratov advised to postpone the publication of the brochure, as it raised difficult questions and might have caused discontent of Italian allies of Russia. The manuscript was "stuck" in the censorship committee for two months, and Kareev tried to solve the problem by contacting the head of the Second Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, baron Boris Nolde, who, in his turn, advised him to write a personal letter to Neratov. In his letter, Kareev assured Neratov that there was nothing "offensive" in the brochure; it was written in "objectively scientific" language; the facts had been published and discussed not only in England and France, but also in Italy. Kareev also asked Neratov for a personal meeting to convey his arguments. It is possible that the meeting actually took place, because a week later the director of the Press and Information Department, Alexander Lysakovsky, informed the chairman of the Petrograd Press Committee, Nikolai Levitsky, that the Foreign Ministry no longer had any complaints against Kareev's brochure and it could be published. The published documents show the mechanism of censoring essays on foreign policy topics in Russia during the First World War. In addition, N.I. Kareev's letter is now introduced into scientific use, supplementing his extensive epistolary legacy.

Keywords

Historical sources, Slavic question, World War I (1914–18), Istria, Dalmatia, Austria-Hungary, censorship, Press and Information Department, Nikolai I. Kareev, Aanatoly A. Neratov, Nikolai I. Levitsky, Alexander I. Lysakovsky, Boris E. Nolde.

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