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Report on damage to monuments in Detskoye Selo, imperial residences and N. N. Yudenich's

campaign in the autumn of 1919

Abstract

The article publishes a report by V. I. Yakovlev, curator of the Detskoye Selo palace-museums, on the damage caused to the monuments of the former royal residence during the advance of N. N. Yudenich's troops on Petrograd in the autumn of 1919. Following the October Revolution of 1917, museum organizations were established at most of the palace complexes located near Petrograd. In Detskoye (Tsarskoye) Selo, Gatchina, and Slutsk (Pavlovsk), extensive work was undertaken to inventory and preserve the artistic treasures remaining after the fall of the autocracy. Curators were appointed at the palace-museums, responsible for the protection of artistic monuments and the development of scientific research. Due to the advance of the Northwestern Army, work at the imperial residences was suspended. The palace complexes were at risk of destruction, as their grounds became the arena of battles between the Reds and the Whites. This study attempts to determine the damage inflicted on the palace-museums during military operations. Memoir-based sources contain information about incidents at the Gatchina and Pavlovsk palace-museums. The study revealed that information about material losses in the suburban complexes is poorly understood and sometimes contradictory. This published source allows us to determine the true extent of the damage inflicted on the palaces and pavilions of Tsarskoye Selo. The document was compiled by V. I. Yakovlev, curator of the Detskoye Selo palace-museums, after the retreat of the Northwestern Army from Detskoye Selo. The report, housed in the manuscript department of the scientific archive of the Institute of the History of Material Culture of the Russian Academy of Sciences (IHMC RAS), contains information on the nature of the destruction of the Catherine, Alexander, and Babolovsky palaces, the Chinese Theater, the Paley Palace, the Lyceum, and park buildings. The source contains an exact list of buildings belonging to the Detskoye Selo palace-museums in the autumn of 1919. The inclusion of curator V. I. Yakovlev's report in scholarly circulation allows for a more complete understanding of the residences' history in the first years after the Bolsheviks came to power. This newly discovered document contributes to the study of little-known chapters in the history of the Tsarskoye Selo palace-museums. The study provides insight into the attitudes of both the Bolsheviks and the White Movement toward the symbols of a bygone era.

Keywords

Detskoe Selo, Gatchina, Pavlovsk, palace-museums, imperial residences, N. N. Yudenich, A. P. Rodzianko, Petrograd, historical sources.

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