

УДК 929

DOI 10.28995/2073-0101-2020-2-403-413

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New Information on the History of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Beijing: From Correspondence of the Head of the XV Ecclesiastical Mission in Beijing, Archimandrite Palladius with the Envoy of the Russian Empire in China, Eugene K. Butsov

Abstract

The article describes the correspondence of the participant of the XII (1840–1849), head of the

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XIII (1849–1859) and of the XV (1865–1878) Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Beijing (REM), the greatest Russian orientalist, archimandrite Palladius (Kafarov) (1817–1878) with the head of the Russian Diplomatic Mission in China, Evgeny Karlovich Butsov (1837–1904). The letters originals have been found by the author in the State Archive of the Russian Federation (Moscow) in the Butsov fond. The analyzed letters had been written in Beijing from June 30 to December 3, 1877, during which period Archimandrite Palladius (Kafarov) was the head of the XV Russian Ecclesiastical Mission and Yevgeny Byutsov headed the Russian Diplomatic Mission in China. The study of documents that have not yet been introduced into scientific use strives to fill in the gaps in studying of the activities of the XV Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Beijing and its contacts with the Russian Diplomatic Mission in China. The letters provide rich material on the relationship of the two leaders of most important Russian authorities, officially operating in the Chinese capital after the Second Opium War. The first letter contains information on finding a contractor for the construction of the REM library; in the second one, Palladius informs Butsov of mental health problems of the mission hieromonach Father Gerontius (Levitsky). The letters contain numerous details of the everyday life of the XV REM, including many references to previously unknown difficulties encountered by its chief and concerning its employees: i.e. Father Gerontius (Levitsky). Archimandrite Palladius devotes much attention to describing the restructuring of the Northern Metochion of the REM, which began in the said period. The letters mention a significant number of people who were in the general circle of acquaintances of Kafarov and Butsov. Among them are the Minister of Finance of the Russian Empire, Mikhail Khristoforovich Reiter, the head of the Diplomatic Mission of the German Empire in China, Maximilian August Tsipio von Brandt, employees of the Russian Democratic Republic (Father Gerontiy, Father Flavian, Father John), the representative of the Diplomatic Mission in China (P. S. Popov), and members of the Butsov family.



Keywords

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Historical source, Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Beijing, Archimandrite Palladius, Palladius Kafarov, Eugene Butsov, Russian Diplomatic Mission in Beijing

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Submitted 6.08.2019, published (for citation):

KULIKOV, A. M. Novye svedeniya k istorii Rossiiskoi dukhovnoi missii v Pekine. Iz perepiski glavy XV dukhovnoi missii v Pekine, arhimandrita Palladiya i poslannika Rossiiskoi imperii v Kitae E. K. Byutsova [New Information on the History of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Beijing: From Correspondence of the Head of the XV Ecclesiastical Mission in Beijing, Archimandrite Palladius with the Envoy of the Russian Empire in China, Eugene K. Butsov. In Russ.]. IN: Vestnik arhivista / Herald of an Archivist, 2020, no. 2, pp. 403-413. doi 10.28995/2073-0101-2020-2-403-413

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Полностью материал публикуется в российском историко-архивоведческом

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