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Elizaveta V. Osennikova

Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow, Russian Federation

Transferred Cultural Objects in Russian and Foreign Public Opinion

## Abstracts

The article analyzes national and foreign historiography devoted to the problem of transferred cultural objects and in particular archival documents which were brought to the USSR after World War II and have been in classified fonds of the Central State Special Archive of the USSR for over 40 years. The issue of archival documents of foreign origin stored in Moscow was introduced by E. Maximova in February 1990 and prompted further research. Current historiography on transferred cultural objects is quite extensive, and this article can only review the works that address the return of archival documents to their countries of origin. It notes that in the aftermath of the USSR collapse and new state emergence, Russia was unprepared to

determine the fate of the objects and insisted on principle of mutual interest. The article also reviews publications in press (Izvestiya, Moskovskii Komsomolets, Nezavisimaya Gazeta, Ogonyok, Megapolis-Express, Itogi), which in 1990s followed the formation of legislative mechanism for exchange and return of transferred cultural property and stirred up public interest. Of special importance is the controversy surrounding the ownership of transferred cultural property, which continued even after the law on procedure for exchange and return of such values was adopted. Foreign researchers accused Russia of nationalizing objects of foreign origin. The author concludes that the public could not come to consensus on the issue of returning documents of foreign origin, despite adoption of a special law and subsequent return of archival documents to the European countries. Currently, more than 300 thousand items of documents of foreign origin remain in storage in the Russian State Military Archive. The interested states persist in trying to return them, and thus the topic does not lose its relevance.

### Keywords

Transferred cultural objects, archival documents, Central State Special Archive of the USSR (TsGOA USSR)

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About author

Osennikova Elizaveta Vladimirovna, Russian State University for the Humanities, Master`s Degree Student, Moscow, Russian Federation, +7-916-748-45-15, lizaosen@inbox.ru

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