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Gulnara E. Rafikova, Tatarstan Academy of Sciences, Kazan, Russian Federation

Nadezhda B. Pazina, Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russian Federation

Roza U. Galimova, Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russian Federation

The Kazan Archive of Diplomat V.N. Chicherin (1829-1882): History, Characteristics,
Composition of the Fond

Abstract

Introduction into scientific use of historical sources on the history of the foreign policy of the Russian Empire, such as diplomatic correspondence, is a significant problem of studying Russian foreign policy, and history of diplomacy in particular. On one hand, the foreign policy of pre-revolutionary Russia has been studied well enough, on the other hand, the newly revealed documents allow to revise the established notions and to put forward new hypotheses. The personal provenance archive of the diplomat Vasily Nikolaevich Chicherin, which has been discovered in the Lobachevsky Scientific Library of the Kazan Federal University, offers all possible difficulties of processing and describing. Thus, the authors have been faced with a task of compiling an inventory of the fond in order to introduce the discovered historical documents into scientific use. The difficulties arose, when defining their content, authorship, and date while compiling headings of documents (60% are in French). To accomplish the task, attribution method (establishment of authorship, conditions of creation in the general historical context and in conjunction with known biographies), as well as descriptive, historical and comparative, and other historical methods have been used. The fond has been named "The Archive of Vasily Nikolayevich and Zhorzhina Egorovna Chicherins." 331 documents have been described dating 1958 to 1882; 118 of these are from the period of V.N. Chicherin's stay in Italy (1856-1862) and France (1862-1867). The fond includes personal correspondence of J. Meyendorff and personal documents. The authors' efforts are to introduce into scientific use a new document complex pertaining to V. N. Chicherin, as well as new documents on the history of Russian foreign policy in the second half of the 19th century. Personal provenance sources allow to determine personal attitude the diplomatic missions and embassies employees to imperial policy they pursued, as well as to clarify some historical facts and events, their dating and consistency.

Keywords

Historical sources, history of Russian diplomacy of the 19th century, diplomatic correspondence, Vasily Nikolaevich Chicherin, biography, personal provenance archive.

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Сведения об авторах

About authors

Rafikova Gulnara Ernstovna, PhD in History, Institute of Tatar Encyclopedia and Regional Studies of the Tatarstan Academy of Sciences, Advanced Research Fellow, Kazan, Russian Federation, +7-843-264-26-89, grafikova@mail.ru

Pazina Nadezhda Borisovna, Kazan (Volga region) Federal University, Kazan University, Lobachevsky Scientific Library, Department of Manuscripts and Rare Books, chief librarian, Kazan, Russian Federation, +7-843-233-77-38, nadezhda.pazina@kpfu.ru

Galimova Roza Usmanovna, PhD in Philology, assistant professor, Kazan (Volga region) Federal University, Kazan University, Institute of International Relations, Division of Translation Studies and World Cultural Heritage, assistant professor, Kazan, Russian Federation, +7-843-221-34-24, rgalimova80@mail.ru

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