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Classification of Documents from Archival Fonds of City Magistrates of the Kursk Viceroyalty of the Second Quarter of the 18th Century

Abstract

The article classifies documents of magistrates of the Kursk viceroyalty, which are stored in the State Archive of Kursk Region in the fonds of the Kursk viceroy's office, Kursk magistrate, and Oboyan magistrate. For studying legal proceedings, demography, and administration in the

second quarter of the 18th century, researchers prefer materials of the Kursk Chambers of Civil and Criminal Court, treasury department, and the viceroy's office. Thus, studying external and internal documentation of magistrates is significant for revealing their role in the cities' political and economic life. Until the early 1990s, in the Russian historiography there have been no specialized works on composition of documents of magistrates. The use of materials of city courts was thematic. Socio-economic studies put emphasis on a statistical documentation, while legal works focused on established practice in applying the law. Nevertheless, the scholarship of the second half of the 19th century developed two main principles of systematization of magistrate documents: chronologically-nominal and structurally-functional. Historians noted that, despite losing their tax and administrative competencies in the 1780s, magistrates continued to control these issues. The work is to structure documents of city courts of the Kursk viceroyalty. The author has developed her own structural and functional classification scheme, taking into account organizational and competence specifics of these institutions. For this typologization, a contextual analysis of materials has been carried out in order to evaluate the documents' legal force and to identify which area of relations they regulate. Thus, the documents have been divided in two groups (organizational/administrative and competence-based), each further subdivided in 4 classes. The first block includes materials regulating activities of magistrates (internal and external regulatory legal acts) and those springing from their functioning (accounting, personnel, accounting and registration, reporting documents). The second block includes materials which the magistrates created while executing their direct and indirect powers. The given classification reflects the composition of city courts' documents and procedures of their clerical work, as well as their place and role in the city development of the Kursk viceroyalty in the second quarter of the 18th century.

Keywords

Historical sources, magistrate, bulletin, record of service, petition, denunciation, register, report, alphabet, ballot paper, meeting log, verdict of the Society of townspeople, special definition.

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