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Problems of safety of archival documents in Moscow Provincial Archive of old cases

Annotation

The documents of the Moscow Central State Archive allowed us to delve into the history of Moscow Provincial Archive of Ancient Documents, the issues of preservation of the documents on Moscow history especially those concerning the Patriotic War in 1812. The work introduces unpublished sources on the history of one of the largest and oldest regional archives for scientific use. The article describes the key moments related to the preservation of the documents: the destruction of the materials due to explosion of the Arsenal in 1812, inappropriate storage conditions in Moscow Provincial Archive of Ancient Documents, and the constant practice of sending undocumented cases to the archive. Unheated damp rooms of the towers of the Kremlin and Kitai Gorod destroyed many priceless pieces. By the beginning of the XX century about 150,000 documents out of 1,800,000 stored had been lost or destroyed by dampness. We have paid particular attention to the period of governance of Governor-General Prince Dmitriy Golitsyn and Governor Vladimir Dzhunkovsky who attempted to improve the conditions of the archival work in the capital and developed a new construction project. The article researches into the activity of the Commission on review and destruction of the ancient documents of the Province Archive. The analysis of the work of Province Archive on preservice of the documents clarifies that the inappropriate storage conditions had led to their mass destruction. The documents in most cases were not listed so it was impossible to recover which materials and documents had been destroyed.

