

Publications of Archival Documents and Archival Science

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ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to one but important direction of archival documents and information use - the publication of documents of the National Archival Fond of the Republic of Belarus, which are deposited in the state archives. The article briefly discovers the legal requirements for publishing activities, including organizational aspects of the preparation and conduct of the work fixed in the rules of work of the state archives. The author notes the significant achievements of the Belarusian archivists in this area in recent years, which are supported by both quantitative and qualitative indicators. However, despite the progress made in publishing activities, a number of problems to be solved still remain. Among them, the author notes the absence of uniform rules of the publication of archival documents, the lack of a single center, which coordinates the work of publication at the national level, undeveloped Belarusian diplomatique, which creates difficulties with the publication of documents of the 14th-18th centuries, the need to develop the requirements for electronic publication. Particular emphasis is placed on the role of archival science in the development of evidence-based approaches to the selection of papers for publication, development of common approaches to the transmission of texts published, preparation of relevant guidelines.

Key words: archival document, use of archival documents and information, publication, forms of publication, electronic form of publication, archival science

Pubblicazioni di documenti archivistici e archivistica

SINTESI

L'articolo si tratta della pubblicazione dei documenti del Fondo archivistico nazionale della Repubblica di Bielorussia, depositati nell'Archivio di Stato. L'autore mostra brevemente le necessità legali per le attività di pubblicazione, inclusi gli aspetti organizzativi della preparazione e la conduzione del lavoro fissata nelle regole dell'Archivio di Stato e rileva i significativi risultati degli archivisti bielorussi in questo settore negli anni recenti, sostenuti da indicatori sia quantitativi che qualitativi. Tuttavia, nonostante i progressi ottenuti nelle attività di pubblicazione, una serie di problemi da risolvere rimangono ancora. Tra essi, l'autore nota l'assenza di regole uniformi per la pubblicazione di documenti archivistici, la mancanza di un centro unico che coordini il lavoro di pubblicazione a livello nazionale, la poco sviluppata diplomazia bielorussa che crea problemi con la pubblicazione di documenti dei secoli dal XIV al XVIII, il bisogno di sviluppare i requisiti per la pubblicazione in forma elettronica. Un'attenzione particolare viene posta sul ruolo dell'archivistica nello sviluppo di criteri di selezione dei documenti per la pubblicazione, allo sviluppo di metodi per la divulgazione dei testi pubblicati, alla preparazione di rilevanti linee guida.

Parole chiave: documento archivistico, uso dei documenti archivistici e delle informazioni, pubblicazione, formati di pubblicazione, formati elettronici di pubblicazione, archivistica

Objavljanje arhivskega gradiva in arhivska znanost

IZVLEČEK

Članek se posveča pomembnemu načinu uporabe arhivskega gradiva in informacij, in sicer objavi gradiva Nacionalnega arhivskega fonda Republike Belorusije, ki ga hranijo v državnih arhivih. Avtor na kratko predstavlja zakonske podlage za založniško dejavnost, vključno z organizacijskimi vidiki priprave in vodenja dela, ki so določeni v delnih pravilnikih državnih arhivov. Avtor opozarja na pomembne dosežke beloruskih arhivistov na tem področju v zadnjih letih, ki so podprte tako s kvantitativnimi, kot tudi s kvalitativnimi kazalniki. Kljub napredku v založniški dejavnosti, še vedno ostajajo številne težave, ki jih bo treba rešiti. Avtor omenja pomanj-

kanje enotnih pravil za objavo arhivskih dokumentov, odsotnost enega samega centra, ki bi usklajeval delo na nacionalnem nivoju, nerazvitost beloruske diplomatike, kar povzroča težave pri objavo dokumentov od 14. do 18. stoletja, in potrebo po razvoju zahtev za elektronske publikacije. Poseben poudarek je na vlogi arhivske znanosti v razvoj pristopov izbora gradiva za objavo, razvoju skupnih pristopov pri razširjanju objavljenih besedil ter na pripravi ustreznih smernic.

Ključne besede: arhivsko gradivo, uporaba arhivskega gradiva in informacij, objave, oblike objav, elektronske publikacije, arhivska znanost

Публікацыя архіўных дакументаў і архіўная навука

РЭЗЮМЭ

Артыкул прысвечаны аднаму з важных напрамкаў выкарыстання архіўных дакументаў і інфармацыі - публікацыі дакументаў Нацыянальнага архіўнага фонду Рэспублікі Беларусь, якія знаходзяцца на захоўванні ў дзяржаўных архівах. У артыкуле каротка разглядаюцца патрабаванні заканадаўства да публікацыйнай дзейнасці, у тым ліку арганізацыйна-прававыя аспекты падрыхтоўкі і правядзення гэтай працы, замацаваныя ў правілах работы дзяржаўных архіваў. Аўтар адзначае значныя дасягненні беларускіх архівістаў ў гэтай сферы ў апошнія гады, якія пацвярджаюцца як колькаснымі, так і якаснымі паказчыкамі. Аднак, нягледзячы на дасягнутыя поспехі, у публікацыйнай дзейнасці застаецца шэраг праблем, якія патрабуюць вырашэння. Сярод іх аўтар звяртае ўвагу на адсутнасць адзіных правіл публікацыі архіўных дакументаў, адсутнасць адзінага цэнтры, які ажыццяўляе каардынацыю публікацыйнай работы ў маштабах краіны, нераспрацаванасць беларускай дыпламатыкі, што стварае складанасці з публікацыяй дакументаў перыяду XIV-XVIII стст., неабходнасць выпрацоўкі патрабаванняў да электроннай формы публікацыі. Асаблівы акцэнт робіцца на ролі архіўнай навукі ў выпрацоўцы навукова абгрунтаваных падыходаў да адбору дакументаў для публікацыі, распрацоўцы адзіных падыходаў да перадачы тэкстаў якія публікуюцца, падрыхтоўцы адпаведных метадычных рэкамендацый.

Ключавыя словы: архіўны дакумент, выкарыстанне архіўных дакументаў і інфармацыі, публікацыя, формы публікацыі, электронная форма публікацыі, архівазнаўства

1 Introduction

The role and importance of archives in modern society is primarily determined by the capabilities of effective use of the documents stored in them. It is not by coincidence that the topic of relationship of archives and society in terms of the use of archival documents for scientific, historical, economic, cultural and other socially important purposes was one of the key one in all three latest congresses of the International Council on Archives (ICA). This topic was also quite acute at the conference of the International Archival Day organized by the International Institute for Archival Science in Trieste and Maribor in 2011. In particular, P. P. Klasinc noted that archives used to solve, along with their direct professional responsibilities (taking over, storing, managing and transfer of archival records), a variety of additional tasks, such as academic research, publishing, exhibitions, participation in educational process and the like (*Klasinc, 2011, p. 157*).

It is exactly the need to meet the challenges of effective use of archival documents and information contained in them seems to determine the direct responsibilities of archives on acquisition of documents, provision of their permanent and long-term storage, stock-taking, and development of finding aids.

2 Fundamental principles of legislation in the field of publishing activities of archives

The concept of using archival documents is multifaceted and includes various areas of activity of the archives. Law of the Republic of Belarus of 25 November 2011 *On Archival Work and Record Management in the Republic of Belarus* devotes a separate chapter to the use of archival documents. According to archival law the main lines of activity of archives on the use of archival documents include:

- information support of the users according to their needs, as well as on archives own initiative;

- provision of archival documents for study and use of the information contained in them;
- preparation and publication of documentary collections, reference information publications on the structure and content of archival documents;
- popularisation of archival documents in the media;
- exhibitions of archival documents (*Закон Республики Беларусь Об архивном деле и делопроизводстве в Республике Беларусь, 2011, art. 27*).

Thus, the publication of archival documents is one of the important areas of their use. A separate chapter in the Rules of Work of State Archives of the Republic of Belarus is also devoted to the organization of publishing activities. According to the Rules, the publication activity of archives is a set of works on preparation of documents for publication, including selection of topics, determination of publication type, kind and form, formation of a team of compilers, editorial board, issue of organizational and methodological documents, conclusion of a contract with interested organizations and publishers (*Правила работы государственных архивов Республики Беларусь, 2006, pts. 269-275*).

There are three types of documentary publications: scientific, popular-science and educating:

- scientific publications are designed for scientific use, in most cases they replace a direct reference to the document. They describe the history of the text creation, external features of the published document, define its place among other sources. Scientific publications are the result of scientific research, and their finding aids reflect all aspects of the study;
- popular-scientific publications are used for dissemination of knowledge and popularization of archival documents;
- publications of educational type are intended for deeper digestion of curriculum, training in independent work with archival documents. Age characteristics of students and the level of their knowledge are considered in preparation of teaching aids.

By their kind the documentary publications are divided into fond-based (comprised of documents of one fond), thematic (consisting of a variety of archival documents on the same topic, regardless of their origin), publication of documents of the same type (reports, letters, orders, etc.), publication of documents of one person (consisting of the documents created by that person in the course of his/her activities, regardless of the fond of origin).

The forms of documentary publications are printed (long primer, series, collection, album, booklet, poster, in periodicals and multivolume editions); publication on film media; publication in electronic form. It should be noted that in recent years Belarusian archives have been using only printed and electronic publications.

3 The main trends of publication activity

the issues of publication of archival documents are paid considerable attention in Belarus. Suffice it to say that the State Program Archives of Belarus for the period of 2011-2015 (*Постановление Совета Министров Республики Беларусь от 15 сентября 2010 г. N. 1322 «О Государственной программе "Архивы Беларуси"»*) included such activities as the publication of documentary sources on topical issues of Belarusian history, archival directories on the composition and content of the documents of the National Archival Fond of the Republic of Belarus, increasing the number of historical and documentary exhibitions, creation of electronic exhibitions of archival documents, participation of archival service of the Republic of Belarus in organization of joint international exhibitional and publishing projects. The program provided for the allocation of additional financial resources to the state archives for these purposes, although its main objective was to improve the conditions for storage of archival documents by way of construction, modernization and repair of archival buildings and premises.

In order to promote the activities of the archives, as well as to highlight for a wide range of stakeholders the information contained in the documents of the National Archival Fond, state archives actively publish collections of archival documents and scientific editions prepared with participation of both central and regional state archives. In doing so, the publication of many documentary collections is often accompanied by presentations with participation of mass-media, and therefore the publishing activities of archivists used to receive wide publicity.

The analysis showed that in the last 10 to 15 years the archives have published more collections of documents annually than for the entire latter half of the twentieth century. Thus, only in 2015 the state archives published 9 collections of documents, prepared for publication another 21, and published in the media 42 thematic collections of documents. Considering that there are only 31 state archives in Belarus, and in 16 regional (provincial and zonal) archives the number of employees is not more than 10 to 12 people, these amounts look impressive.

One can point out a number of main directions of publication activity of Belarusian archives in the recent years.

1. Publication of documents that reveal the most significant events of national and world history.

The public interest to certain historical events usually increases when approaching anniversaries. This aspect is always in the focus of attention of Belarusian archivists who seek to coincide the release of the collection of documents devoted to a specific historical event with its anniversary date. For example, the Belarusian archives have prepared and published the collections of documents for the 200th anniversary of the War of 1812 (*see Беларусь и война 1812 года: Документы, 2011*), the 100th anniversary of the First World War (*see Беларусь в годы Первой мировой войны, 2014*), the 75th anniversary of reunification of Western Belarus with the BSSR (*see Воссоединение: к 75-летию воссоединения Западной Беларуси с БССР, 2014*) and others.

2. Publication of documents that reveal the tragic moments of the Second World War, as well as dedicated to the victory over Nazism (*see Памятники Великой Отечественной войны в Беларуси, 2015, Хатынские Деревья жизни, 2015*).

This area of publication work is always in the centre of attention of Belarusian archivists. This is not only due to the significance of the Second World War in world history, but also owing to the enormous losses suffered by the people of Belarus during the war (almost every third person was killed in battle, went missing, was killed in the death camps, or as a result of counter-insurgency operations).

3. Publication of documents reflecting life story and activities of prominent public and political figures, scientists, writers and artists (*see Купала і Колас, вы нас гадавалі, 2010-2012, Пантелеймон Пономаренко: личный архив и книжное собрание, 2013*).

In recent years there has been a significant growth of public interest in Belarus in the fate of people who have placed themselves on record in the national and world history. This interest does not only relate to specific individuals but also to their family members and near of kin.

4. Publication of memoirs and documents of epistolary nature.

Old chronicles, memoirs and recollections of witnesses to certain events are important historical sources. Publication of documents of such nature is not predominant in the work of state archives and concerns mainly the recently discovered documents taken for storage in the archives. Publications of this kind are mainly typical of the specialized Belarusian State Archive-Museum of Literature and Art (*see Летаніс Дукорскай Петра-Паўлаўскай царквы, 2013*).

5. Publication of documents that reflect the history of a region.

This trend of publication of documents is mainly maintained by the regional archives, due to the specific nature of the documents stored in them. The topics of collections published by them are diverse, from economic and religious history of the region to the history of reserve management and studies (*see Рэлігійная жыццё на Міншчыне, 2015, Історія Березинского биосферного заповедника: путь длиною в 90 лет, 2015*).

6. Publication of the documents on the pre-Soviet period of Belarusian history can be distinguished as a separate group.

The earliest document stored in Belarus dates back to 1391. The specific feature of composition of the documents stored in the archives of Belarus is that the documents of the late 14th - early 20th

century are concentrated in two national archives, the National Historical Archive of Belarus in Minsk and the National Historical Archive of Belarus in the city of Grodno, whereby the documents of the 14th-17th centuries are almost fully located in the Minsk archive. Accordingly, the collections of documents prepared in these archives cover a wide range of issues relating to this period, from the testaments (wills) of Belarusian gentry to cartographic documents (*see Тастаменты шляхты і мяшчан Беларусі другой паловы XVI ст., 2012, Картографічныя матэрыялы в Нацыянальным історычным архіве Беларусі, 2015*).

Thus, the topics of collections of documents published in recent years are very much diverse.

Of course, the publishing activities of archives are not limited only to the preparation and publication of collections of documents and publications of documents in periodicals. It also includes preparation and publication of archive directories, and scientific and popular monographs.

4 Scientific support of publication activity

Preparation of archival documents for publication is a complex process. It includes several stages: defining the theme and concept of a collection, selection of the type and form of publication, selection for publication of the documents found on the theme, archeographic treatment of the document (preparation of editorial headlines and archeographic legend for them), preparation of finding aids for the collection (indices, bibliography, etc.).

Of course, such work requires broad-minded archivists with high professional qualification. In these conditions the development of the necessary scientific and methodological support is an important factor contributing to the increased effectiveness of publication activities in the state archives. Corresponding tasks have been assigned to the Belarusian Research Institute for Documentation and Archival Science (BelNIIDAD). Since 1994 BelNIIDAD structure includes a specialized department of archeography.

The BelNIIDAD activities dealing with issues related to scientific and methodological support of publication activity of state archives can be roughly divided into four main directions.

1. Development of theoretical and methodological foundations of archeography.

The attention here in the recent years has been focused on the development of guidance manuals on publication of archival documents.

It is known that the publication of documents of different historical periods has its own specific features. At the same time Belarus at various times was a part of different state formations: the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Russian Empire, Poland and the USSR. This, in turn, has led to a wide variety of composition of the documents stored in the archives, the presence of large complex documents in multiple languages (Old Belarusian, Latin, Old Polish and modern Belarusian, Russian, Polish, etc.). This feature has determined the need for the scientific development of teaching aids for the publication of documents not only of different historic periods but also in various languages.

In the new century BelNIIDAD has done considerable work in this direction. Guidelines for publication of Cyrillic documents of 13th-18th centuries (*Метадычныя рэкамендацыі на публікацыі рукапісных актавых кірылічных крыніц у Беларусі, 2003*), documents in Polish of 16th-19th centuries (*Метадычныя рэкамендацыі на публікацыі польскамоўных дакументаў на гісторыі Беларусі XVI - першай паловы XIX ст., 2012*), Latin documents of 13-14 centuries (*Метадычныя рэкамендацыі да публікацыі лацінскіх дакументаў XIII-XIV стст., 2005*), documents of the Soviet period (*Методические рекомендации по публикации документов и материалов по истории Беларуси 1917-1991 гг., 2014*) were prepared and published. In 2015 preparation of the guidelines for publication of Cyrillic documents of late 18th - early 20th centuries and the manual for publication of documents of archival investigation files of the Soviet period was completed, and in 2016 the development of a methodological guide for publication of the CPB/CPSU archives was started.

The guidelines prepared by BelNIIDAD cover all stages of preparation for publication of archival documents, including examples of design. These recommendations help to improve the quality of

publication work, to involve in the scientific circulation a large amount of historical sources, which had previously been poorly treated in terms of archeography.

2. Coordination of publication activity of state archives, providing them with practical assistance in preparing documents for publication.

Archaeographic Commission was established in 1999 at the Department on Archives and Records Management of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Belarus to ensure coordination of publication of state archives. Although departmental in nature, it was composed of representatives from state archives and archives of organizations, academic and sectoral research organizations, cultural and educational institutions, and non-governmental organizations. The branches of the Archaeographic Commission were established in some regions (*Рыбаков 2011, p. 25*).

BelNIIDAD provides for the organizational and logistical support of the Archaeographic Commission. Archaeographic Commission and its executive body, the Bureau, coordinate its activities with the BelNIIDAD management and the academic council.

Every five years the Archaeographic Commission develops a plan of publication of documents in the state archives, which shall be approved at a general meeting of Archaeographic Commission's members. The plan includes all collections of documents planned for publishing on the basis of proposals of the state archives and recommendations of the Department on Archives and Records Management. Plans are not a dogma, and their correction is made as necessary.

The second important task of Archaeographic Commission is providing practical assistance to state archives in the preparation of collections of documents. This is mainly done in the form of consultation by the members of the commission (regional archives are mostly in need of it) and review of collections of documents prepared by archives.

"Belarusky arheografichny shtogodnik" (Belarusian Archaeographic Yearbook), a serial scientific publication, established on the initiative of the Archaeographic Commission, renders practical assistance in the preparation of publications of archival documents (it is prepared and published by BelNIIDAD). The first issue of the yearbook was published in 2000, and in 2009 the ISSN International Center assigned it an international standard number of the serial edition. Besides scientific articles on theoretical and methodological problems of Belarusian archeography, each issue of the yearbook used to publish archival documents as illustrative examples of archival documents duly prepared for publication.

3. The information and reference support of publication work.

The practical result of research in this field is the preparation of archival directories, dictionaries of ancient act language, source studies aids, and bibliographies.

Quality preparation of an archival document to be published is in some cases impossible without a comprehensive study of topics traditionally related to the subject of special historical disciplines (diplomats, source studies, paleography, etc.). The knowledge of archival fonds history helps to prepare a quality comment to the collection of documents and to make the necessary finding aid.

BelNIIDAD has prepared and published a range of works as part of this direction of research. Among them one should note unique works intended to provide publication and introduction into scientific circulation of documents in Latin: the Latin-Belarusian Dictionary of act language of Grand Duchy of Lithuania (*Лацінска-беларускі слоўнік актавай мовы Вялікага Княства Літоўскага XIII-XVIII стст., 2011*) and the manual on paleography of Latin acts (*Лацінская актавая палеаграфія, 2015*).

4. Publication of collections of documents.

This area of activity was predominant for BelNIIDAD in the 1990's, when the Institute has prepared and published a number of collections of documents, mainly on the history of Belarus of 1920-1930 period (*Рыбаков 2011, p. 18*).

After the adoption in 2002 of the decision on concentration of direct work on preparation and publication of archival documents in state archives, this direction has been represented in BelNIIDAD

only fractionally. Publication of documents in textbooks and reference books issued by the Institute is, as a rule, illustrative or complements the source characteristics of the documents under study (*see Помнікі права Беларусі XIV-XVI стст.: агульназемскія прывілеі і акты дзяржаўных уній: крыніцазнаўчы дапаможнік, 2015*).

5 Problems

Despite the significant progress made in recent years a number of organizational, scientific and methodological problems in publication activities and its scientific support remain unresolved.

1. Active publication work has been done recently not only by state archives, but also by academic institutions, universities and other organizations. Publication of archival documents by these institutions is carried out not only in the form of collections, but also their thematic groups, as well as individual documents in scientific journals.

Such interest to archival documents, should, of course, be welcomed. However, in these circumstances there is a need to coordinate the actions of the state archives and other institutions in performing publication work, including the need for elaboration and observance of a unified methodological approach to the publication of documents.

While archivists have already accumulated enough experience in this regard and have at their disposal the required scientific and methodological support, the publishers of other institutions use diverse approaches to the preparation of documents for publication. For them, the primary value is the information of the document, so they see the main purpose of the publication in the transmission of the document text, its content. In doing so, they do not or only partially observe archival rules of document text transfer, making up its title, archeographic legend, and creation of finding aids where necessary. As a result, the quality of archival document publication suffers.

This approach to publication of documents is not acceptable for archivists. It is not only the document content which is important for archival publication, but also the document itself as the main subject of archival storage, the context of its creation and existence in the world, the relationship with other documents, etc.

In this situation it seems reasonable to develop unified rules of documents publication for all institutions; however, implementation of this idea today seems to be unlikely.

Creation of an interdepartmental (inter-sectoral) Archaeographic Commission could facilitate the coordination of publication activities of various agencies and the development of a unified methodology for publication of archival documents. The idea of creating such cross-sectoral body was first mentioned in the order of the Head of the Government of the Republic of Belarus as far back as 1994, according to which BelNIIDAD was to become the National Archaeographic Centre (*Архіўная справа на Беларусі ў дакументах і матэрыялах, 1996, N. 49*).

In recent years the management of the Department on Archives and Records Management and BelNIIDAD have come to the understanding that coordination of archaeological research and preparation of document collections at the nationwide level is clearly too much for the sectoral Research Institute from both organizational and financial points of view. Taking into account similar experience of Russia and the Ukraine, today it seems appropriate to transfer the functions of the national Archaeographic Commission to the institution having interdepartmental nature (for example, the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus), retaining the status of the Archaeographic Commission under the Department on Archives and Records Management as one of its subsidiaries. Time will tell whether it would be possible to implement this idea, because the issues of targeted financing of the Archaeographic Commission's activities and volunteer nature of the work of its members still remain unresolved.

2. In recent years electronic form of publication of archival documents both on CD and in the Internet is gaining popularity.

The advantages of electronic form of publication are obvious: low material costs, possibility of fast and easy duplication and dissemination of published information and, as a result, accessibility to

wide audience of potential users. Belarusian libraries have recently been actively completed with electronic publications on computer disks.

However, the use of electronic forms of publication poses a number of questions before archivists.

Firstly, the issue of long-term preservation of data stored on the disk needs to be solved. It is common knowledge that the disks used to record information have a limited life cycle, which requires provision of continuous control over preservation of information stored on them and its regular rerecording. This problem is worsened by the obsolescence of the software used to record information on the disk and able to read it, as well as the emergence of basically new media for recording information that could eventually lead to the same problems that archivists faced after the withdrawal of floppy disks from circulation.

Thus, archivists can not be sure with regard to the possibility of use of archival documents in electronic form in more or less long term, which largely reduces its operational advantages.

Secondly, the electronic form of publication highlights the problem of observance of copyright of the authors of virtual collections of documents and property rights of organizations that make electronic publication of such collections. Possibility of easy and fast copying of information in electronic form, overriding of copy protection installed on the disk creates a significant threat to observance of the above mentioned rights. So far we have to state that no ideal solution of this problem has been found.

Thirdly, the question arises about the development of special rules for electronic publication of documents. Should the electronic publication be carried out according to the same methodological principles as the publication of documents in the traditional (paper) form? Should we take into account any specific features of such publication? Whether the development of separate guidelines is required for the electronic publication of documents?

The Rules of work of state archives in respect to their publication activity do not contain any specific features and do not answer the questions posed (*Правила работы государственных архивов Республики Беларусь, 2006, chapter 50*). The study of this problem and the possible subsequent development of a separate methodology of electronic publication of documents seem to be among the important tasks of archival science in the near future.

3. Belarusian archivists used to face difficulties of professional nature arising in publication of the Cyrillic documents of the 14th-18th centuries stored in the archives.

The problem is rooted in the Soviet era, when the publications of archival documents of this period were made very rarely, which was largely due to political and ideological reasons (*Голубеў, 2016, pp. 25-26*). In doing this work Belarusian archivists used the approach to the classification and description of documents elaborated in the Russian diplomatics and archaeography. On the basis of this approach BelNIIDAD has prepared and published in 2003 the guidelines for publication of Cyrillic documents of the 14th-18th centuries (*Метадычныя рэкамендацыі па публікацыі рукапісных актавых кірылічных крыніц у Беларусі, 2003*).

However, the recommendations prepared by the Institute turned out to be out of demand in the practice of publication activity of both the archives and other relevant institutions. This is due to the fact that the documents of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth have significant specific features in comparison with the Russian documents of the similar period. This is most obvious in the diversity of document types (i.e., different names of the documents with the same meaning), which is also fixed in the archive inventories. Such discrepancy is transferred to the editorial headlines of documents when they are published. In these conditions the authors are forced to seek their own approach to the principles of text transmission, drawing editorial headlines to documents, designation of types and kinds of documents, transfer of names, etc. while publishing documents of the 14th-18th centuries.

Thus, archival science is still facing an acute problem of preparation of publication methodology for the Belarusian Cyrillic documents of the 14th-18th centuries. The complexity of solution of this

problem is insufficient development of the Belarusian-Lithuanian-Ukrainian diplomatics, while the achievements of Russian diplomatics are not always and not completely acceptable in this work.

4. The traditional problem for the archives is to find sources of financing in preparation and publication of collections of documents. Such sources of funding are the budget, sponsorship and own funds of the state archives.

Unfortunately, in recent years the budgetary funds have not been allocated sufficiently for publication of collections of documents. Suffice it to note that the funds stipulated in the Archives of Belarus State Program for 2011-2015 for the publication of documentary sources on topical issues of Belarusian history, have not been received by archives.

6 Conclusion

Publication activities of archives are aimed primarily at providing scientific research with primary (original, not interpretive) archival information. Publishing activities play an important role in the educative process of children and youth, their upbringing. Publication of archival documents makes it possible to present the information contained in a document to a wide range of users (stakeholders), most of whom will no longer need to turn to the original, which also contributes to their better preservation. Indirectly publishing activities also aim to promote the work of archives and documents stored in them, since this is a tangible and the most visible result of work of archivists.

Belarusian archivists have succeeded in the field of publication activity in recent years. They have at their disposal the necessary scientific and methodological support, coordination of publication activity of state archives has been maintained. At the same time a number of problems remain unresolved. In general, they can be divided into two main groups: organizational and financial on the one hand and scientific and methodological on the other. Problems of the first group are objective in nature to a large extent, and the ability to solve them depends on external factors. The solution of problems from the second group is in the scope of archives, and archival science represented by specialized institutes should, of course, have its say, offering appropriate scientific solutions and methodological guidelines.

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SUMMARY

The role and importance of archives in modern society is determined by the possibilities of effective use of the documents stored in them. Publication of documents is one of the important areas of their use. In recent years the Belarusian archives have published annually more collections of documents than in the entire latter half of the twentieth century. The topics of collections published by archives are diverse. These are the most significant events of the national and world history, the tragic moments of the Second World War, life story and activities of prominent public and political figures, scientists, writers and artists and the history of the regions. Preparation of archival documents for publication is a complex process. It includes several stages and requires broad-minded archivists with high professional qualification. In these conditions the development of the necessary scientific and methodological support of publication work acquires great importance. This task has been assigned to BelNIIDAD, which is to develop theoretical and methodological foundations of archaeography, coordinate publication activity of state archives, provide them with practical assistance in the preparation of documents for publication, and support publication work with information and reference materials. However, despite the significant progress made in recent years in publication activities and scientific support, a number of organizational, scientific and methodological problems remain unresolved: the lack of coordination among the state archives and other institutions in conducting publication work, the need for elaboration and observance of unified methodological approach to publication of documents; lack of methodology of electronic publication of documents; undeveloped Belarusian diplomatics; difficulties in financing publications of collections of documents.

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