***Vladimir Komarov, MA***

**Activities of societies of aid to Polish refugees for the preservation of their national identity during the First world war**

In the study we analyze the following aspects: programs and measures for the support of refugees in financial, clothing, cultural, and spiritual ways. Moreover, we analyze the effectiveness of support programs. We also compared them with the state-fund programs. We consider that the organizations for Polish refugees were interested not only in supporting their fellows living, but also in strengthening and developing their national feelings.

Despite certain difficulties these organizations managed to develop an effective system of support provision. Due to the more targeted nature of support programs – exclusively to Poles, they were more effective than state programs. Moreover, the Polish refugees found themselves in a more advantageous position than Russian or Ukrainian refugees, receiving support from both national organizations and state institutions.

Refugee support organizations had a significant impact on the unification of Polish refugees during their stay in the inner regions of Russia. Their activities made it possible to preserve national identity. Moreover, these organizations created basis for the future independent Polish state.

The topic of the work is connected with a number of relevant areas of humanitarian knowledge, such as new imperial history, war history, history of everyday life, institutional history, political history, economic history, nationalism studies.

The analysis was carried out on an extensive source base, namely the documents stored in the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GA RF).