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Manuscript of the Rostov Archbishop Alexy (1543-1548) and Features of the Diocesan Administration in the Russian Church of the Medieval Period

Abstract

The article assesses status of the commissioner of the manuscript from the Rogozhskoe collection (Research Division of Manuscripts of the Russian State Library), containing the Pandektai of Nikon of the Black Mountain. The colophon of this manuscript informs that the copyist finished his work on October 23, 1542 and at the time the commissioner of the codex, Alexy, was the Rostov archbishop. However, it's known that he was enthroned on February 25, 1543. The author expresses his opinion that he must have been elected and named for the Rostov throne soon after the death of his predecessor Dositheos (in August 1542). Alexy's

immediate enthronement his was hindered by the fact that members of the Sobor had departed to their own dioceses. They assembled in Moscow only in early 1543. Drawing on earlier materials, the author shows that in the Russian Church in the 11th -16th centuries there could pass several years between the election and enthronement of bishops. These intervals were especially long in Novgorod, located far from the center of the diocese (Kiev). However, the author believes that the church authorities attempted to elect new bishop as soon as possible after the death or resignation of the previous one, even if his enthronement was to happen later or not at all. The Russian church leaders strove to elect a new bishop as soon as possible to avoid discontent of the congregation, destabilization of the local church governance and economics of bishop's house. Governance of the diocese by an elected, but not yet enthroned bishop promoted stability. The author is of opinion that the number throne's "widowhoods" must be less and of shorter duration than is known in historical science.

Keywords

Historical source, manuscript, the Rogozhskoe collection from the Research Division of Manuscripts of the Russian State Library, Pandektai of Nikon of the Black Mountain, Russian history, church history, 16th century, diocese of Rostov

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