Scientific article

УДК 94(470.323)+930.25

DOI 10.28995/2073-0101-2021-1-130-140

Kristina A. Zarubina, Svetlana V. Sheveleva

South-West State University, Kursk, Russian Federation

Professional Crime in the Kursk Gubernia in the Second Half of the 19th – Early 20th Century:
Materials from the State Archive of the Kursk Region

Abstract

The study of regional aspects of crime in the pre-revolutionary period allows us to form a holistic view on the development of such socially dangerous criminal phenomenon as professional crime in Russia. Recent changes in Russian criminal law (2019–20), that are to protect the

society from professional crime, have made studying the issue more significant. There is a gap in scientific knowledge of regional aspects of professional crime of the past. The scholarship either addresses the issue on the large scale (that of Russia as a whole), or focuses on big cities (Moscow, St. Petersburg). The article presents an analysis of the formation and development of professional crime based on the materials from the State Archive of the Kursk Region (fond 32 of the Kursk district court), reflecting the development of ordinary crime in the Kursk gubernia in the second half of the 19th – early 20th century. The choice of territorial framework is due to the fact that the Kursk gubernia was a typical region of the European part of Russia in the specified time period. There is little research on the topic, and most archival materials have been studied and introduced into scientific use for the first time. A whole complex of criminal cases considered by the Kursk district court (criminal division) in the second half of the 19th – early 20th century has been identified and analyzed. Methodological basis of the research is analysis and generalization of special literature and scientific publications; study of archival materials using historical-comparative, historical-genetic, and historical- systematic methods. It has been concluded that professional crime in the Kursk gubernia in the second half of the 19th – early 20th century was focused on agriculture, since the region's economy had a pronounced agricultural specificity. The most popular criminal craft was horse theft; it was pursued in organized groups, where all roles were distributed among the gang robbers. Often they were assisted by horsedealers who were their only channel for selling stolen horses. There also were cases of counterfeiting, theft of hand luggage and clothing, and group theft in form of robbery (pickpocketing and brigandage were less common). Pickpockets had in their stock in trade for committing theft. They had special knowledge and practice-oriented skills for stealing money and other values from hand luggage or clothing of their victims and for avoiding criminal prosecution. The authors' conclusions broaden our knowledge on the issue and are of interest to historians, lawyers, and sociologists.

Keywords

Historical sources, crime, professional crime, criminal professionalism, horse stealing, pickpocketing, counterfeiting, robbery.

Download the article: [zarubina sheveleva doi](#)

References

KULACHKOV, V. V., MUZYCHUK, T. L. Kriminologicheskie aspekty pravovogo soznaniya krest'yanstva Zapadnogo regiona Rossii na rubezhe XIX-XX vekov [Criminological aspects of the legal consciousness of peasantry of the Western region of Russia at the turn of the 20th century. In Russ.]. IN: Vserossiiskii kriminologicheskii zhurnal, 2017, no. 3, pp. 615–622.

SKURATOV, Yu. I., GLAZKOVA, L. V., GRUDININ, N. S., NEZNAMOVA, A. A. Razvitie organizovannoi prestupnosti v Rossii: sistemnyi analiz [Development of organized crime in Russia: System analysis. In Russ.]. IN: Vserossiiskii kriminologicheskii zhurnal, 2016, no. 4, pp. 638–648.

KHARSEEVA, O. V. Prestupnost' krest'yan v guberniyakh Tsentral'-Chernozemnoi Rossii v kontse XIX – nachale XX v. [Crime of peasants in the gubernias of Central and Black Earth Russia at the turn of the 20th century. In Russ.]. IN: Uchenye zapiski. Elektronnyi nauchnyi zhurnal Kurskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta [Scientific bulletin: Digital scientific magazine of the Kursk State University], 2017, no. 1 (41), pp. 17–27.

KHARSEEVA, O. V. Prestupnost' nesovershennoletnikh v Rossiiskoi provintsii v seredine XIX – nachale XX vv. (na primere Kurskoi gubernii) [Juvenile delinquency in the Russian periphery in the middle of the 19th – early 20th century: A case-study of the Kursk gubernia. In Russ.]. IN: Uchenye zapiski. Elektronnyi nauchnyi zhurnal Kurskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta [Scientific bulletin: Digital scientific magazine of the Kursk State University], 2010, no. 3 (15), pp. 132–139.

SHEPELEVA, M. P. Ugolovnaya prestupnost' v rossiiskoi provintsii na primere Kurskoi gubernii (1861–1917 gg.) [Criminal crime in the Russian periphery: A case-study of the Kursk gubernia (1861–1917). In Russ.]. IN: Izvestiya AltGU [Bulletin of the Altai State University], 2010, no. 4–1, pp. 270–272.

SHEPELEVA, M. P. Kharakteristika ugovolnykh prestupnikov Kurskoi gubernii v kontse XIX – nachale XX v.: gendernye razlichiya i soslovnaya spetsifika [Characteristics of criminal offenders in Kursk gubernia at the turn of the 20th century: Gender differences and estate specificity. In Russ.]. IN: Uchenye zapiski. Elektronnyi nauchnyi zhurnal Kurskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta [Scientific bulletin: Digital scientific magazine of the Kursk State University], 2011, no. 3 (19), pp. 170–175.

YUNAKOVSKAYA, A. A. “Zapiski iz Mertvogo doma” i “Sibirskaya tetrad” F. M. Dostoevskogo kak osnova russkoi lingvokriminalistiki [“Notes from the Dead house” and “The Siberian notebook” by F. M. Dostoevsky as a hallmark Russian forensic linguistics. In Russ.]. IN: Vestnik OmGU [Bulletin of the Omsk State University], Omsk, 2012, no. 1 (63), pp. 279–285.

About the authors

Zarubina Kristina Aleksandrovna, South-West State University, faculty of law, postgraduate student, Kursk, Russian Federation, +7-4712-22-25-46, kris1996z@mail.ru

Sheveleva Svetlana Victorovna, PhD in Law, associate professor, South-West state University, faculty of law, dean, Kursk, Russian Federation, +7-4712-22-25-46, decan46@yandex.ru

Grant information

The article has been prepared within the frameworks of state assignment for 2020 no. 085102020-0033 “Transformation of private and public law in the evolution of the individual,

society, and state.”

Submitted 24.03.2020, published (for citation):

ZARUBINA, K. A., SHEVELEVA, S. V. Professional'naya prestupnost' v Kurskoi gubernii vo vtoroi polovine XIX – nachale XX v. Po materialam Gosudarstvennogo arkhiva Kurskoi oblasti [Professional Crime in the Kursk Gubernia in the Second Half of the 19th – Early 20th Century: Materials from the State Archive of the Kursk Region. In Russ.]. IN: Vestnik arhivista / Herald of an Archivist, 2021, no. 1, pp. 130-140. doi 10.28995/2073-0101-2021-1-130-140

You can read completely article in the russian historic-archival magazine “The Herald of an Archivist”. Read more about terms of subscription [here](#) .

Полностью материал публикуется в российском историко-архивоведческом журнале ВЕСТНИК АРХИВИСТА. Ознакомьтесь с условиями подписки [здесь](#) .