

Nuykina E.Y., Moscow, Russian Federation

Archival Investigatory Records of Charges against Clergy as an Informative Source on the History of the Russian Orthodox Church

Abstract

The article assesses the informative value of archival investigatory records on charges against clergy of Moscow and the Moscow region, a considerable complex of which is concentrated in the State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF) in the fond 10035 "Directorate of the KGB of the USSR for Moscow and the Moscow region". The researchers first got access to these documents after the Russian Federation Presidential Decree of 1991 under which the Directorate of the Russian Federal Security Service for Moscow and the Moscow region transferred the archival investigatory records to the GARF. The article points out that archival investigatory records vary significantly in composition of documents, which may contain not only documents of investigative procedure, but also documents of personal provenance. The problem of using archival investigatory records in historical research was much publicized and debated in scientific magazines and at scientific conferences. The scholarly discussion about the use of archival investigatory records touched upon a number of significant issues concerning source study of their content for the purpose of identification of reliable information about facts and events of the past. The article stresses the value of archival investigatory records for historical research as, on the one hand, they report historically significant data on the events of intra-church life of the Soviet era, and, on the other hand, information about the fates of repressed clergy. A case-study of archival investigatory records of archimandrite Illarion (Troitsky), vice rector and professor of the Moscow Spiritual Academy, famous theologian and preacher, assistant of patriarch Tikhon (Belavin), first arrested in 1919, confirms the conclusion

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about high informative value of this type of sources. Though the investigatory records on charges against clergy are widely used by modern historians, various issues of source study of these sources demand further research.



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About the authors

Nuykina Elena Yurevna, post-graduate student at the History and Archives Institute of the Russian State University for the Humanities, deputy chief editor of the magazine "Herald of an Archivist, Moscow, 8-910-434-08-38, elenaveststar@mail.ru

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