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In Search of Sources for Studying Russian Social History of 1990s: Materials from the Archive of the Kuban State University

Abstract

Although the last decade of the 20th century is the most important stage in the development of modern Russia, the historiography on social history of the period is insufficient as archival sources on the social history of 1990s are difficult to identify. While studying life trajectories of young people who were entering adulthood at the end of the Soviet era and had to work out new strategies for self-realization during global social transformations, the author has found it difficult to search for adequate sources. These have been eventually found in the archive of the Kuban State University. The article assesses informative potential of educational records of

students. They are useful for studying several important issues of social history of 1990s: social mobility of the population, educational and professional strategies of the youth, gender history. New Russian realities had an impact on the fates of 1992 and 1993 graduates of the full-time department of the historical faculty of the Kuban State University — they are to become a target group of sociological study planned by the author. With a series of interviews in view, the author has analyzed documents in graduates' educational records, which are preserved in the archive of the Kuban State University: applications for entrance examinations admission, characteristics from schools, certificates of employment, recommendations, referrals, examination answer sheets, grade records, student ID cards, health certificates. This information provides a collective portrait of graduates, who received a diploma of 'historian' in the period of change. The analysis of documents from graduates' educational records helped to select future respondents and develop an interview form. The author believes that searching in departmental archives can bring to light many aspects of social history of 1980s-1990s as a 'turning point' in the Russian history, which greatly impacted the contemporaries' fates.

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Keywords

Source, Social history of Russia, 1990s, life strategies, studentship, historical faculty, archive of the Kuban State University, educational records.

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