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Irkutsk Chronicles of the 17th–19th Centuries as a Historical Source

Abstract

The chronicles are undoubtedly the most important source for studying Ancient Rus as a whole, as well as its regions, both in the initial period of the formation of statehood and that of centralized state with its established institutions. The empirical base of the research is sources, which may be divided into several groups: chronicles, normative legal acts, scholarship that

allows us to record changes in historical process. The methodological basis of the research is general dialectical method, which makes it possible to track effective methods and forms of chronicle development, and method of hermeneutics (scholarship on understanding and interpretation of texts and phenomena, the original meaning of which has become unclear due to antiquity or ambiguity of interpretation). The chronicles were written even in the 19th century, and thus it is of interest to conduct a comparative analysis of the early chronicles and those of the later periods in order to trace their transformations and changing methods over a considerable period of time; to assess how the narrative changed; to identify, if possible, who stood behind the chronicles both of early and later period; to study how the political situation changed; to assess how independent and objective the chroniclers were. The article is to pay tribute to the people who gave us this legacy of historical memory and knowledge of our ancestors and laid the foundation for continuity of national history in all its diversity. No other source provides such diverse, valuable, and often surprising information that allows researchers in various fields of knowledge to write histories of their disciplines. In the aggregate it can provide an image of the nation and follow the historical process in all its diversity, while identifying features of different periods. Therefore, addressing the history of chronicling is to remain an important component in studying Russian history for quite a long time.

Keywords

Chronicles, historical source, chroniclers, origin of chronicles, V. Sibiryakov, P. Pezhemsky, V. Krotov, N. Romanov.

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