

# Professional biographies of the current bishops of Russian Orthodox Church (1965–2017): Dynamic of factors for career development

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Russian Orthodox Church has closed structure and personal qualities of elite's members like social background and ideological preferences play significant role in policy formation of this social institute. However the process of moving up in ecclesial hierarchy remains very obscure for outsiders and it seems quite intriguing to investigate details of this process. This puzzle became more exciting giving that modern orthodox elites consist of different fractions with contradicting views on different issues (Mitrochin 2004). However there are a few biographical researches of religious elites (Edwards 1959; Ravitch 1965; Morgan 1969) and they are concerned to XX century and they neglect to consider Eastern churches.

In my report I tend to fill this gap and investigate origins of contemporary Russian Orthodox bishops. The sample is formed by the current orthodox elite, the persons occupying highest degree of holy order, which lives in Russian Federation and actively serving their duty. Data is taken from official sites of Moscow Patriarchate. My aim is to find out the most influential selective pressures governing the elite formation of the institution such as:

1. Social background (religiosity of parents, military service, secular and religious education);
2. Hierarchical social networks (patrons during their deaconate and presbyterate, bishops provided ordination or tonsured to monk etc.);
3. Activities on deacon and priest positions in the various domains of Moscow patriarchate.

Nowadays, the database of all archbishops is already created ( $N=89$ ) and some preliminary features explaining their successful career could be presented. It seems that the most influential factors are:

1. The theological seminary: Moscow TS (39 + 11 in absentia), Saint-Petersburg TS (14), Odessa (5), Ryazan and Stavropol TS (3)
2. Synodal Department/ other activity: education (30), monastery (22), Department for External Church Relations (22), parochial activity (16), diocesan secretariat (10)
3. Personal links: four bishops who made the highest number of tonsures and deacon ordinations of future archbishops – Aleksander and Eugenij (9), Nikodim and Isidor (8).

## References

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