



Metropolitan Yuvenali | 31.05.2005

Statement by Metropolitan Yuvenali (Russian Orthodox Church) on the Alleged "Ritual" Nature of the Murder of the Royal Family

In its historical analysis of the Ekaterinburg tragedy, the Commission could not avoid dealing with the question of the so-called ritual murder of the royal family, which continues to be the subject of press articles. On 9 November 1995 I received a reply to my communications, dated 28 December 1993 and 21 August 1995, addressed to the Rectors of the Moscow Spiritual Academy and Seminary, in which I asked them to help the Commission by offering the expertise of the teaching staff of the theological institutions committed to their charge in preparing an historical and theological study, "The Orthodox view on whether the term "ritual murder" can be applied to the tragic death of the royal family."

The document drawn up by the Moscow Spiritual Academy observed the following: "Without the means for an independent examination of all the circumstances surrounding the murder of the royal family, based on a presumption of innocence, after studying the murders which took place in the Ipatiev house, the version that these were of a ritual nature should not be considered proven on the following grounds:

1. during the most widely publicised and minutely investigated case concerning ritual murder "the Belyis Case" the prosecution was unable to prove that such murders had ever existed within the Jewish community;
2. a typical ritual murder, as presented by those who claim such murders exist, has little in common with the murders in the Ipatiev house;
3. nothing is known about the religious faith of those with Jewish antecedents who took part in the murder of the royal family?"

Thus, the contemporary expert theological analysis of so-called "ritual murder" confirms the negative specialist opinion of the group of Orthodox theologians (Professor I.G. Troitsky of the St Petersburg Spiritual Academy and Professor A.A. Glagolev of the Kiev Spiritual Academy) who in 1913 were witnesses at the Belyis trial. The analysis of the circumstances surrounding the murder of the royal family likewise does not permit a conclusion that it was ritual in nature.

Editorial remarks

From the Address of Metropolitan Yuvenali of Krutitsky and Kolomna, "The Work of the Holy Synod's Canonisation Commission on the Question of the Royal Family's Martyrdom," *Journal No 63, 10 October 1996 Session of the Russian Orthodox Church's Holy Synod.*