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Religious Freedom in Modern Russia. Edited by Randall A. Poole and Paul W. Werth. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2018. Pp. 314. $50.00 (cloth). ISBN: 9780822945499.

Edited by Randall Poole and Paul Werth, the splendid *Religious Freedom in Modern Russia* offers eight essays (including two previously published) that explore historical, social, and philosophical and theological dimensions of religious freedom in Russia. Together, the contributions treat the "early modern period," that is, Russia's late imperial era, although G. M. Hamburg's essay provides a magisterial historical overview of religious toleration (and intolerance) in Russian thought from 1520 to 1825, and Eugene Clay's essay examines the nature of religious entrepreneurship since 1997, when the Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations was passed.

In examining ideas and policies related to religious freedom, the accomplished historians who contribute to this volume offer new perspectives on the multifaceted character of Russian religious life. The essays focus on Russian Orthodoxy, evangelical Christianity, and Islam; within Orthodoxy, they devote particular attention both to the liberal religious philosophers of the Silver Age, and to conservative defenders of Orthodoxy's privileged position in Russian national life.

In an expansive introduction, Poole asserts that the volume's unifying theme is "the multiple contested meanings of Russian religious freedom, including freedom of conscience" (10). However, only Patrick Lally Michelson explicitly develops this thesis. Taken as a whole, the essays identify three enduring tensions within Russian (and Orthodox) thought: individual rights versus corporate identity; the Russian Orthodox Church's relation to the Russian state; and, within Orthodoxy, competing definitions of religious freedom. Moreover, several essays—Poole's, in particular—move in a programmatic direction, arguing for politically guaranteed rights to freedom of religion and conscience in Russia today.

First, the freedom of a religious group to represent its beliefs and way of life is often in tension with the freedom of an individual to choose (or reject) religious faith. Victoria Frede notes that political radicals of the late nineteenth century tried to rally Old Believers and sectarians to their cause by promising them religious freedom. However, the radicals soon discovered that these groups were not committed to a general principle of freedom of conscience; on the contrary, they believed that they alone had truth, and they opposed the freedom of other groups to disseminate "falsehood."

The relation of individual and communal rights took a different form among Russia's Muslims. Norihiro Naganawa argues that after the 1905 revolution—and the October Manifesto that established freedom of conscience, press, and assembly—Muslims debated not how to guarantee individual rights but rather how best to preserve their collective rights. Nevertheless, this debate rested on the right of individuals to express their opinions on the question, which in turn resulted in an expansion of the Muslim press and the emergence of what Naganawa calls a "Muslim civil society" (181).

Yet another twist on the relation of personal conscience and group interests appears in Western attitudes toward Russia in the late nineteenth century. In a brilliant essay on the "stundists," Heather Coleman shows how Western evangelicals and liberals made common cause in pressuring the Russian government to guarantee religious freedom to Russians who had converted to evangelical Protestant forms of faith. However, the "persecuted stundists" were also an occasion for

Westerners to promote their own political agenda. Evangelicals used the issue to advance themselves as an international movement, while Western liberals rallied support within Europe to their commitment to democratic governance.

A second tension in Russian thinking about religious freedom lies in the relation of the Orthodox Church to the Russian state. Daniel Scarborough notes that by the late nineteenth century numerous Orthodox brotherhoods and voluntary associations were emerging. Those that organized educational and social initiatives tended to be religiously tolerant. They desired peaceful relations with dissident religious groups and other civil actors. Other groups within the church, however, believed that only Orthodoxy could ensure national unity.

What resulted was a fundamental disagreement about state involvement in religious affairs. The first group saw state support as weakening the church's ability to bring its values into Russian society, whereas the second wanted the state to ensure Orthodoxy's privileged status. The first group did not fear religious competition (or cooperation) and, indeed, regarded an open religious marketplace as necessary if the church were freely to pursue its social interests; the advocates of "inner mission" called on the state to unify Orthodox religious life and restrict other religious groups.

The third point of tension relates to different Orthodox understandings of freedom. Michelson notes that by the late nineteenth century, mainstream Russian Orthodox theologians, such as Archimandrite Ioann Sokolov, had adopted but reframed the language of "freedom of conscience." Sokolov agreed with secular defenders of freedom of conscience that belief, if it is to be genuine, must not be coerced. An individual has to freely assent to God. However, for Sokolov, true freedom lies not in believing whatever one wishes but rather in living in accordance with divine truth. Since God has entrusted this truth to the church, Sokolov called not for establishing an individual right to freedom of conscience but rather for reforming church-state relations, so that the church can freely pursue its mission to set Russians free from sin and licentiousness.

Poole explores a different strand of Russian Orthodoxy. Drawing on Sergei Bulgakov and other theological "liberals" of the Russian Silver Age, Poole argues that religious experience grounds a right to freedom of conscience. Poole examines, in particular, the revival of popular Orthodox spirituality in nineteenth-century Russia. As believers venerated miracle-working icons, made pilgrimage to holy springs, and sought out holy elders, they personally and individually determined their relationship to the divine. Bulgakov gave theological and philosophical articulation to this phenomenon and drew political consequences. Emphasizing the spiritual dignity of the individual, he "called on the Church to fight for freedom of conscience—which . . . necessarily meant fighting for political freedom from the autocracy" (39).

Clay's essay rounds out the discussion of what constitutes religious freedom by noting the vitality of religious entrepreneurship in contemporary Russia. Even when legal rights to freedom of religious expression are abridged, minority religious groups creatively carve out protected spaces for themselves. Clay's concluding words make explicit an argument of the volume as a whole: "excessive regulation stifles religious innovation; religious institutions prosper when they have free access to the religious marketplace" (212–13).

Here, however, two theological issues arise that the essays do not fully address. First, the Orthodox Church understands itself to be the "one holy catholic and apostolic church" (Nicene Creed). At stake for it in debates about freedom of conscience is not only its claim to mediate (perhaps exclusively) divine truth but also its responsibility to preserve the unity of Christianity. At least since the time of the Slavophiles (in particular, Khomiakov), Russian Orthodoxy has associated "freedom of conscience" with Protestant individualism, that is, the position that the individual believer can know divine truth without the mediation of the church or its authoritative traditions. For Orthodoxy, this Protestant principle has resulted in unending church division.

While Poole brilliantly argues for the centrality of personal religious experience in Orthodoxy, he does little to acknowledge the legitimate concern of organized church bodies to guard against individual expressions of faith that undermine the community's inherited and shared faith (which, to be sure, is always subject to debate and revision). Nor does he note that Pavel Florenksii, Bulgakov's close intellectual friend, drew quite different (conservative, monarchical) political conclusions from Orthodoxy's emphasis on religious experience.

Church authority can indeed become oppressive and deaden religious vitality. In response, however, it is important to note that not all expressions of personal religious experience can count as "Christian." Whatever the advantages of the free religious marketplace of the West, it may stoke postmodern doubts that truth exists at all. Organized religious bodies, especially those that see church unity as central to the gospel, will necessarily differentiate between faith and superstition, and between truth and heresy.

The second issue that complicates understanding Russian Orthodox attitudes toward "freedom of conscience" relates to Orthodoxy's inherent impulse (in the words of the well-known American theologian, Father Alexander Schmemann) "to permeate and to transform" the culture in which it finds itself. Orthodoxy lays "claim to the *whole* of life" (Schmemann, "Problems of Orthodoxy in America: The Canonical Problem," *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly* 8, no. 2 (1964): 67–85, at 77–78). That the national cultures of "the old world" could claim Orthodoxy as essential to their identity was, for Schmemann, a laudable, not a regrettable, achievement. Today, leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church emphasize the church's special responsibility to preserve Russia's historic Orthodox identity, just as other ethnic groups within the Russian Federation will rightly maintain their distinctive religious identities.

To be sure, this Orthodox posture can become chauvinistic. At its best, however, the Russian Church calls on the "Orthodox nation" to place itself beneath transcendent ideals of truth, beauty, and justice. By contrast, the American penchant to sharply separate church and state has meant that liberal Protestants have had little to say theologically about nationhood or about a positive role of religion in shaping national identity.

None of these essays explicitly addresses the question of what kinds of laws the Russian Federation should have. Nevertheless, this volume will be of great value not only to historians and political scientists but also to legal scholars who want better to understand what makes Russia a distinctive and perhaps perplexing case study of the possibilities and problems of religious freedom.

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