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Heather L. Bailey, *The Public Image of Eastern Orthodoxy: France and Russia, 1848-1870*. Ithaca: Northern Illinois University Press, 2020. xii + 294 pp. Notes, bibliography, and index. \$55.00 U.S. (hb). ISBN 9781501749513.

Review by George L. Freeze, Brandeis University.

This well-researched monograph explores an important phase in Franco-Russian cultural relations—the peak of a confessional battle between the Catholic and Orthodox churches in the mid-nineteenth century. The volume begins with an expert analysis of Russophobia in France from the first half of the nineteenth century, with a focus on the period from 1830 to the mid-1850s (chapter one). Russianists are well aware of the vitriol that shaped negative perceptions of Russia, not only in France, but elsewhere in the West. The author next (chapter two) reviews the activities of an Orthodox priest in Paris who sought to rebut the critiques, much of it directed at the presumed nexus between Church and state in Russia. Chapter three focuses on the consecration of the Alexander Nevsky cathedral, an impressive piece of architecture intended to awe and impress Western observers. The following chapter turns to the campaign to defend Orthodoxy (chapter four), the next offers a close analysis of the French discourse about the I.S. Belliustin affair and Russian Orthodoxy (chapter five). The monograph ends (chapter six) with an overview of a Russian-sponsored French periodical tasked with providing a defense of Orthodoxy.

This monograph, which at first glance might appear rather arcane, in fact addresses a number of broader issues. Of particular importance is the analysis of French Russophobia, which became particularly intense during the Nikolaevan era and proved a significant factor in provoking the Crimean War. The author also provides a systematic, well-informed account of the substantial literature produced in the West (chiefly, but not only France) that conflated despotism and Orthodoxy and that served to fuel the growing Russophobia. Implicitly, the Russian response after the Crimean War—a concerted attempt to rebut misconceptions like “caesarpapism”—reflected Russia’s own awareness of the importance of public opinion in a new age of diplomacy.

The author has meticulously sifted through a large corpus of primary sources, not only printed but also materials in several French archives. Of great value too is the systematic inclusion of scholarly literature, including Mariia Oderova’s candidate dissertation about the Orthodox church at the Russian embassy in Paris.[1]

The result is a definitive study of the public discourse about Imperial Russia and Russian Orthodoxy, based chiefly on a rich complex of periodicals, pamphlets, and books. It provides an

empirical perspective on the rise of French Russophobia, complementing some of the earlier research.^[2] It would have been helpful to draw upon some of the newer Russian scholarship, especially on the Eastern question, which had such a major impact on Franco-Russian discourse.^[3] It is rather surprising that the monograph does not refer to the valuable study and documentary publication by Mikhail Dolbilov and Darius Staliunas about internal Russian proposals for a “reverse union”—the creation of Russian Catholic Church.^[4]

While the author has indeed written a definitive account of discourse in France, the next stage is to explore more fully the *Russian* side— why and how various high-ranking figures realized the need to cast a more positive image of Russian Orthodoxy. For that it is essential to make a systematic inquiry into relevant Russian archives (none of which are cited in this monograph).^[5] That would include relevant files from the foreign ministry archive,^[6] personal archives in various repositories,^[7] and of course the central archives of the Russian Orthodox Church.^[8] Some insight into these materials can be gleaned from recent scholarship (primarily, the documents from the foreign ministry summarized in the Oderova dissertation), but the other repositories remain largely untapped for materials on the questions explored here.

Finally, it is important to put this rich empirical research in a broader context: the transition from the era of romanticism and restoration to globalization, the latter gaining momentum from mid-century and impacting not only trade and economic relations, but culture as well. This monograph nicely corresponds to these broader dynamics and would gain in significance if framed accordingly. It is important to appreciate that, even before the post-Crimean War engagement, the Russian Church had continuously looked westward for ideas and models. But that was even more so during the Great Reforms of the late 1850s and 1860s.^[9] And it was not only a mission to enlighten the French: Russian Orthodox publications were directed at other European audiences as well.^[10]

These are merely suggestions for further research. As it stands, this monograph is a first-rate analysis of the Catholic-Orthodox public encounter in the mid-nineteenth century.

NOTES

[1] Mariia V. Oderova, “Pravoslavnaia tserkov’ pri russkom posol’stve v Parizhe (1816-1917 gg.) [The Orthodox Church at the Russian Embassy in Paris, 1816-1917],” candidate dissertation (Moscow: Moskovskii gosudarstvennyi universitet, 2009).

[2] Strangely, there is no reference to Guy Mettan, *Creating Russophobia: From the Great Religious Schism to Anti-Putin Hysteria* (Atlanta GA: Clarity Press, 2017), especially pp. 137-175 (on French Russophobia).

[3] Mikhail Iakushev, “Khristsianskie sub”ekty osmanskoi imperii antiokhiiskii i ierusalimskie patriarkhaty—v politike Rossiiskoi Imperii (30-e gg. XIX--nchalo XX v.) [Christian subjects of the Ottoman Empire—the Antioch and Jerusalem patriarchates—in the policy of the Russian Empire, 1830s-early XX century], candidate dissertation (Moscow: Institut stran Azii i Afriki, 2009); Irina Smirnova, “Konfessional’nyi faktor Rossiiskoi politiki v blizhnevostochnom i severotikhookeanskom regionakh v seredine XX veka (1840-1860-e gody) [The Confessional Factor of Russian Policy in the Near East and Pacific Regions in the mid-20th Century (1840s-1860s)],” doctoral dissertation (Moscow: Institut istorii RAN, 2017).

[4] Mikhail Dolbilov and Darius Staliunas, *Obratnaia unii. Iz istorii otnoshenii mezhdu katolicheskom i pravoslaviem v Rossiiskoi imperii, 1840-1873* [Reverse Union: from the History of the relations between Catholicism and Orthodoxy in the Russian Empire, 1840-1873] (Vilnius: LII Leidykla, 2010).

[5] The author did draw extensively on Russian archives in her dissertation, subsequently published as: *Orthodoxy, Modernity, and Authenticity: The Reception of Ernest Renan's Life of Jesus in Russia* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publisher, 2008).

[6] Arkhiv vneshnei politiki Rossiiskoi Imperii, f. 187 (Russkoe posol'stvo v Parizhe [Russian embassy in Paris]).

[7] Nauchno-issledovatel'skii otdel rukopisei Rossiiskoi gosudarstvennoi biblioteki [Scientific-research Department of Manuscripts of the Russian State Library], f. 188 (A. N. Murav'ev), f. 302 (A. P. Tolstoi), and f. 316 (Filaret [Drozdov]).

[8] Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi istoricheskii arkhiv [Russian State Historical Archive], f. 796 (Kantsliariia Sv. Sinoda [Chancellery of the Holy Synod], f. 797 (Kantseliariia Ober-prokurora [Chancellery of the Chief Procurator]), and f. 807 (S.-Peterburgskii komitet dukhovnoi tsenzury [St. Petersburg Committee of Ecclesiastical Censorship]).

[9] See, for example: Gregory Freeze, "Globalization and Orthodoxy in Imperial Russia," *Vestnik S.-Peterburgskogo Universiteta*, Serii 2: Istorii, no. 1 (2017): 4-17.

[10] Significantly, in 1866 the Church arranged the publication of a 3-volume collection of sermons by the leading prelate of the Russian Orthodox Church--Metropolitan Filaret (Drozdov) of Moscow: *Choix de sermons et discours de s. Em. Mgr. Philarète*, 3 vols. (Paris: Lobkoff, 1866).

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