Page Herrlinger. *Holy Sobriety in Modern Russia: A Faith Healer and His Followers.*

Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies. Ithaca: Northern Illinois Press, an Imprint of Cornell University Press, 2023. vii, 340 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. $54.95, hard bound.

Daniel Scarborough

Nazarbayev University
Email: daniel.scarborough@nu.edu.kz

doi: 10.1017/slr.2024.456

Holy Sobriety in Modern Russia traces the history of a religious movement that developed around the personality of Ivan Churikov, a charismatic faith healer, who attracted a large following in late imperial St. Petersburg. In 1894, Churikov moved to the capital from Samara province at the age of 33. There, he became "Brother Ioann" to the mostly working-class people who turned to him for help escaping alcoholism. Churikov's followers coalesced around his Bible discussions, and were initiated into his movement by taking oaths of sobriety. In this work, Page Herrlinger examines the development of the sobriety movement through multiple waves of persecution, first by the Orthodox ecclesiastical administration, and then under Soviet rule. While specific in focus, the book provides insight into a variety of broader issues across more than a century of Russian and Soviet history. These include developments in modern Orthodoxy, religious freedom in Russia, and the unique Soviet version of "secularization."

Herrlinger examines the sobriety movement's reinterpretation of Church traditions. After acquiring a large following in St. Petersburg, Churikov established an agricultural community at Vyritsa, south of the capital. There, he rejected the Slavophile concept of a Christian commune, or *obshchina*, in favor of individual responsibility for one's spiritual life. He also stressed the reading of Scripture as vital for individual salvation, while the Orthodox laity had traditionally viewed the Bible as a sacred object to be venerated, but interpreted only by clergy. Despite his repeated declarations of loyalty to the Church, clerical administrators accused Churikov of heresy for his autonomous interpretation of the Bible. He was repeatedly forbidden to preach, temporarily incarcerated in an insane asylum, and finally excommunicated. Herrlinger argues that the reaction of ecclesiastical leaders to the sobriety movement demonstrated their inability to respond to the changing needs of the Orthodox population, preferring to rely upon the state to enforce their religious authority.

The revolutions of 1917 initially liberated the sobriety movement from persecution. As Herrlinger points out, however, adherents to sobriety, or *trezvinniki*, soon faced attacks from the Soviet government that were similar in character to those they had endured from Church leaders. As Churikov had preached complete abnegation of political involvement under the tsarist regime, so did he abstain from any expression of disobedience to the Soviet government. The *trezvenniki* at Vyritsa provided recruits for the Red Army and organized their community as an ideal Soviet commune, with the sole caveat of retaining belief in God. This would ultimately prove unacceptable to the regime, as the refusal to embrace official atheism was deemed incompatible with "becoming Soviet" (185). Herrlinger identifies parallels between the anti-*trezvennik* propaganda of the Orthodox "missionaries" before the revolution, and that of the "godless" that was launched against the movement in the mid-1920s.

Both accused Churikov of leading his followers astray of the official ideology at the behest of foreign interests. Both identified Churrikov's fervent declarations of loyalty as some form of heresy. The mass arrests of *trezvenniki*, including Churikov himself, began in 1929. The commune at Vyritsa was dissolved, and Churikov died in prison in 1933.

Herrlinger observes that the sobriety movement not only survived the terror, but grew and adapted to the socialist world. State control over religious institutions, such as the Orthodox hierarchy, somewhat paradoxically allowed alternative religious movements to expand. *Trezvenniki* expressed the belief that the revolution had made Churikov's vision manifest, and that the sobriety movement was necessary for the success of Soviet life. Soviet ideology was, in turn, influenced by the persistence of religious belief, and forced to recognize that movements like that of the *trezvenniki* were serving real social needs that official Marxism had failed to address. Although martyrdom under Stalinism became an integral component of their identity, the *trezvenniki* also saw themselves as full members of Soviet society.

Although clearly sympathetic to the *trezvenniki*, Herrlinger acknowledges some of the more disturbing features of their movement, such as the rejection of modern medical care in favor of faith healing. She also discusses the belief among some *trezvenniki* that Churikov was the reincarnation of Christ, which has precluded their rapprochement with the Church. Yet, she also describes the post-Soviet reconciliation with Orthodoxy among more moderate *trezvenniki*, including one priest who came to his ordination through the sobriety movement. Herrlinger's engaging work is grounded in extensive research into a wide variety of primary sources. It presents an important contribution to scholarship on religion in the tsarist empire, the Soviet Union, and post-Soviet Russia.

Ed. Paul Valliere and Randall A. Poole. *Law and Christian Tradition in Modern Russia*.

Law and Religion. London: Routledge, 2022. xiv, 339 pp. Notes. Index. $136.00, hard bound.

Stephen K. Batalden

Arizona State University, Emeritus
Email: stephen.batalden@asu.edu

doi: 10.1017/slr.2024.454

Launched as part of a larger project on Christian jurists sponsored by the Center for the Study of Law and Religion at Emory University, this collection of essays originated in a conference of distinguished Russian and American scholars of history, law, and religious studies held at Emory in 2019. The essays explore Russian legal culture by addressing the specific contributions of more than a dozen Orthodox jurists in modern Russia. Separate essays treat individual jurists, ranging chronologically from Vasilii Malinovskii (1765–1814) to Ivan Il'in (1883–1954). One essay, from Vera Shevzov, reaches beyond individual biography to document very effectively the development of church and canon law instruction in Russia's theological academies and, particularly, its secular universities.

The volume opens with two broadly synthesizing essays by editors Randall Poole and Paul Valliere. Poole's essay addresses Russian legal consciousness which, in the best tradition of the late Harold Berman, is seen as a movement emerging out of opposition to legal positivism. For Poole, the Russian thinkers profiled in the collection were Christian theists who grounded their views of law upon a moral universe that embraced concepts of human dignity and human rights. Thus, for Poole, there is a line of connection linking the natural