

Halle Studies in the Anthropology of Eurasia

"... anthropology needs a broader vision. It needs to shake off its strong association with the primitive and the exotic and become genuinely global in its comparisons. From this perspective, more sustained attention to Eurasia and a renewed focus on its underlying unity might launch the transformation of our parochial scholarly traditions into a mature cosmopolitan science."

– Chris Hann, in his Preface to this series

Intimate Divisions Street-Level Orthodoxy in Post-Soviet Russia

The resurgence of the Russian Orthodox Church after the fall of the Soviet Union has rendered it a popular source of identification, even though few Russians bother to observe the faith strictly. What makes the tie between the Church and society so strong? This book, based on ethnographic fieldwork in urban parishes in the Saint Petersburg Region, argues that, at the level of the street, post-Soviet inequalities have contributed to the entanglements between Russian society and the Orthodox Church by shaping the structure and meaning of everyday religious interaction. By rebuilding churches, participating in the parish economy and Orthodox schooling, pondering over almsgiving, and providing charitable support to common needy, agents of many kinds experience, reproduce, and critique Russia's social order.

"Tocheva includes in her ethnographic vision a wide range of people and practices often missing from other studies, from church shopkeepers to beggars, from Sunday school teachers to doorkeepers. In proposing 'street-level Orthodoxy' as an analytical concept to unify the many disparate and often divergent practices that make up everyday parish life, *Intimate Divisions* sheds new light on centuries-old questions about the changing place of Orthodoxy in Russian society."

Douglas Rogers, Yale University

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