

Given its underlying current of contested “modernity,” *Saints or Devils Incarnate?* serves as a fitting inaugural volume in the new series edited by Robert Maryks: *Jesuit Studies: Modernity through the Prism of Jesuit History* (titles available at brill.com/js). Proposing such a series 30 years ago—when O’M. first published “To Travel to Any Part of the World: Jerónimo Nadal and the Jesuit Vocation” (1984; reprinted here)—studying modernity via Jesuit history would have seemed an oxymoron at worst, a paradox at best. That today’s association of Jesuits with “modernity” is not only possible but commonplace rests on a remarkable revolution in thought over the past decades. This retrospective survey remembers the revolution.

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Turning to Tradition: Converts and the Making of an American Orthodox Church. By D. Oliver Herbel. New York: Oxford University, 2014. Pp. ix + 244. \$27.95.

The last few decades have witnessed a considerable number of Protestant and Catholic Christians in the United States embracing the Eastern Orthodox faith, a phenomenon that shows no signs of abating in the first years of the 21st century even as a higher proportion of Americans claim no religious affiliation than at any other time in history. Since the year 2000, a number of academic and popular publications—such as Alexander Bogolepov’s *Toward an American Orthodox Church* (2001) or Anthony Vrame’s *The Orthodox Parish in America* (2004)—have set out to explore the unique situation and the challenges of Eastern Orthodoxy in America. This ecclesial reality is well known for its uncompromising fidelity to an ancient theological heritage but also, more prosaically, for the ongoing struggles between the Orthodox Church in America on one hand, and a variety of ethnic ecclesial jurisdictions on the other.

Herbel’s study of a number of American converts to the Orthodox faith is a timely contribution to this ongoing conversation about the emergence and the specific characteristics of a typically “American” Orthodox church. He echoes Amy Slagle’s argument in *The Eastern Church in the Spiritual Marketplace* (2011) that America’s positive attitude to “choice” and self-expression—together with a long-established tolerance toward religious “originals” and mavericks—has ensured that many Americans could embrace the Orthodox faith far more easily and “naturally” than in other Western societies (10). In addition to this undercurrent of religious liberalism, H. observes that in America conversion to Orthodoxy is paradoxically made easier by the widespread evangelical search for a “purer” and more “authentic” form of religious practice that continues to be visible in the “restorationist” tendency of many non-denominational churches (152).

The bulk of the volume explores the life and work of four prominent converts, whose decision to embrace the Eastern Orthodox faith reflects very different sociocultural, no

less than theological, concerns. The first is St. Alexis Toth (1853–1909), an Eastern Rite Catholic priest from Slovakia, who in 1889 moved from Austria-Hungary to the United States to minister to the local population of Carpatho-Rusyn immigrants. After the Catholic Bishop of Minneapolis let him know that he did not consider him “or his bishop” Catholic, Toth and his parish contacted the Russian Orthodox bishop in San Francisco and joined the Orthodox Church in 1892 (33–37). The mistrust and often outright ignorance of the Catholic hierarchs in the United States, who were reluctant to accept Greek Catholic clergy and their traditions—especially a married priesthood—into the existing structures of their church, ensured that in the 20 years before World War I numerous Ruthenian and Ukrainian communities joined the Orthodox Church. Alexis Toth would eventually be canonized by the OCA in 1994.

The second and third chapters discuss the experience of Raphael Morgan (1869–1916) and Moses Berry (1951–present). Morgan was a Jamaican whose extraordinary spiritual journey led to his ordination to the Orthodox priesthood and the establishment of an Orthodox mission to African Americans; many members of his community would eventually join the Orthodox Church under different jurisdictions and even help support the first Orthodox communities in Kenya (80–82). Moses Berry similarly believed that African American spiritual yearnings would find their ideal home in the Orthodox Church, and for that purpose he established the pan-orthodox Brotherhood of St. Moses the Black (97–98).

Two chapters are then devoted to the experience of the Evangelical Orthodox Church, which emerged in the 1960s from the Campus Crusade for Christ under the leadership of Peter Gillquist (106). Gillquist’s search for the true New Testament church led him first to establish an independent “Orthodox” church in 1979 (110) and eventually to seek full communion with the Eastern Orthodox Church under the aegis of the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of North America in 1987 (125). While this led to a significant influx of clergy and laity into the Church, their gradual acceptance of Orthodox theology and liturgical practice, as H. recounts, was not without its challenges, leading some members of the original community to leave the church and seek refuge in other ecclesial communities (138).

H.’s study does not attempt to address the questions of autocephaly or philetism that continue to vex the Orthodox Church in America, largely assuming that the reader is already familiar with these issues. Choosing to focus on the life and the experiences of four influential converts, H. also bypasses the challenges faced by ordinary American Orthodox believers, who find themselves practicing the faith in a sociocultural context that differs substantially from more traditional Eastern European and Middle Eastern societies. The choice of an anecdotal style, however, makes for a very readable volume that will be of great interest to scholars of Eastern Orthodoxy and of sociology of religion in the contemporary United States.

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