

Russian Palestine

Diploma thesis

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Abstract

This diploma thesis entitled „The Russian Palestine“ deals with activities of the Russian Orthodox Church and Russian diplomatic corps designed to help Russian pilgrims to the holy places in Palestine as well as local Orthodox believers in the Levant in the 19th and beginning of 20th century. These activities were accompanied by considerable tension not only between Russian activists in Palestine and in Russia, but also in their encounters with Greek hierarchy in Jerusalem and Constantinople as well as with Western diplomats and missionaries pursuing Catholic and Protestant interests in the same area. The aim of this thesis is to offer an insight into motivations, ways and results of their activities in Palestine and to call attention to the difficulties they were facing. This work is neither an apology nor a criticism of either of the instruments of Russian influence – the Russian Orthodox Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem (since 1847) and Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society (since 1882) respectively. Because of the broadness of the subject it was not always possible to follow strict historiographic methods. Therefore this thesis is concerned mostly with biographical material of some of the most influential Russian personalities of the period, relying on their published works and correspondence.