

The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State (1939-1950). By Bohdan R. Bociurkiw. Edmonton, Toronto: The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press, 1996 320 pp. \$39.95.

This book provides a detailed account of the uneasy relationship that existed between the Byzantine Ukrainian Catholic church and the Russian and Ukrainian government authorities before and after communism. The author assigns the historical foundation of Ukrainian Catholicism to the Union of Brest in 1596 which expressed the demand of Ukrainian and Belarussian bishops for an affiliation with Rome in return for a recognition by the Polish-Lithuanian civilian officials of the equal status of their church vis-à-vis the Roman Catholic church in Poland. This volume contains important archival material that testify to the dilemma of religious policy which the Soviet state applied to religious communities in general and non-Orthodox churches in particular. In addition, it is a well-documented study of the Ukrainian Catholic church statements and promulgations, and is very rich in the oral history collection of the main witnesses and actors among the secular and ecclesiastical leaders of that period. Yet, the author's analysis should serve as an institutional memory of how the Vatican should approach its relationship with the Eastern Orthodox churches and the Eastern-rite Catholic churches in Ukraine, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, and other parts of Eastern Europe.

Bociurkiw gives a number of reasons that led to the demise of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic church in March 1946. The Russian invasion of Galicia in 1939 bolstered the domination of Ukraine by Soviet authorities. The Red Army's reoccupation of Western Ukraine in June 1944 forced the seizure of many churches and their properties. The new spirit of collaboration between Stalin and the patriarchate of Moscow renewed the call by Constantinople that the Catholics in Ukraine should return to their Orthodox roots. Soviet propaganda portrayed the Catholic church in Ukraine and any semblance of Ukrainian nationalism as manifestations of cooperation with Nazi Germany. Pope Pius XII's appeals to Moscow to respect religious freedom in the Soviet-dominated part of Europe was rejected by Russia and the local communists in Ukraine and elsewhere.

Yet, the book reveals that the Ukrainian Catholic church was never integrated as an independent entity in the Roman Catholic church. Little sympathy was found during long decades of existence under the Austro-Hungarian Empire or the Polish state. The insistence of the Ukrainian church to resist the "Latinization" of the Roman Catholic church placed more hurdles in its ties to Rome. Thus, the legitimacy of Ukrainian Greek Catholicism rested on

the popularity of its leaders, especially Metropolitan Andrei Shepty'skyi, whose death in November 1944 further weakened the strength of the church.

The book is a good reference to a number of church synods. The "Initiative Group" made up of a few Ukranian Catholic bishops revived the "reunion campaign." The Sobor of L'viv convened in March 1946 used the argument made at the Polastk Sobor of 1839 regarding the historical unity between the churches in Moscow and Kiev. While the author disputes the canonical validity of the sobor of 1946, currently many autocephaleous churches in Ukraine have invoked the names of previous church synods to create independent Orthodox jurisdictions.

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