

genre of devotional music, McGowan makes a strong case for the priority of *liturgy* in early Christianity and Christianity more generally, understood as a matrix of intentional, ritualized bodily practices and words in fluid relationship with Christian actions more generally.

McGowan's book is a careful, erudite work of synthesis of the best scholarship on early Christian worship. It is a boon to liturgists. New students of early Christian worship will appreciate its breadth and readability, and students of religion in late antiquity will find endless insights into the relationship between ritual and everyday life in the first four centuries. *Ancient Christian Worship* is sure to become the standard textbook on early Christian liturgy for years to come.

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Jaroslav Coranič, *Z dejín Gréckokatolíckej cirkvi na Slovensku* (On the History of the Greek Catholic Church in Slovakia) (Česke Budějovice: Sdružení sv. Jana Nepomuckého při Biskupství českobudějovickém, 2014), 528 p.

The subject of this outstanding volume, the Greek Catholic Church of Slovakia, is the successor to the Greek Catholic Eparchy of Prešov, which is about to mark two centuries of existence. In 1818, the eparchy was carved out of territory in the western part of the Greek Catholic Eparchy of Mukachevo, which is based in today's Transcarpathian oblast of Ukraine. The existing literature on Slovakia's Greek Catholic Eparchy of Prešov is quite extensive, with studies dating from the second half of the nineteenth through the twentieth centuries by priests and cultural activists, including Aleksander Dukhnovych, Julius Kubinyi, Michael Lacko, and Sevastiiian Sabol. Many of these authors were writing at a time when the region was ruled by Communist authorities. Consequently, not only

were archives closed to these and other researchers, but the very subject of Greek Catholicism was considered taboo.

Since the collapse of Communist rule in Czechoslovakia in late 1989 and the birth of independent Slovakia at the outset of 1993, an entirely new cohort of Church historians, mostly connected with the Eparchy of Prešov and the associated Greek Catholic Theological Faculty at the University of Prešov, have produced a wide variety of research and publications on a broad range of topics connected with the Greek Catholics of Slovakia.

Among the most prolific and talented of these historians, himself a layman, is Jaroslav Coranič. The *History of the Greek Catholic Church in Slovakia*, the result of Coranič's many years of research on the topic, is perhaps the best historical survey of the Greek Catholics living within the borders of present-day Slovakia. The volume, based on a wide range of archival and published secondary sources, consists of ten chapters that follow a chronological sequence from earliest times to the present. These include an opening chapter on the earliest Christian presence in the region connected with the ninth-century mission of the "Apostles to the Slavs," the Byzantine brothers Constantine/Cyril and Methodius. The second chapter traces in some detail the period when eastern Slovakia was still within the "mother eparchy" of Mukachevo. The remaining eight chapters deal with the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in particular the era of Hungarian rule until the end of World War I; the interwar decades of democratic Czechoslovakia; the World War II-era Slovak state; Communist Czechoslovak rule from 1945 to 1989, both before and after the liquidation (1950) and restoration (1968) of the eparchy; and the full reconstitution and flowering of the Church since the fall of Communism and birth of independent democratic Slovakia.

In each chapter Coranič does an excellent job of providing the larger political context in which the Church has had to operate as well as a description of the internal evolution of the church as an institution. Particularly noteworthy is the author's impartiality in dealing with controversial issues. These include, on the one hand, the policies of individual bishops and their reaction to the nationality differences among their pari-

shioners and, on the other, the demands of the various ruling regimes, each of which has had its own views on how the Greek Catholic Church should function (or not function) within the larger society.

Coranič's text is clearly written and particularly engaging when describing the difficulties faced by ruling bishops, in particular during late nineteenth-century Hungarian rule and the persecutions meted out by Communist rulers in the years immediately following World War II. Included in the book are several invaluable statistical charts on Church membership, maps of jurisdictional subdivisions, an extensive bibliography of archival and secondary sources, and a personal name index. Church historians and scholars of central Europe, especially those with an interest in Slovakia and the nationality question involving Carpatho-Rusyns, Slovaks, and Magyars, will all be grateful to Jaroslav Coranič for enlightening us about this fascinatingly complex topic – the Greek Catholics of Slovakia.

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