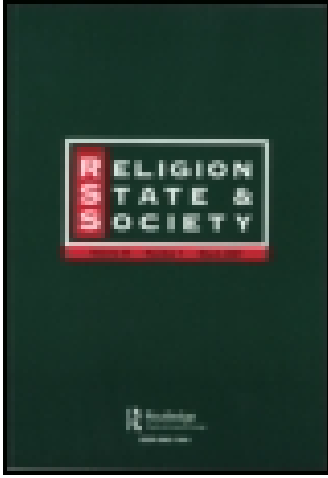


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## Religion in Communist Lands

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### Review article

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## Review Article

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*The Eastern Orthodox Church in the Ukraine*, by The Most Reverend Archbishop Makariy. Kiev: Ukraina Society, 1980. 75pp. 30 kopecks.

Archbishop Makariy of Uman undertook to write this pamphlet at the request of the Association for Cultural Relations with Ukrainians Abroad (the Ukraina Society). In a preface, Metropolitan Filaret of Kiev, Patriarchal Exarch to Ukraine, explains that this work is necessary because of the interest of Ukrainians in the USA, Canada and Western Europe in the religious life of Soviet Ukraine as a result of their growing contacts with their ancestral land. Metropolitan Filaret sees this booklet as satisfying the needs of "our Ukrainian compatriots, as well as many other Christians and people of different religious affiliations" who wish to know "the truth about the status of religion in the Soviet Union, about the activities of the Eastern Orthodox Church under new social conditions". It is therefore particularly interesting to note how this booklet presents the history and the contemporary situation of religious life in Ukraine to over three million Ukrainians abroad.

The desire to appease Ukrainian sentiments can even be seen in the title, *The Eastern Orthodox Church in the Ukraine* which would be more accurately rendered as "The Russian Orthodox Church in the Ukraine". There is indeed an attempt to placate Ukrainian patriotism in various ways — by using Ukrainian geographical names, for instance. Nevertheless, traditional conventions and ways of thinking are too strong to allow either author or translator to carry out this policy consistently. In any case, the real purpose of the booklet, as stated in the preface and the conclusion, is to view "the Ukrainian Exarchate as an inseparable component of the Russian Orthodox Church".

Most of the booklet is devoted to the history of the church in Ukraine and it is here that the Makariy is most selective in his presentation of events. The Christian culture of Kievan Rus' is extolled, in particular for its services to the "fatherland". Here Makariy enters the area of the traditional conflict of perspective between Russian and Ukrainian views

on ecclesiastical affairs. Archbishop Makariy is solidly in support of the Russian viewpoint. He concludes the section on this period with the Union of Florence of 1439, the election of Metropolitan Iona in Moscow without Constantinople's consent in 1448, the appointment of a separate Metropolitan of Kiev by Constantinople for Ukraine and Belorussia in 1458, and the change of title by the Metropolitan in Moscow from "Kiev" to "Moscow" in 1461.

Makariy next proceeds to discuss the fate of the Kiev Metropolitan See under Polish and Lithuanian rule. He insists that:

What made the Orthodox living in the Kiev Metropolitan See feel inseparable from the Church in Rus' was their common creed, baptism, ethnic origin and the entire course of historical and cultural progress since the time of Vladimir I. The Russian Church constantly helped Orthodox Ukrainians by sending them words of sincere encouragement and generous donations, and proving their reliable supporter.

These statements follow closely the official line of Soviet historians on the "eternal friendship of the Russian and Ukrainian peoples" and the Ukrainians' desire for "reunification". Makariy in his popular brochure does not have to go to the trouble of presenting evidence. Thus he can make such a bald statement about a period when in fact cultural and religious differences between Russians and Ukrainians were rapidly widening and the metropolitanates of Moscow and Kiev displayed relatively little interest in each other as they faced totally different problems under different cultural-political systems. It might be argued that Moldavia and Constantinople and even possibly the Balkans loomed larger than Moscow for Kievan Christianity during this period.

Makariy criticises the Polish king's appointment of church hierarchs and the oppression of the Orthodox minority, but he ignores the considerable cultural achievements of the Orthodox community which came from stimulation by the Latin West and the degree of toleration and tolerance in the Commonwealth at least until the end of the 16th century. Considerable attention is devoted to the Union of Brest of 1596, the agreement of a part of the Orthodox hierarchy, clergy and laity to unite with the Church of Rome while retaining their eastern traditions. For Makariy this is a clear struggle between good and evil in which the "treacherous" Uniates are even excluded from the Ukrainian people, since, he declares, the enemy of the Union was "the entire Ukrainian people, all the social strata." While it might be expected that Makariy would show little understanding of the Union as an attempt to reform the eastern church, it is surprising how little interest he shows in the renaissance of Ukrainian Orthodoxy, except as a force struggling against the Union. The uninformed reader is unlikely to realise that the spread of

printing, the formation of schools and the establishment of brotherhoods all predated the Union, and while they may be seen as a response to Western Christian pressure, this Catholic and Protestant pressure was less overt persecution than an intellectual and organisational challenge. After 1596 these innovations, which made Orthodoxy in Ukraine so different from Orthodoxy in Russia, were put to the service of the Orthodox Church. Archbishop Makariy almost entirely avoids mentioning the pinnacle of educational, printing and theological activity reached under Metropolitan Peter Mohyla (1633-1647), after the Polish government recognised the legality of the Orthodox Church. This reluctance is probably due to Metropolitan Mohyla's anti-Muscovite and pro-Polish political views, his western-orientated reforms, and his formulation of a distinct Ukrainian Orthodox tradition.

It is with the great Cossack revolt of 1648, the formation of the Hetmanate and the acceptance of the protection of the Muscovite tsar in 1654 that Makariy's account switches from a highly opinionated history to an elliptic list of events and episodes, as interesting for what is left out as for what is included. No mention is made of the fact that Metropolitan Sylvester Kosov opposed Khmel'nyts'kyi's agreement with the Tsar because he feared his church's incorporation into the Muscovite Patriarchate. The transfer of the metropolitanate of Kiev to Moscow's jurisdiction in 1686 is described as "a natural completion of the process of state reunification of the Ukraine with Russia" and as having been carried out "with the consent and blessings of the Patriarch of Constantinople" with no mention that the procedure was carried on in a highly questionable way with simoniacal practices. The absorption of the Kievan Metropolitanate into the Russian Church is discussed without making clear that in the end not only did the metropolitan lose authority over dioceses that remained under Polish control, but also over Orthodox dioceses under Russian control, ultimately leaving him with the mere title Metropolitan of Kiev and Halych". The saints and scholars that the church in Ukraine produced in the late 17th and 18th centuries are listed, but no explanation is made of the Imperial Government's policies that rooted out the local traditions of the church in Ukraine, banned the printing of books in Ukrainian editions and turned the once flourishing Kiev Academy into a provincial seminary.

For the 19th century Archbishop Makariy provides only three disparate pieces of information: the Eastern-Rite Catholics "disappeared" in all Ukrainian lands "reunited" with Russia, culminating in the "return" of the Uniates of the Kholm region in 1875; the Russian Orthodox Church marked the 900th anniversary of the Christianisation of Old Rus' in Kiev in 1888; and the Holy Synod permitted a Ukrainian version of the Gospels in 1911. He does not tell us that the Uniates "disappeared" only after fierce persecution or that the Russian Orthodox Church had

banned Ukrainian ecclesiastical printing during the reign of Peter I, had prevented publication of Ukrainian translations of the Bible throughout the 19th century and had supported Tsarist Russia's infamous ban against Ukrainian printing in 1876. Archbishop Makariy apparently sees no reason to criticise such policies of the old regime and church.

In describing the period after the 1917 revolution, Archbishop Makariy shows a similar selectivity. Considerable comment is made about the proclamation of autonomy for the church in Ukraine in 1918, but no explanation is given as to what remains of this "autonomy". In contrast, the Ukrainian Church movement, the formation of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, and the competition between the Patriarchal and Autocephalous Churches in the 1920s (that is, the reason that the Patriarchal Church grudgingly granted "autonomy") are not even mentioned. Makariy steps gingerly in describing relations between church and state in the 1920s and 1930s and instead concentrates on the services of the church to the Soviet war effort, in particular in condemning Ukrainian partisan groups who sought to establish an independent Ukraine.

While Makariy avoids even mentioning the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, destroyed by Stalin in the 1930s, he devotes a whole chapter to the Ukrainian Catholic Church — a catacomb church that has been persecuted by the Soviet government since 1946. He asserts that the Eastern-rite Catholic Church had no roots among the Western Ukrainian populace, that their hierarchy served the Nazi occupiers, and that the "Synod" of L'viv of 8-10 March, 1946 which nullified the Union of Brest of 1596 was canonical. All are extremely questionable assertions, to say the least. Interestingly Metropolitan Andrei Sheptyts'kyi (1900-1944), who is revered by Ukrainian Catholics and vilified by the Soviet regime and the Patriarchal Church, is not mentioned. Archbishop Makariy also gives no explanation for the continued activity and constant persecution of the Ukrainian Catholic Church.

Archbishop Makariy follows with a description of the Ukrainian Exarchate (in which no mention is made of "autonomy") and of the church's role in the inter-Orthodox, ecumenical, and peace activity. Much of the text consists of quotes of foreign visitors, a pastiche intended to convince the reader that there is no religious persecution in the USSR.

What impact Archbishop Makariy's and the Ukraina Society's work will have on Ukrainian believers abroad or on foreign opinion on the religious question in Ukraine is difficult to estimate. That such a contrived and convoluted brochure was produced reveals the Russian Patriarchal Church's sensitivity to the Ukrainian Orthodox and Catholic criticism of its activity in Ukraine and the Soviet government's annoyance that there is increasing knowledge of its religious policies.

FRANK SYSYN