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John-Paul Himka. *Religion and Nationality in Western Ukraine: The Greek Catholic Church and the Ruthenian National Movement in Galicia, 1867-1900.* Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999. xvii + 236 pp. $65.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-7735-1812-4.

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Historians of Galicia are often faced with the difficulty inherent in making the history of a backward and peripheral province of the Habsburg monarchy relevant, let alone interesting, to the non-specialized reader. Those who revel in the complexities of transitional or frontier regions are naturally drawn to Galicia, as they are to the Balkans. But many readers shun these areas precisely because they are "atypical." In his latest book on the development of modern nationalism among the Ruthenians in nineteenth century Galicia, John-Paul Himka, professor of history and classics at the University of Alberta, successfully overcomes these difficulties. This work has as its subject the confessional structure of the Ruthenian population at the most critical phase of the nation-building process and the nexus between religion and nationality. As such, it is a noteworthy contribution to the literature on Galicia and on nation building, and it deserves a wide audience.

The book appeals both on the theoretical and on the "Rankean" level. As Himka writes in his introduction, the present book is "for the reader who enjoys the savour of complexity and the nuances of historical situations and who is interested in the problem of religion and nationality's intersection" (p. 4). Himka is fully abreast of the latest research on the nature of nationalism and the national awakening, which informs his analysis throughout. But the author is also a good storyteller in his own right. The result is an informative, elegant, and eminently readable historical monograph. The series editor has done a magnificent job in producing a work notably free of spelling and typographical errors, with clear endnotes, a thorough bibliography, and a succinct yet highly usable index.

Himka has already published two important works on the Ukrainian national movement in Galicia, one focusing on the rise of socialism and the other of the role of Ukrainian villagers in the spread of national consciousness.[1] Indeed, the present volume is conceived as the final part of a trilogy. It is the culmination of years of reflection, very broad reading, and impressive research in Ukrainian, Polish, Austrian, and Italian archives. Together with the older works, it presents a nuanced and thoughtful description of the rise to modern political consciousness of the overwhelmingly agricultural Ruthenian population in the period between the *Ausgleich* and the turn of the century. Employing concepts of nationality and nationalism developed by Ernest Gellner, E.J. Hobsbawm, and Miroslav Hroch, Himka reveals how much his own concept of the nature of nationalism has grown over time. In an observation that reveals the complexity of nation building, he correctly concludes that the Greek Catholic case in Galicia is "a stunningly transparent instance of how much agency and choice can be involved in the construction of nationality" (p. 163).

The book is organized in a somewhat unorthodox fashion. Rather than following a purely chronological division into chapters, Himka provides a tripartite division: an introduction, followed by two chronologically distinct sections. In the introduction, the author sets out his theoretical plan, including an explanation of terms, a short history of the Greek Catholic Church and its administrative structure, along with explication of the highlights of the Ruthenian national movement in the early part of the nineteenth century. He defends his choice of "Ruthenian" and "Greek Catholics," rather than "Ukrainian" and "Ukrainian Catholics," as a consciously "conservative linguistic choice" that is, moreover, "neutral with regard to the two competing paradigms of national identity that divided [this population] in the late nineteenth century" (p. 8). His position is well taken and indicative of his consistent attempt to transcend the nationalistic prejudices that have often marred scholarship on this area in the past. A brief historiographical essay and an interesting note on archival sources rounds out this section of the book.

The nature of the material in each of the chronological sections drives the organizational framework of the sections themselves, subdividing them into what is almost a collection of vignettes. The first overall impression is of a book that offers thumbnail biographical sketches of little known figures (Iosafat Kuntsevych, Mykhail Kuzemsky, Iosyf Sembratovich, and Ioann Naumovych), interspersed with analyses of small groups (The *Sion* circle, the St. George Program of 1871), and various disputes and administrative changes within the Greek Catholic Church (the reform of the Basilian order, the fight over three-barred crosses and *kolpaks*, and the creation of the Stanislaviv Eparchy). But the book is much more than a collection of curiosities. Holding all these episodes and sketches together is the fascinating story of the fight for a people's very soul, an all-out struggle for their religious allegiance. The prime players in the game are anything but peripheral. This issue of confessional allegiance would be determined not so much by Ruthenian peasants themselves, but by the fascinating interplay of the influence and policies of the Habsburg and tsarist governments, of provincial Polish officials, of the Vatican, of the Jesuit order, and of a variety of heterogeneous elements within the clerical stratum of the Greek Catholic Church itself. It is precisely in this interplay that the "agency and choice" referred to above become apparent.

Himka's narrative effectively weaves these at times numbingly numerous strands together. The first chronological section, stretching from 1866 to 1881, sets the stage for a crisis that initiated a number of far-reaching changes within the Greek Catholic Church. Himka chooses to begin his chronological survey with the *Ausgleich* of 1867. By the time the negotiations for the Compromise had been completed, it became increasingly clear that the politics of the old leadership of the Ruthenian national movement, the so-called St. George's party, were just about bankrupt. As Ruthenians saw it, the payment for their absolute loyalty to the Habsburgs practiced by this party had resulted in no benefits at all. On the contrary, Ruthenians were now being "handed over" to the Poles. One result of the loss of stature of the St. Georgites was the growth of a consciously Russophile position within Ruthenian politics. This strand of thought was perhaps best represented by Father Ioann Naumovych, a man who later would convert to Orthodoxy and leave Austria for Russia. That the Ruthenians could indeed come to think of themselves as Russians was also supported by interesting developments in the eparchy of Chelm, outside the Habsburg empire. A predominantly Greek Catholic eparchy, Chelm would soon become the scene of a mass conversion. In the early 1870s, Galician Ruthenian pastors and teachers, disaffected with the politics of their compatriots in Galicia, crossed the border and worked actively in Chelm for the purpose of converting the locals to Orthodoxy. With strong tsarist support, in 1875 almost all of the eparchy had indeed converted to Orthodoxy. The Vatican, the hierarchy of the Polish dominated Catholic church in Galicia, and the Habsburg government were alarmed.

But a second political orientation was also developing in Galicia alongside the Russophiles, namely, National Populism. Adherents of this view shared many of the Russophile antagonisms toward both the Poles and Rome. Their view of the ethnic "identity" of Ruthenians, however, was quite at odds with that of Naumovych and his followers. The National Populists envisioned the Ruthenians as Ukrainians rather than Russians, a population having more in common with their cousins in Left Bank Ukraine than with the forest zone in the north. Such a position was both anti-Polish and anti-Russian. An important difference, however, with the Ukrainians resident in tsarist Russia was the issue of religion. While Ukrainians in Russia were solidly Orthodox, National Populists in Galicia tended to defend and emphasize the Catholicism of the Galician Ruthenians, albeit in varying ways. During the 1860s and 70s the National Populists did not truly present a united front precisely because different factions disagreed on tactics and on the role of the church in the national movement. Some held a position close to that of moderate Polish Catholics who wished to see the church serve as a bridge that might overcome ethnic tensions between these two Slavic peoples, while others, more fiercely anti-Polish, tended to stress the necessity of greater ecclesiastical independence for the Greek Catholic Church. Himka traces the various groups and subgroups, analyzing their often subtle differences and never losing sight of issues such as the socioeconomic background of the figures involved, their geographic origin, their education, etc.

The period also witnessed the appointment of a new metropolitan (Father Iosyf Sembratovych) and a new bishop (Ioann Stupnytsky) in Przemysl. It is in these chapters, outlining the complicated policies of the Vatican, the civil administration, and the various groups within the Greek Catholic church over candidates for high episcopal office, that Himka is at his best as a painstaking historian. Coupling a knowledge of internal Vatican politics based upon extensive research in the Vatican archives with a deep knowledge and sympathy for each of the Ruthenian and Polish points of view, Himka builds a strong, thick description of how Rome was able

to place its candidate on the throne of Halych over the objections of both the Ruthenians and the Habsburg government.

Part II deals with what at first seemed a minor and rather insignificant event, the 1882 conversion of 129 inhabitants of the village of Hnylychky to Orthodoxy. What probably ought to have remained a quiet affair of the deanery in which the conversion occurred soon blew up into a province-wide political incident. Father Ioann Naumovych, the famous Russophile, was accused of high treason. Civil authorities suspected him of being a Russian agent, and the Catholic ecclesiastical hierarchy perceived a direct threat to the existence of the Greek Catholic Church. After describing the affair and the trial, Himka spends the rest of this section analyzing how these events led the Catholic Church to embark actively upon a policy aimed at combating the spread of Russophilism and Orthodoxy among the Ruthenian population. Metropolitan Sembratovych, originally the Vatican's man, lost favor in Rome and was forced to resign. The ancient Basilian order of monks, which had sunken into a state of near-hopeless stagnation and corruption, was forcibly reformed. A provincial synod was summoned in 1891 to debate, among other things, the issue of clerical celibacy.

In general, Rome's active policies were bound to cause some resentment and run into obstacles. For example, it soon became clear that Greek Catholics were intent on preserving their tradition of a married clergy, while Rome clearly wanted to discourage the practice. The generally undiplomatic policies pursued by the Vatican over the course of the Synod antagonized many Greek Catholic clerics. The reform of the Basilians too was mishandled. Although changes were indeed overdue and reform was clearly a much needed, progressive development, the manner in which the reform was carried out infuriated any number of Ruthenians, clerics and lay people alike. The Vatican had charged the Jesuits with the task of implementing reform. In Galicia, the Society of Jesus was staffed primarily by ethnic Poles, and the activities of the Jesuits had long been perceived as attempts at polonization. Finally, while the forced resignation of Metropolitan Sembratovych indicated how strongly Rome felt about developments in Galicia, it also contributed to strengthening the hand of those who felt that the Greek Catholic church needed more independence within the greater Roman Catholic fold.

The final section of Part II, entitled "Ruthenian National Politics and the Church," ties up all the strands present in the book. Most important from the political point of view is the story of how Russophilism declined and a pan-Ukrainian orientation solidified itself. In explaining this, Himka clearly demonstrates the peculiar nature of transitional regions and how their peripheral nature affects political thinking. To quote him at length, "The state and higher church authorities had sent a clear message that Russophiles would not longer be tolerated. Those who continued to adhere to the orientation after 1882 did so with the sure knowledge that they were taking a risk. Since martyrdom can breed intransigence, the persecution of Russophilism could have had the effect of making it more popular among the Ruthenians, but the opposite happened. Perhaps this is in part attributable to certain weaknesses in the position of the Russophile leaders. They had essentially become agents of a foreign, indeed hostile, power, on which they depended both for short-term financial support and long-term deliverance in the form of annexation. This was a position so dangerous that it could only be known to a small group of insiders. The rank and file of the movement, particularly the peasants, but also many priests, had no clear idea of the real content of the political tendency to which they belonged" (p. 139). The effect of the Vatican's intervention in Greek Catholic Galician affairs was indeed to defeat Russophilism as a practicable political orientation. But the parallel, and in the end far longer-term effect, was to strengthen both the Greek Catholic Church and the National Populists. The stage was set for explaining the roots of conflict in modern Ukrainian political nationalism.

Perhaps the only significant criticism of the work is that it seems, on first reading, to lack a clearly enunciated conclusion. This is due solely to the dual nature of Himka's chosen organizational plan. Because the author deliberately jumps back and forth between a chronological narrative and a theoretical analysis of nationalism, his decision to tie up matters in the theoretical realm rather than the chronological one leaves the reader with a feeling of non-completion. In 1900 Bishop Andrei Sheptytsky was elevated to the position of Metropolitan, an event that Himka states at the beginning of the book marks a logical conclusion. One cannot quibble with that. Furthermore, Sheptytsky, whom Himka clearly reveres, was such a pivotal figure that his reign as Metropolitan clearly marks a completely separate phase of Ukrainian Galician history and as such does not fall within the scope or intent of the book. Yet this reader still longs for a formal "wrapping-up." Perhaps the author will find it necessary after all to follow this fine piece of scholarship with a fourth volume.

Note

[1]. John-Paul Himka, *Socialism in Galicia: The Emergence of Polish Social Democracy and Ukrainian Radicalism, 1860-1890* (Cambridge, Mass.: distributed by Harvard University Press for the Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute, 1983; Himka, *Galician Villagers and the Ukrainian National Movement in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988).

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