Liliana Hentosh. ***Mytropolyt Sheptyts'kyi 1923-1939: Vyprobuvannia idealiv*** [*Metropolitan Sheptyts'kyi 1923-1939: A Test of Ideals*]. VNTL-Klasyka, 2015. xii, 588 pp. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Name Index. Paper.

This book (nicely printed by VNTL-Klasyka in Lviv and featuring a handsome cover design by Ievhen Ravs'kyi) has been hailed by prominent appraisers with diverse levels of knowledge of Andrei Sheptyts'kyi; and it achieves several things quite well. This is the third monograph on Sheptyts'kyi by a woman (the other monographs—see Schuver; Sheptyts'ka) and the first notable scholarly work on the subject in post-Maidan Ukraine. It is a contribution for Ukrainians who are interested in knowing about the man behind the cherished, constructed image. Hentosh, finding Cyrille Korolevskij's 1964 (not 1956) biography wanting and considering no other, presents her own biographic work, which focuses on sixteen years, 1923-39, of Sheptyts'kyi's seventy-nine-year life. This episode for her is "key to understanding his legacy since that was when his activity came to fruition and his plans for the reform of the Greek Catholic Church and his vision of ecumenical dialogue with the Orthodox world became fully formed" (my trans.; ix). It is an interesting perspective to put forward, but in the absence of evidence to back up her assertion, readers will wonder why the twenty-three preceding years and the five subsequent years of his term in office were excluded.

Six chapters cover specific themes of the interwar Polish period, from the 1923 decision of the Council of Ambassadors to turn Eastern Galicia over to Poland up until September 1939, when Soviet forces invaded the territory. The author presents the Greek Catholic Church up to the 1925 Polish Concordat and church-state relations after 1925. She also looks at Sheptyts'kyi's attitude toward Ukrainian nationalism, his economic and philanthropic activity, his efforts to transform his Church into a pan-Ukrainian (*zahal'noukrains'ka*) institution, and his socio-political activity during the 1930s. This structure suggests an overarching interest in church-state relations and church-society issues, and several observations are immediately in order.

The coherence of that outline is disturbed by a number of outlying themes. The metropolitan's unionist/ecumenical ideas, a vast topic and the most extensively studied dimension of his life, is described here perfunctorily in the space of eighteen pages, without engaging with the literature, raising questions of substance, or proposing new insights. However, his financial and economic activity, which only one human being known to this reviewer has ever regarded as other than marginally important (see Slusarczuk Sirka), receives here a special place of

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prominence, in conjunction with Sheptyts'kyi's philanthropic and cultural activities. Beyond that, numerous descriptions of Vatican and Polish machinations do provide context, and readers who wish to know what the Vatican and official Polish circles were thinking at the time will learn about those things.

The inevitable price of attending to these and other peripheral matters is that the central character gets lost in the shuffle. The section entitled "Mezhi kompromisu" ("The Limits of Compromise") ponders bureaucratic issues, such as the proper title for Sheptyts'kyi, the appointment of his auxiliary bishop, and the recording language for parish registries (88-109). An ensuing discussion of the 1863 Concordia, which established the distinctiveness of, and relations between, Roman and Greek Catholics, alternates between that document and the views of its twentieth-century Vatican and Polish interpreters—Luigi Sincero and Eugenio Pacelli; and Józef Bilczewski, S. Janikowski, and Władysław Skrzyński. The main protagonist is left outside of the frame of reference—abandoned along with any sense of how these reconstructions illuminate his life. The relevance of this chapter to the book, which perhaps was drafted before the author had a clear outline of the whole book, is not evident. Yet a biography must surely focus on a person and his/her proactive agency even in the face of formidable obstacles. Here, instead, we see a deficit of attention as the narrative drifts repeatedly to other players—with their respective thoughts, actions, and motives.

In the opening chapter, "Povernennia na arkhyiepyskops'ku katedru (lito 1923)" ("Return to the Archepiscopal See [Summer 1923]" [9-23]), one presumes that the return is Sheptyts'kyi's. But from where is the return? We are not told why 1923 was a turning point in his life or in his socio-political milieu. Other than a one-and-a-half-page allusion to the preceding two and a half decades, the storyline holds strictly to the period from 1923 to 1939. Perhaps another volume will someday set the stage for the events covered here. But there is no mention of any planned follow-up, and like the unexplained rationale for limiting this life story to a middle fragment, the prospect of a multivolume project is couched in mystery.

The book does contribute to an understanding of Sheptyts'kyi's attitudes on Ukrainian nationalism. As has been established in previous scholarship, while many Ukrainians in interwar Poland shifted ideologically to the right, the metropolitan held his ground both as a cosmopolitan and a Christian. His critique of nationalist violence remains a blind spot to this day for many—Ukrainophiles and Ukrainophobes alike. This book extends our knowledge of his views on this important matter. The author first lays out Roger D. Griffin's definition of fascism ([see 131] a timely warning to "post-Communists" who improvise their own variations on that theme today) and points out that after World War I, Sheptyts'kyi assumed the function of a moral authority and *lider*

("leader" [the only news in this is the post-Soviet neologism]). Hentosh then discloses the inner workings of the Polish Ministry of Internal Affairs and Vatican circles before, finally, turning to Sheptyts'kyi's views.

The metropolitan's rejection of violent, extremist nationalism and embrace of what he called *khrystyians'kyi patriotyzm* ("Christian patriotism") are known from previous scholarship. In the book, we are given the particulars of his tensions with the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the nationalist leadership of the Ukrainian branch of Catholic Action. None of these details will please Ukrainian nationalists. Yet their enduring relevance relates to the question of whether this central, critical element of Sheptyts'kyi's legacy will be acknowledged, finally, by his clerical heirs as a *sine qua non* of their religious identity or swept under the rug as an inconvenient nuisance. As for the matter of Anton Shekhovtsov's terminology (*klerykal'nyi fashyzm* ["clerical fascism" (see 131)]), Hentosh's critique is misdirected—Shekhovtsov's greater fault lay in his uncritical embrace of Soviet fabrications in lieu of a verification of original sources. And finally, readers expecting an analysis of Sheptyts'kyi's 1936 nuanced critique of Communism will find only a cursory mention here (see 402-05); for a thorough analysis, they will return to my monograph on his social ethics (which Hentosh systematically ignores—obviously an oversight [see Krawchuk, *Christian Social Ethics*]).

Some readers may superficially accept that this book is a biography. Others, concerned about things such as denominational narcissism, the peculiar love-hate relationship with a complex figure who defies easy categorization, and the symbolic construction of a convenient, perpetually blessing father figure, will await a return to sound reasoning and the frank discussion of inconvenient truths. Sheptyts'kyi not only faced off with Banderite hotheads but also took on those among his priests who sided with them. He was at war with other bishops, and Hryhorii Khomyshyn was first among them. Differences of opinion or conflicting interests with antagonists in Rome, Warsaw, or Moscow pale in comparison with the white heat that Sheptyts'kyi bore on the home front. His first obituary preceded his death by a full twenty-seven years. People wanted him dead.

In this book, vacuous affirmations detract from the presentation. "Sheptytskyi's most important undertaking as an ecclesiastical leader was the modernization of his church. . . . His approach could be viewed as a sort of practical modernism . . ." (585). Perhaps—or perhaps not. No less worrisome as this unsubstantiated claim is a looseness of terminology that leads to anachronisms. The author may today assign her own chosen meanings to modernism, but Sheptyts'kyi would not have endorsed a modernism that Pope Pius X had condemned in 1907.

The study concludes that "he [Sheptyts'kyi] generally failed to implement his ideas and plans to build a strong, dynamic church and a strong, self-sufficient Ukrainian society based on Christian values" (586). Supposedly, then, either Sheptyts'kyi's efforts bore fruit only after his death or he left behind a weak Church and a weak society, both of which survived persecution seemingly in spite of themselves. Had the author consulted more closely the recovered history of the persecuted Church, we may have seen a more accurate appreciation of the ecclesiastical community that was driven underground in 1946. Considering a range of indicators, such as education, scholarly literature, and monastic life, that community (see Krawchuk, *Indeks*) had arguably reached a peak of theological and spiritual development and it certainly had not yet been co-opted by secular patriots.

The book, indirectly, provides a glimpse into the state of scholarship and publishing in Ukraine. In the same year that it appeared, one Volodymyr Serhiichuk of Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, the author or editor of thirty-five books in the preceding twelve years, launched his thirty-sixth monograph, the four-hundred-forty-page book *Andrei Sheptyts'kyi* (self-published in Vyshhorod). With resolute chapter titles like "Han'ba Rosii" ("Russia's Shame") and "Ukraina musyt' obov"iazkovo vidokremytys' vid Moskvy" ("Ukraine Absolutely Must Separate from Moscow"), it is a very different kettle of fish. Yet this weighty tome also purports to stand on extensive archival references, both Western and Soviet. It, too, is illustrated with a rich assortment of rare, previously unknown photographs. For the foreseeable future, the field will likely retain the nature of a hunting-and-gathering ground, with scholars of various stripes doing their utmost to navigate unexplored archival oceans. Looking beyond the creaky see-saw of Uniate hagiography and neo-Soviet defamation of Sheptyts'kyi and the frenzied manufacture of hefty monographs, the necessary space does not yet exist for the thoughtful appreciation of previous scholarship, the focused selection of sources, and thorough analysis, methodological rigour, and depth. The search for historical truth is further stymied by powerful temptations and inducements to align findings with prevailing sensibilities, myths, and agendas. In the face of formidable obstacles, sound scholarship is needed, and at present, historians appear to be at the vanguard of this process, certainly ahead of theologians.

As for the Lviv publication, its jacket blurbs reveal something about its early reception, target audience, and potential impact. Voices from Ukraine and North America welcome the book for "its lively grasp of the hero." The comments continue: the book "offers an example of a church leader [*lider*] who had a great impact on his flock"; "shines a light on an era so in-depth"; and "is an easy read that deserves to become a bestseller on the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of Metropolitan Andrei's birth" (my trans.; back cover).

With those endorsements, the book is perhaps being positioned to advance a strategic alliance between advocates of Sheptyts'kyi's image in Ukraine and their counterparts in the West. Putin, beware: the Uniates are coming.

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