

## The Serbian Orthodox Church 1920-1970

a volume to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the re-establishment  
of the Serbian Patriarchate

*(Srpska Pravoslavna Crkva 1920-1970: Spomenica 50-Godisnjici  
Vaspostavljanja Srpske Patriarsije)*

published by the Holy Episcopal Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church,  
Belgrade, 1970, 539 pp., no price indicated.

## General Survey of the Catholic Church in Yugoslavia

*(Opći Sematizam Katolicke Crkve u Jugoslaviji)*

published by the Bishops' Conference of Yugoslavia,  
Kaptol 31, Zagreb, 1975, 1,166 pp., £12.

The publication of these two massive volumes for the first time gives us a wide survey of the two great Christian confessions in Yugoslavia, a survey which is in fact unique among communist countries. Although both make tacit concessions to the prevailing climate of official opinion in Yugoslavia, they give, within the framework of what is permissible today, a picture of each of these Churches as it would wish to appear to the world.

There is more historical material in the Serbian volume. It consists firstly of a series of essays by various writers. These are divided into three chronological sections: 1920-41, 1941-45 and 1945-70. The first section is an historical account of the uniting of a number of different groups of Orthodox Churches to form the restored Serbian Patriarchate, closely involved with the Serbian dynasty which ruled over the newly-formed State. The second section covers the terrible years of the war and the virtual destruction of a large part of the institution of the Church. The third deals with the post-war years of reconstruction. The breaking away of the Macedonian dioceses to form an autocephalous Macedonian Orthodox Church is acknowledged but not discussed. A further section includes chapters on the theological faculty and the five seminaries, the women's convents, religious art and the Museum of the Patriarchate, the rebuilding of destroyed churches and the construction of new ones. One lengthy chapter describes the relations of the Serbian Orthodox Church with other Churches, not only the Russian and other Orthodox Churches of Eastern Europe and the Middle East, but also the Anglican Church and the World Council of Churches, of which the present Patriarch is a President. Finally, there are biographies of all the Serbian Patriarchs and a list of dioceses and all their bishops from the re-establishment to 1970 with historical and biographical notes. Some background knowledge is necessary for making the best use of this section, but given this, it is an accurate and useful work of reference, marred only – but this is a serious

fault – by the lack of an index either for this section or the whole book. Unfortunately no lists of clergy are given, but the book does not purport to be a register. Nevertheless, it would have been much more useful if it had included a systematic selection of the statistics published yearly by the Patriarchate for internal use, which give the number of parishes, clergy, monks, nuns, seminarians, churches and church buildings in each diocese. We are offered only tantalizing snippets, depending on the inclinations of the writers of different chapters: two tables, for example, showing the startling increase in the number of nuns from 1924 (73) to 1941 (286) and 1969 (658). This increase was sparked off by a colony of Russian nuns who settled in Yugoslavia after the 1917 Revolution.

The *General Survey of the Catholic Church in Yugoslavia* is primarily a register of the kind which is produced annually in many countries. It includes a list of bishops in each diocese reaching back, in some cases, to the 7th century, and a number of maps and statistical tables of the greatest interest. The last general survey was published in 1939 and was edited by the same cleric who headed the editorial committee of the 1975 volume. (The dioceses of Zagreb and Ljubljana both published diocesan registers during the 1960s.) The maps include some historical ones and many of the present-day dioceses and principal sees. The statistics which are newly gathered from church sources have been meticulously checked and are published for the first time. Finally there is a chapter of additions and corrections, which bring the material up to date as far as is possible.

The book shows the Church's remarkable recovery after the blows of the immediate post-war years. For example, the religious orders and clergy over the last 25 years have grown in strength and numbers. The number of diocesan clergy, which was 3,291 in 1939 and had fallen to 2,904 in 1949 (the decade of war and persecution) and 2,738 by 1959 (a decade when many ordinands, especially those doing military service, were under heavy pressure to leave the Church) had by 1969 reached the figure of 2,835 and by 1974 stood at 3,001. And this latter period was a time when the hierarchy complained about the increasing secularization of society. All the religious orders, except for the contemplatives (Carthusians and Trappists), have maintained their strength. In 1940 there were 2,795 men in religious orders (priests, lay brothers, students, seminarians and novices); in 1974 there were 2,817. In 1939 the women's religious orders had 7,260 members and in 1974 8,622. Of these 1,499 live and work outside Yugoslavia, many in religious houses in Germany where they are paid and so able to contribute to the support of the mother houses. The statistics presented in this book also help to correct a picture which was inevitably distorted by the violent events and conflicting propaganda of the early post-war years. For example, although out of over 5,500 Catholic churches 183 were destroyed in the decade 1940-49, only 21 were alienated from the Church.

The Catholic religious press has flowered. There are 67 publications of various sorts, including a number of official diocesan gazettes. Although some have a small circulation and appear irregularly there are others such as *Glas Koncila* (118,000) which is a fortnightly newspaper, *Kana* (53,000) a family colour magazine, published in Croatia, as well as *Druzina* (125,000) and *Ognjisce* (83,000) their Slovene equivalents. Finally there is AKSA, a Catholic weekly news service in Croatian and German, which has a small but important circulation. Not included in this number are the journals of the various government approved Priests' Associations, one or two of which, such as *Nova Pot*, are serious and respected.

The historical events of the last 35 years are only hinted at. Every diocese has its complement of priests living and working abroad; some names are followed by the laconic comment "living in Argentine". The ecumenical, cultural and educational work of the great 19th century Bishop Strossmayer of Djakovo is mentioned in the history of that diocese, but the events of the war are mostly passed over in silence, and the name of Cardinal Stepinac appears only in the list of Archbishops of Zagreb.

Both volumes include accounts of their overseas dioceses and the European parishes which have grown up as Yugoslav emigrant workers spread out over Western Europe. While the Catholic Church maintains abroad many parish priests attached to dioceses within Yugoslavia, the Serbian Orthodox Church has four dioceses in North America and another one which includes Western Europe and Australasia, all with resident bishops who are members of the Serbian Bishops' Assembly. The Macedonian Orthodox Church has one inclusive overseas diocese.

The Serbian volume, printed in Cyrillic script, makes no linguistic concessions, but the *General Survey* has translations in English, French and German of its introduction, of the table of abbreviations and of the statistical tables, making these accessible to anyone interested in the subject. It also includes a complete index of names and places. Lastly, and happily, there is a brief account of the life and work of Mother Theresa of Calcutta, the most famous living Yugoslav Catholic, born in 1910 of Albanian parents in Skopje, where she lived until 1928.

STELLA ALEXANDER

## Kontinent 1: The Alternative Voice of Russia and Eastern Europe

edited by Vladimir Maximov, Andre Deutsch, 1976, 180 pp., £3.95.

*Kontinent* is the English version of a Russian quarterly magazine launched in 1974 by recent Soviet émigré intellectuals. *Kontinent*, as the original subtitle states, is intended to be "a literary, social-political and religious