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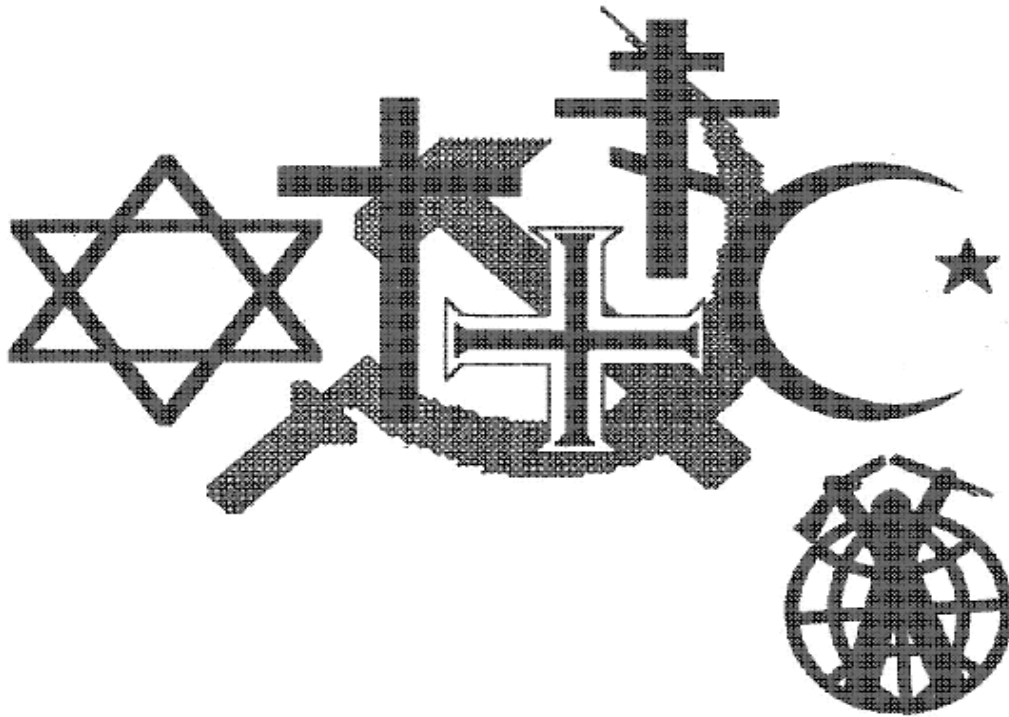
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**WOMEN'S FAITH-BASED PEACE INITIATIVES IN BOSNIA AND
HERZEGOVINA**
AUTOCEPHALOUS STATUS OF THE POLISH ORTHODOX CHURCH
SACRED RELIGIOUS MUSIC OF UKRAINE
TWO *IN MEMORIAM* FOR MICHAEL BOURDEAUX

Edited by Paul Mojzes
Co-edited by Beth Admiraal and H. David Baer

OCCASIONAL PAPERS ON RELIGION IN EASTERN EUROPE

Vol. XLI, No. 3 (April 2021)

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EDITORIAL

ON DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

The Cold War is a testimony to the fact that people who differ, even while working for a similar goal such as protecting human rights, including the rights of religious conscience, can be part of a more complex truth. When we memorialize worthy persons, who sought to defend the rights of religious believers under communist oppression, we encounter dissonant reflections. The death of Canon Michael Bourdeaux of Great Britain in April 2021 is memorialized in this issue by two American church historians, Mark Elliott and Walter Sawatsky, who worked with him on numerous occasions and greatly appreciated his remarkable contributions. Yet they had different perceptions concerning the best way to defend believers' rights and how to best confront the apparatus of oppression, as one can see from reading the memorials. We publish both of them, not only because OPREE subscribes to freedom of opinion, but also because we think both perspectives ought to be shared with readers in order to provide a more complete perspective on controversial matters.

There is a Hassidic story which may help us understand that truth can be expressed even in contradictory narratives. Two petitioners come to a rabbi. The first man states his case. The rabbi listens, contemplates, and says "You are right." The second petitioner then speaks, laying out a completely contrary position. Again, the rabbi listens, contemplates, and says "You are right." The rabbi's exasperated wife then speaks: "Both of these contrary positions cannot be right." The rabbi listens, contemplates, and responds: "You are right." Often, we are in a similar predicament, but contrary to the rabbi's wife we affirm that diverse explanations may contain valid insights.

For a more complete perspective on the complex and often contradictory Christian responses to issues arising during the Cold War, readers may wish to consult and read different chapters of *North American Churches and the Cold War*.¹ In vastly oversimplified terms, the different Christian perspectives were not only due to different concerns and priorities of Christians and churches who lived outside of the communist dominated countries, but also due to the very different circumstances and experiences under which Christians living in communist lands operated. It is, therefore, not surprising that a variety of perspectives existed and continue to exist between equally motivated and honorable activists and analysts. One may only regret that instead of being in dialogue, we often confront each other in anger and suspicion. There were individuals on the extremes of these alternatives who were in the wrong, but the largest number of genuine Christians on both sides of the Iron Curtain were in the right, even though they disagreed on how best to defend religious freedom and avoid nuclear war.

¹ Edited by Paul Mojzes and published in Grand Rapids, MI by Eerdmans, 2018.