Anglican polity (as reflected in *The Principles of Canon Law*) affirms that bishops, clergy and laity share authority in synodical government (Principle 15.9). Such a polity finds justification in an ecclesiology in which bishops, clergy and laity all share in the ministry of teaching, sanctifying and governing, albeit in different ways. Ecumenical dialogue amongst canonists is relevant here. Despite the Second Vatican Council introducing such an ecclesiology, there remains a view that governance is limited to the episcopate (with the bishop of Rome). The current Roman Catholic synodical process (not a single event) illustrates this current debate. In a chapter in the recently published *The Oxford Handbook of Vatican II*,[4] John Beal[5] argues that although the 1983 Code is structured according to the threefold offices of Christ, its content does not always reflect this, reverting sometimes to the outmoded older ecclesiology. Before Anglicans get too self-satisfied, we should consider our own recent arguments between bishops and synod in the Living in Love and Faith debate. Going back to *Principles*, how does 15.9 work in practice (and law) with the following 15.10 'Episcopacy is fundamental to church polity'. Bishops have the responsibility to discern the common mind of the Church and to articulate it; but what processes of listening to the experience of the wider church are entailed in their discernment? Ecclesiologists and canonists might compare notes and do so ecumenically.

doi:10.1017/S0956618X24000073

Autocéphalies. L'exercice de l'indépendance dans les Églises slaves orientales (IXe–XXIe siècle)

Marie-Hélène Blanchet, Frédéric Gabriel and Laurent Tatarenko (eds)
École française de Rome, Rome, 2021, 673 pp (paperback €45), ISBN: 978-2-7283-1453-9

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This book, dedicated to autocephalies (in the plural) in the Eastern Slavonic churches, has been prepared with the aim of studying historical cases of

[4] C Clifford and M Faggioli (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Vatican II* (Oxford, 2023), 432 ff.
[5] Co-editor of *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, see note 1.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0956618X24000085 Published online by Cambridge University Press

autocephalies over a long period and comparing the different ways in which they have been formalised. The aim is clearly to make this a non-partisan and non-denominational examination. The historical perspective, oriented towards the exercise of independence, makes room for contingent and singular elements. However, attention is also paid to the rhetoric used to justify independence and to the content of the vocabulary, which makes it an interesting book for theologians and canon lawyers as well. The historical perspective is also often enriched by more sociological reflections on language, *ethnos* and nation.

In his introduction, Frédéric Gabriel distinguishes, from the point of view of the practices of autocephaly, three periods with regard to the long period studied here. Although the term 'autocephaly' appears for the first time in a text dating from the sixth century, the studies presented in this book begin in the ninth and tenth centuries, which are considered to be the inaugural period of autocephaly in the Slavic world. The first period identified here is that of Byzantine rule, followed by Ottoman domination, before ending with the era of ethnic and national states in the 19th century. This periodisation and the criteria used immediately highlight the link with the geopolitical situation and with political independence, the political and ecclesiastical registers being often intertwined. On the one hand, some autocephalies were recognised when the political centre on which these Churches depended was weakening. This was the case with Constantinople and, at the same time, the strengthening of local civil and military powers in the Balkans; and while the independence of the Church was indeed achieved at the ecclesiastical level, it often remained linked to local political powers, particularly when it came to choosing the head of the Church.

In ecclesiastical terms, the notions of autocephaly and autonomy were only distinguished more rigorously in the 19th century, leading to a definition of autocephaly as strict independence. At the same time, autocephaly could not be thought of without the relationships between the churches, so legal and *de facto* independence at the administrative level went hand in hand with doctrinal and liturgical communion. The authority granting autocephalous status has also varied: sometimes it was the emperor, sometimes a patriarch, and in the 19th century the patriarch of Constantinople, if it was not the Church itself that proclaimed itself autocephalous.

The contributions to this book, written mainly in French (only three of the 22 chapters are written in English) by eminent researchers attached to the CNRS, the Collège de France or universities in other countries, first examine the problems of definition, before reviewing the historicisation of autocephalous practices according to the different periods, first from the ninth to the 16th century, then the modern era, followed by that known as the 'age of nations' and ending with the period since 1918. They focus, in particular, on the churches in Bulgaria, Serbia, Macedonia, Russia and Ukraine. Three contributions presenting contemporary visions bring the book to a close. Readers with a particular interest in the situation of the churches in Ukraine and their relations with Constantinople on the one hand and Moscow on the other, will find elements of analysis and reflection in the afterword written by

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Laurent Tatarenko. Each contribution is accompanied by a short bibliography. A fairly substantial cartographic dossier of around 40 pages, accompanied by brief explanations that situate the churches according to periods and countries, indexes of places and names of people, as well as summaries, are very helpful to consult this work.

The focus of the research, the scholarly nature of the contributions and the reputation of the authors make this a landmark work that deserves the attention of academics in a wide range of disciplines, including canonists.

doi:10.1017/S0956618X24000085

The Cambridge Companion to the Council of Nicaea

Young Richard Kim (ed.)
Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2021, 424 pp (paperback £30.99), ISBN: 978-1-108-44811-6

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The Council of Nicaea took place in 325, and canon lawyers are preparing to mark the 1700th anniversary of that event in various ways, not least the Ecclesiastical Law Society's conference 'Nicaea Received: 1700 years of Canons, Councils and Ecumenism', which is planned for June 2025 in Chichester, UK. *The Cambridge Companion to the Council of Nicaea* provides an admirable scholarly introduction to numerous aspects of the Council and its enduring legacy today, and can be recommended as good preparatory reading for the 2025 anniversary.

Nicaea gave us a creed and a canonical tradition, and left its imprint indelibly on a Christian church that was already becoming more international in extent and more public in character. Editor Young Richard Kim has taken a thoroughly interdisciplinary approach to this *Companion*. Theology, ecclesiology, history, archaeology and canon law are brought alongside one another, although each chapter tells its own story rather than contributing to a single narrative. The volume is not an introductory one, but should be mostly accessible for a non-specialist who has some existing knowledge of the period. In a few places Latin and Greek in footnotes have slipped through untranslated.

Part I considers the political and doctrinal background to the Council. Rebecca Lyman manages to make the deep complexity of the Arian controversy comprehensible, and (with reference to the work of Rowan Williams among

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0956618X24000085 Published online by Cambridge University Press