
This book surveys the history of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church from the Soviet incorporation of Western Ukrainian territory following the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact to its liquidation in Galicia and Transcarpathia after World War II. The central event in the narrative is the "Lviv" Sobor of 1946. Bociurkiw demonstrates the political motivation behind this action, which was directed exclusively by the Soviet secret police. His account draws on archival documents that have recently become available in the former USSR; other sources include Vatican, Church, and Western government archives, as well as interviews and private correspondences.

The culmination of a lifetime’s scholarship, the book is a masterful exposition of an important episode in Ukrainian history and Soviet cultural politics. The Greek Catholic Church was closely linked with nationalist resistance to Soviet rule. Bociurkiw analyzes the origins of the Church, its relationship to the national resistance, and the various ways in which it was persecuted and its remaining faithful driven underground. The clergy shared the fate of some half a million Western Ukrainians who were removed from Galicia and forcibly dispersed throughout Stalin’s Gulag archipelago.

The author also describes the parallel fate of the Church in Poland, which was outlawed at the same time as the Wista operation that resettled some 139,000 Ukrainians and imprisoned thousands more. It is because of its resistance to this "ethnic ecclesiocide" that the Church, when resurrected and legalized in 1989–90, was able to draw on such widespread support.

This is essential history for anyone wishing to understand contemporary events in Ukraine—and in particular, the tense relations between the churches and the survival of a powerful sense of national identity. The author, however, draws broader conclusions. He insists that neither Marxist atheism nor Leninism alone was sufficient motivation to explain the forcible incorporation of the Church into the Moscow patriarchate. Tsarist policies provide a fuller illumination of Stalin’s actions. There are striking parallels between the Soviet policies and tsarist treatment of the Church in Belarussian and Ukrainian territories in the 1770s. The common feature was a desire to remove barriers to Russification. In this way, Bociurkiw’s meticulously researched, concisely written, and well-edited book can also serve as a case history in Soviet nationality politics.

Myroslav Shkandrij


In 1819, a pioneer named David Thomson donated seven acres of land in Scarborough, Upper Canada, to establish a “globe” for a growing community of Presbyterian worshippers. Upon that globe (a Scottish word meaning “church land”), a kirk would be established. Eventually, local worshippers would erect two churches, two manses, a library, a Sunday school, and a cemetery, complete with sexton’s house and several outbuildings. The kirk is known today as St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church.

Although many Presbyterian churches still survive in Canada, few have managed to preserve their historical heritage as completely as St. Andrew’s has. This book, published to honor Scarborough’s bicentennial in 1997, contains dozens of photos, official records, treasury reports, and church bulletins, as well as numerous oral histories recorded from many generations of the congregation.

Written records such as accounts of pew rents and the minutes of church meetings make for fascinating reading. One of the biggest controversies to rage at St. Andrew’s was a proposal to install a pipe organ to accompany the choir; rather than allow this “disgrace” into St. Andrew’s, one church elder in the 1890s locked the sanctuary door and ran away with the key. At a 1920 Women’s Missionary Society meeting, members who had no qualms about sending female missionaries to live among “primitive heathens” in foreign lands expressed serious misgivings about subjecting those same candidates to the