

UKRAINIAN CHURCHES OF MANITOBA

An Architectural History Theme Study



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Culture, Heritage and Tourism



On the cover: Tabernacle at Holy Ghost Ukrainian Catholic Church, Merridale. The tabernacle, which sits on the altar, is a miniature Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral.

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PREFACE

This booklet has been adapted from a larger publication developed in 1987 by the Historic Resources Branch of Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism. That study, *Ukrainian Churches of Manitoba: A Building Inventory*, should still be available in public libraries.

That original study was intended to assist church hierarchies to gain a better understanding of the architectural heritage of this building type, and thus to undertake better educational, tourism, designation and conservation programs. To that end, this original work also contained a substantial inventory of 314 buildings in the province. A pdf copy of the original study and another of the inventory are available by contacting the branch:

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This present extract from the 1987 report contains the contextual essay that was developed after a close review of the inventory results, and an examination of documents and information from the various church archives. This essay presents the many important and interesting themes that have attended the development of Ukrainian church architecture in Manitoba, and will be useful for anyone interested in this important story.

DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTIANITY IN UKRAINE

THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN UKRAINE is complex and rendered even more complicated by the constantly shifting political boundaries that define the individual regions that comprise Ukraine. To begin, it is necessary to understand why there are two major Ukrainian religious groups—Ukrainian Orthodox and Ukrainian Catholic.^Ψ A synopsis of the development of the Christian church in Ukraine, and its offshoot in Manitoba, clarifies this historical division.

A gradual introduction of Christianity into the areas bounding Ukraine probably occurred in the first century A.D. But it was not until 988, when Prince Volodymyr initiated mass baptisms, that the Christian religion was formally established in Ukraine. A major schism of the Christian church occurred in 1054, dividing leadership of the Christian world between Rome and the capital of the Byzantine Empire, Constantinople. The princes of Ukraine accepted the Greek Orthodox or Eastern Rite, thus securing strong ties with the Byzantine Empire. Initially, the Orthodox church gave a new unity to Ukraine. In the succeeding five centuries, however, Ukraine was fractured by political turmoil.

^Ψ For purposes of clarity the descriptive terms for these two dominant groups – the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Catholic Church – will be used most frequently in this report. In the account of Ukrainian church history that precedes the architectural analysis, the various major name changes that have affected these two church groups will be discussed. The welter of specific legal church entities within the two church families – which changed over time and according to place, but which nevertheless still pursued the basic tenets of Orthodoxy or Catholicism – will be avoided in the text thereafter, so that the broader discussion of church architecture is not complicated by the specific theological differences that affect any large ecclesiastical organization.

By the fourteenth century Ukraine, and adjoining territories—including Romania, whose northern inhabitants had close ethnic ties with Ukraine—had been conquered and divided amongst a number of foreign powers. Eventually, the major portion of the Ukrainian territory, that is Central and Eastern Ukraine, fell under the sway of the Russian Tsars. The religious autonomy of the central and eastern areas was also compromised, especially after the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453. The Tsars, who were the titular heads of the Greek Orthodox Church, claimed that Moscow was the “Third Rome” and the Greek Orthodox Church fell more clearly into the sphere of authority of the resurgent Russian Empire. In the western Ukrainian provinces of Galicia and Bukovyna—homeland for the majority of Ukrainian immigrants to Canada in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—political control fell to Poland (Figures 1 and 2). As in central and eastern Ukraine this political imposition unfortunately brought with it religious strife. After 1500, Ukrainian religious autonomy in the western provinces had been thwarted with Polish kings exerting their authority over the church.

Lower Left: Figure 1.

Europe, ca. 1200, indicating the location of Ukraine within the continent.

Below: Figure 2.

Ukraine, ca. 1500. Galicia and Bukovyna are located in the western half of Ukraine, stretching between Poland and Romania.



Orthodoxy and Catholicism in Ukraine

Political intervention was not the only threat to the Orthodox Church in Ukraine. Religious pressures, including the rise of Protestantism, and, in Constantinople, a waning interest in the Ukrainian church, forced a major ecclesiastical rupture. At the synod of Berestia in 1596 the Greek Orthodox Church in Ukraine was split, especially in Polish-dominated Galicia. A new church, the Uniate Church, which aligned itself with Rome rather than Constantinople, was formed. Bukovyna, which was not controlled by the Poles, remained Orthodox. Thus, from the beginning of the seventeenth century, the history of Ukrainian Christianity is dominated by the Greek Orthodox Church throughout Ukraine, and by the Uniate (Greek Catholic) Church (subsequently known in Canada by the middle of the twentieth century as Ukrainian Catholic) in Galicia.

While the Uniate church retained much of the Eastern rite and liturgy, it was hoped that the union with Rome would offer protection from the interference of the Orthodox hierarchy in Moscow. Actually, the union was an attempt by the Roman Catholic Polish authorities to convert the inhabitants of Galicia. The formation of the Uniate Church was thus perceived by the Polish government as a first step in drawing Ukrainians away from regional religious traditions and into the Polish Roman Catholic fold. But this attempt failed. Indeed, the Uniates in Galicia reacted to Polish influences by reinforcing a Ukrainian nationalistic attitude.

Ukrainian Immigration to Canada and New World Influences

While religious and political differences may have played a role in the late nineteenth century migration of Ukrainians, it was primarily the economic and social conditions that forced many to seek a new home in North America. In the late nineteenth century poverty drove many of the Ukrainian peasants to emigrate from Bukovyna and Galicia: small land allotments had been subdivided with each generation; taxes were high; wood for fuel was scarce and expensive.

Immigration from Ukraine to Canada had begun quietly in 1891. By 1897, a Ukrainian immigration boom was on, encouraged by the open immigration policies of the Canadian government. When war broke out in 1914, there were 170,000 new Ukrainian-Canadians in the three Prairie provinces (Figures 3 and 4).

To some extent, the religious situation for the new Ukrainian immigrant to Canada proved almost as complex as it had been at home. Having not been accompanied by Ukrainian Catholic or Orthodox priests, many of the first Ukrainian pioneers in Manitoba were reliant upon traveling American priests from the more established Eastern Rite dioceses for the occasional service. And, often, it was to the already established local denominations that the Ukrainians found themselves forced to turn for spiritual guidance.

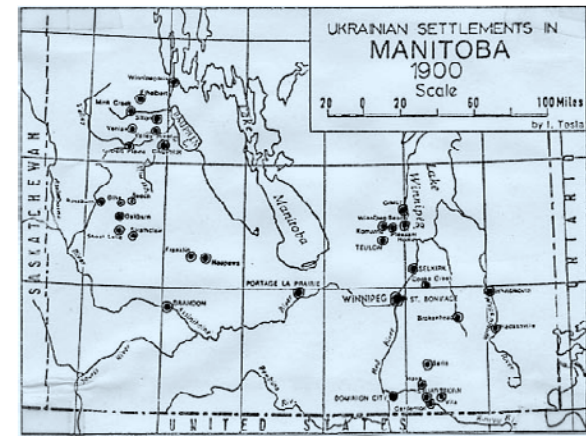
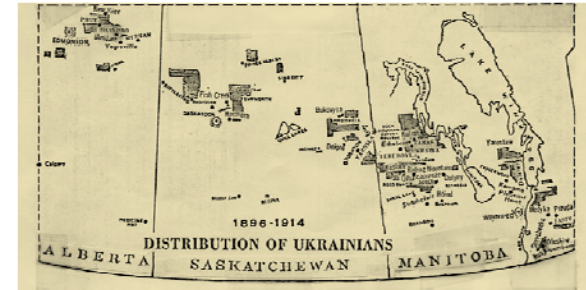


Figure 3. Distribution of Ukrainian pioneer settlement in Western Canada. (Marunchuk, *The Ukrainian Canadians*, p. 48.)

Figure 4. Ukrainian settlements in Manitoba. (Kaye, *Dictionary of Ukrainian Canadian Biography*, 1975, p. xxii.)

Ukrainian Greek Catholics thus found it necessary to petition Rome for priests through Archbishop Langevin in Winnipeg. But, because the Roman Catholic Church opposed the introduction of married Greek Catholic priests into Canada, many years passed before Ukrainian clergymen arrived in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of the settlers. In the meantime, several Roman Catholic priests were designated to serve the Ukrainian settlers. Ukrainian requests for their own priests finally received support from Count Andrie Sheptytsky, the Ukrainian Catholic Metropolitan of Galicia, who toured Western Canada in 1909. He was instrumental in having Rome appoint the first Greek Catholic bishop in Manitoba, Bishop Nykyta Budka, in 1912.

Ukrainian Greek Orthodox immigrants were likewise uneasy with the new situation. Alarmed by the actions of a self-proclaimed bishop and metropolitan from the United States, a large group of Orthodox Ukrainians broke away to form the Independent Greek Church. While this group retained the Eastern rite and liturgy, they were encouraged and supported by the Presbyterian Church. The Independent Greek Church declined after 1907 when the Presbyterians encouraged the new church to accept Protestant reforms. Most members returned to Ukrainian Orthodoxy while a few joined the Presbyterians.

A large group of Catholic Ukrainians, who were disillusioned with the religious situation in Canada, and who refused to recognize the Pope as their spiritual head, organized the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada in 1918. This new religious organization was, of course, not associated with the Greek Orthodox Church in the old country, although some Greek Orthodox Bukovynians later joined them. In several cases whole congregations, whose members were formerly Catholic, joined the new church. In some instances, where the two had once worshipped together, the construction of a second church in the community was necessary.

The years following the initial readjustment period of settlement have witnessed the gradual establishment of Ukrainian Catholic and Ukrainian Orthodox churches as the principal Ukrainian Churches in Manitoba. In spite of the distinct character of their individual religious expression, the architecture of the two faiths exhibits many more similarities than differences. In Manitoba, the designs of Orthodox and Catholic churches are often difficult to distinguish from one another. In this study, therefore, the architecture of the Ukrainian Orthodox and Ukrainian Catholic Churches will be discussed together.

UKRAINIAN CHURCH ARCHITECTURE

Ukrainian immigrants to Canada built their churches according to the centuries-old traditions of their homeland. These customs were primarily drawn from the architecture of the Eastern Christian church in Ukraine. In Manitoba, this heritage produced variations on two basic European styles of Ukrainian church building: the Byzantine, introduced into Ukraine in the tenth and eleventh centuries; and the Ukrainian Baroque, as it had developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As with most architectural styles, the Ukrainian Baroque was considerably varied and modified as it became widely used. The folk or vernacular variations, especially those examples in wood, were of considerable influence on Ukrainian churches built in Canada.

Byzantine Influences

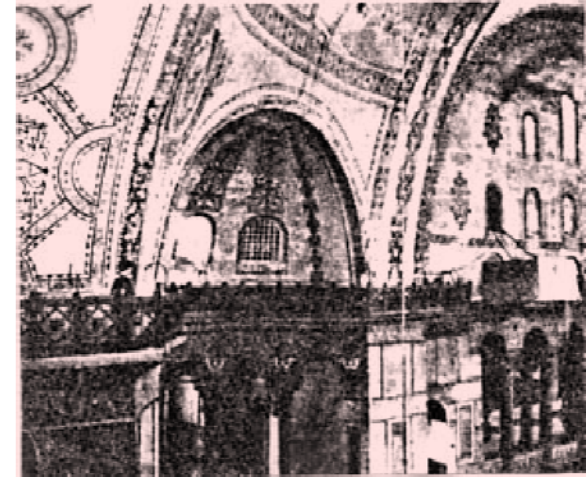
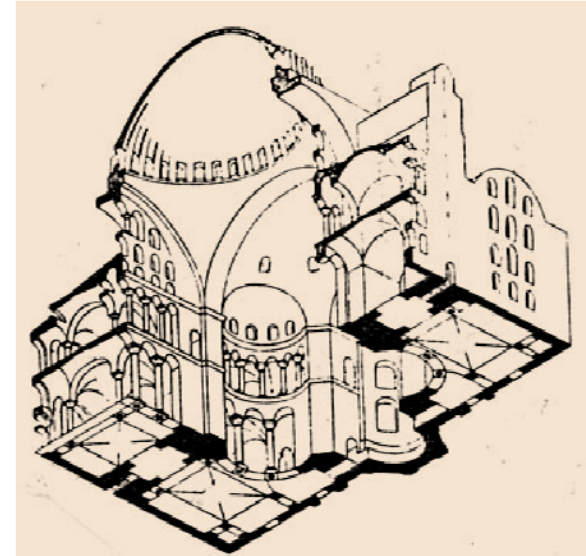
The preliminary source for the architectural style of Ukrainian churches is that of Byzantine architecture. The Church of the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople (523-37 A.D.) was built in an innovative design, and greatly influenced its Ukrainian descendents (Figures 5 and 6). The Hagia Sophia combined a large dome over a cross plan to produce a dramatic yet quiet sense of mystery. St. Sophia in Kiev (1037-mid 1040s), in emulating the Hagia Sophia, became the model for eastern church design in Ukraine (Figures 7 and 8).

Figure 5.

Hagia Sophia, Constantinople, (532-537 A.D.). Analytical half-section. (W. MacDonald, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, Figure 55)

Figure 6.

Hagia Sophia. Interior view of north and northwest superstructure. (W. MacDonald)



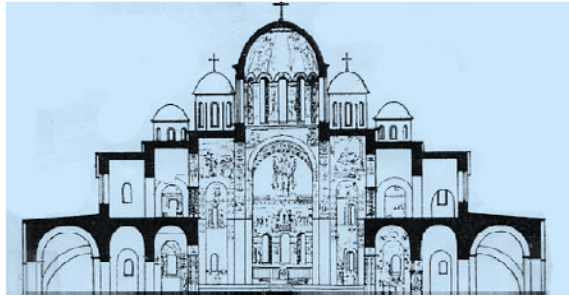


Figure 7.

St. Sophia, Kiev, (1037-mid 1040s). Cross-section based on archaeological investigations. (O. Powstenko, *The Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev*, p. 32)



Figure 8.

St. Sophia. Interior view showing the restored nave area. (O. Powstenko, *The Cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev*, p. 97)

Churches built in the larger urban centres of Ukraine were great stone structures whose plans were based principally on the Greek cross. These churches emphasized the vertical, having hemispherical domes set on drums, resulting in a large enclosed volume of space. The floor plan expressed the liturgical requirements of the Eastern Rite as practiced in the Byzantine Empire. One of the basic conditions of the Rite was the division of the congregation from the altar area by the altar screen, commonly known as the iconostas (also spelled iconostasis), often a highly ornate screen shrouding the ceremonial mysteries from the laity. The physical separation also underlined the role of the priesthood as intermediaries between God and the people. The iconostas took a variety of forms and could be either a solid wall or an intricately carved wooden frame. Usually the iconostas was pierced by three doorways which could be closed by carved gates representing the Holy Trinity. The central, principal opening was referred to as the Royal Door; the flanking doors as the Deacon's Doors. Traditionally the Byzantine Emperor, and later the Russian Tsar, were the only lay persons allowed to approach the altar.

Ukrainian Baroque

Baroque architecture in western Europe spanned the period roughly between 1600 and 1760, although these dates should not be seen as precise limits to the development of the style. Already existing architectural elements, primarily those of Classical antiquity which had been reinterpreted in Renaissance buildings, were developed further in the succeeding Baroque period throughout Europe. Architecture became a bold, flamboyant and colourful expression of the art of the Catholic countries of the Counter Reformation during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The sixteenth century Church of the Holy Trinity, in the Drohobych region displayed elements of the transition to the Baroque style (Figure 9). The Chapel of the Three Sisters (Figure 10) built in 1578 also had many of the sculptural and classicising elements which typified Baroque structures.

It was during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in a period of struggle for national independence, that there arose a resurgence of Ukrainian art. The first examples of Ukrainian or Kozak Baroque emerged as early as the first half of the seventeenth century; but not until the second half did it flourish. Its development was the result of a greater contact with mainstream western European art, primarily in areas under Polish domination. The original St. Sophia in Kiev was restored and enlarged during this period, the result being a complete break with the Byzantine style in the design of subsequent structures (Figures 11 and 12).

In these extravagant Baroque churches were many of the elements that were to make their way into the more subdued Ukrainian-Canadian ecclesiastical buildings. While the Ukrainian Baroque in general had a great effect on the church buildings constructed in Manitoba, another, more regional aspect of the style made a significant contribution – the use of wood construction.

Figure 9.

Church of the Holy Trinity, Nyzharkovychi in the Drohobych region (sixteenth century). (I. Asieiev et al., *An Outline of the History of Architecture in the Ukrainian S.S.R.*, p. 91)

Figure 10.

Chapel of the Three Saints (1578). (I. Asieiev et al., *An Outline of the History of Architecture in the Ukrainian S.S.R.*, p. 93)

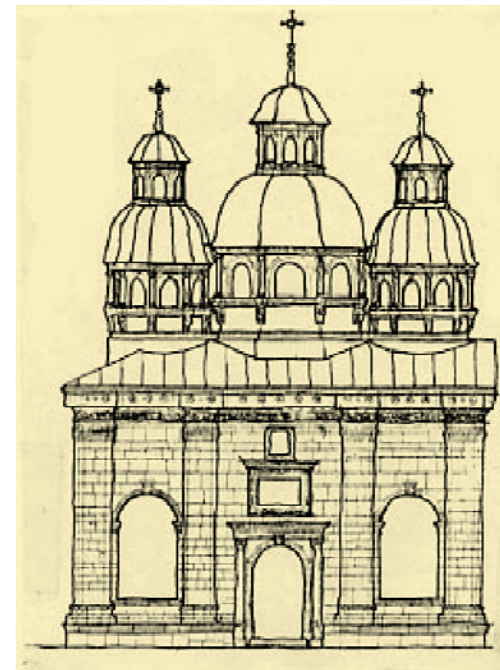




Figure 11.

St. Sophia, Kiev. The central five apses of the original eleventh century structure form the nucleus of the enormous seventeenth century structure. The present exterior is almost entirely the result of additions in the Ukrainian Baroque style (D. Buxton, *Russian Medieval Architecture*, Figure 57)



Figure 12.

St. Sophia. This longitudinal section through the nave reveals the eleventh century core, in black, surmounted by the later Ukrainian Baroque additions. (H. Lohvyn, *Across Ukraine: Early Artistic Monuments*, p. 53)

The basic designs of Ukrainian wooden church architecture had developed during the tenth and eleventh centuries. There were several basic types of plans that characterized subsequent wooden churches (Figure 13). The simplest were the one and two frame plans. In this context, a frame is analogous to a space or a room of either modest or grand proportions. These straightforward two-dimensional compositions attained complexity externally as each frame found its own distinct three-dimensional identity, with towers, domes and cupolas, known in Ukraine as banyas. The development of more sophisticated churches essentially meant the addition of frames. The most common plan was the three frame church, with the central frame somewhat larger than the adjacent two. An addition of two frames to the foregoing three produced a five frame plan, also fairly common. Four smaller frames added to the inside corners of the cross plan produced a nine frame church. A seven-frame plan was formed when two towers were added to the front of a five-frame church.

The stylistic range of wood churches in rural Ukraine is exemplified by several notable structures: the church of the Holy Trinity in Chernivtsi (1774) with its steep pitched roof (Figure 14); St. George's at Drohobych (Figure 15); and the three-frame churches in Krechiv and Chortkiv, with their elaborately shingled domes (Figures 16 and 17). All are of log construction and display features such as the large dome, banyas, tall crosses and bell towers – which typically sit detached – that distinguish these as churches from Ukraine. And, most importantly, these are the buildings which clearly form the precedents for many Ukrainian churches in Manitoba. The Chernivtsi Church was quite obviously, for example, the same type of church as St. Elias Ukrainian Orthodox Church at Sirko, discussed below.

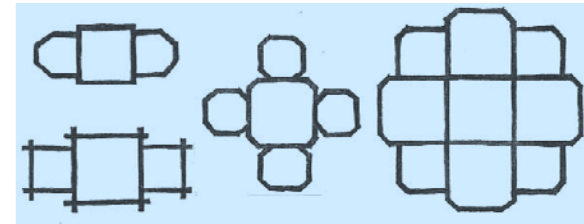


Figure 13.

Examples of three, five and nine frame plans. (Redrawn From V. Sichynsky, *Ukraine: A concise Encyclopedia*, p. 532)

Figure 14.

Church of the Holy Trinity in the suburb of Klokuchka in Chernivtsi (1774). (H. Lohvyn, *Across Ukraine: Early Artistic Monuments*, p. 332)



Figure 15.

St. George's Church in Drohobych (seventeenth century). (H. Lohvyn, *Across Ukraine: Early Artistic Monuments*, p. 354)

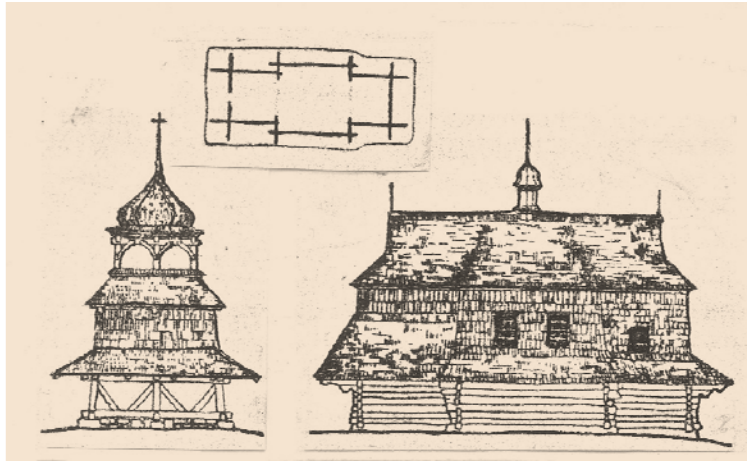


Figure 16.

Church and belfry in Krechiv in the Lviv region (1658-1724). (I. Asieiev et al., *An Outline of the History of Architecture in the Ukraine S.S.R.*, p. 215)

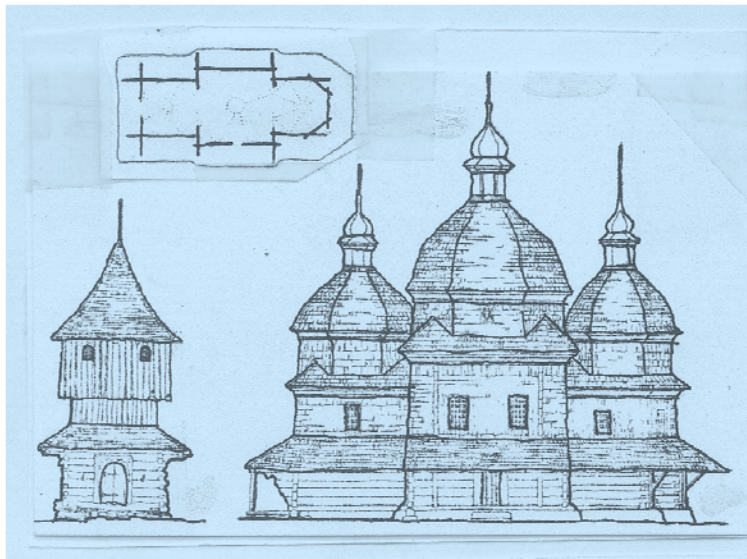


Figure 17.

Church of the Dormition with its attendant belfry, Chortkiv (seventeenth century). (I. Asieiev et al., *An Outline of the History of Architecture in the Ukraine S.S.R.*, p. 222)

As with the stone churches, an important feature in Ukrainian wooden churches was the iconostas. Traditionally, decorations had been in mosaic and fresco on stone and brick walls. With the use of wood construction, the alternative was to produce icons and paintings that could be incorporated onto the iconostas. The result was the development of the icon as a major feature in wooden churches. Artists principally employed the techniques of painting encaustically (burning into a coloured clay surface with wax) and with tempera on carefully constructed wooden panels. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries different mediums came into use, such as oil on canvas (Figure 18).



Figure 18.

This icon, in Holy Eucharist Ukrainian Catholic Church at Horod, Manitoba, is an oil painting.

UKRAINIAN CHURCH ARCHITECTURE IN MANITOBA

Initially, harsh circumstances necessitated the construction of log churches by Ukrainian immigrants to Manitoba. As the communities grew and prospered, however, modest wood frame and eventually “cathedral-style” buildings were raised. But these new structures were not facsimiles of the churches they had left in Ukraine. Not only did they have to adapt forms and details to a new climate, but the dearth of master craftsmen and the lack of immediate access to tangible traditional precedents meant that only a partial transference of building skills could be achieved. Moreover, Ukrainian settlers were often influenced by nearby settlers and their particular building techniques. This combination often led to the mix of traditional Ukrainian forms with those methods being practiced in turn-of-the-century Manitoba.

Manitoba Log Churches

During the waves of immigration during the 1880s and 1890s, almost all of the better farmland in southern Manitoba was patented. This left only marginal land unoccupied in the southeast, the Interlake and the Dauphin regions. Here the eastern Europeans settled in the 1890s. A small church or chapel was often amongst the first buildings to be erected by the devout, newly-arrived immigrants. Where they were not replaced by newer structures, a few of these churches remain, demonstrating that their builders had attempted to duplicate buildings which were most familiar to them.

Only four surviving log churches have so far been positively identified. Three of these – St. Michael’s Ukrainian Catholic Church, Trembowla, St. Michael’s Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Gardenton and St. Elias Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Sirko – were built by Ukrainian pioneers. The fourth log church, St. Elie Romanian Orthodox Church, Lennard is Romanian, but its distinctive design is derived from the same Eastern European traditions.

The oldest Ukrainian church in Canada, St. Michael's Ukrainian Catholic Church at Trembowla, has important historical, as well as architectural claims. The Ukrainian pioneers who built the church in the Mink River area arrived in the district in 1896. They persuaded Father Nestor Dmytriw, editor of the American newspaper Svoboda, to visit them while on a Canadian tour. In the spring of 1897, Father Dmytriw celebrated the first Ukrainian Catholic Liturgy in Canada in the Trembowla area, at what is now called the Cross of Freedom Site. In the fall, he blessed a cemetery at Mink River and encouraged the congregation to build a church there, which they did the following year. St. Michael's, though small in size, boasts an interior that is a remarkable example of Byzantine-style icon painting and decoration.

Foremost among log Ukrainian churches is St. Michael's Orthodox Church at Gardenton, consecrated in 1899 (Figure 20). At first this building had a straw-thatched low-pitched gable roof, with the middle section jutting out to form the traditional central frame of the Ukrainian church plan. Within two years, however, the thatch roof was replaced by shingles and the oak, ash, cedar and tamarack logs were covered with siding. The plan of St. Michael's has remained basically unaltered and is the type most popular in Ukraine: three frames orientated on an east-west axis, with the central frame slightly larger than the adjacent two.

In 1915, the old roof, which had rotted and leaked badly, was replaced by the present roof and dome structure, designed by Menholy Chalaturnyk, also the designer of the church at Sirko. This carpenter/builder rebuilt the roof according to examples remembered from his native Bukovyna and completed it by the fall of 1915. The drum is octagonal, pierced at its base by two small square windows on the north and south sides. Capping this is a single dome, edged by a strip of decorative trim and covered by tin. Chalaturnyk also placed two small cupolas the ridge of the hipped roofs, over the outer frames. These are also encased in tin and, unlike the large central dome which is crowned by an Orthodox cross, have traditional Latin crosses, suggesting that Catholics contributed to its construction.



Figure 19.

St. Michael's Ukrainian Catholic Church, Trembowla, built in 1898, making it the oldest surviving Ukrainian church in Canada .



Figure 20.

St. Michael's Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church, Gardenton. The Plan of the church – three frames oriented on an east-west axis with the central frame slightly larger than the adjacent two – has remained basically unaltered.



Figure 21.

St. Michael's Church, Gardenton. This view into the west frame shows the icons and the impermanent seating.

The original design of the roof was a provincial form typical in Bukovyna. Chalaturnyk's dome and cupolas, however, illustrated a rising awareness of a Ukrainian national identity among Bukovynian settlers. Ukrainian national consciousness had been strengthened in Canada by the close contact made by immigrants from various Ukrainian provinces and their exposure to a thriving Ukrainian language press. It is not surprising then, that the designer of the 1915 church roof selected a style which was more common to national religious architecture throughout the entire Ukraine.

The interior of St. Michael's, Gardenton, reflects the splendour and love of brilliant colour and decoration found in the Eastern Church. Entering through the front door, the worshipper is drawn into a series of spaces. From the entrance to the iconostas, movement was originally unobstructed by seating, with the exception of a few benches placed against the walls for the elderly. Devout parishioners were required to stand during the service. Moving forward from the small porch, it is necessary to step up into the west end frame – a shallow barrel-vaulted room lined by brightly painted planking (Figure 21). Small hand-fashioned shelves and a variety of icons enclose the east corner; a brass chandelier hangs from above. Passing beneath the devotional expression inscribed above the arched partition opening, "Our Hope is in God," written in Ukrainian, the worshipper enters the large domed central space (Figure 22). Overhead, gold stars on a background of midnight blue speckle the undersurface of the dome. Two magnificent chandeliers are suspended from the dome ceiling: one is double-tiered of brass and crystal, the other is of wood, iconographically carved with stylized wings.

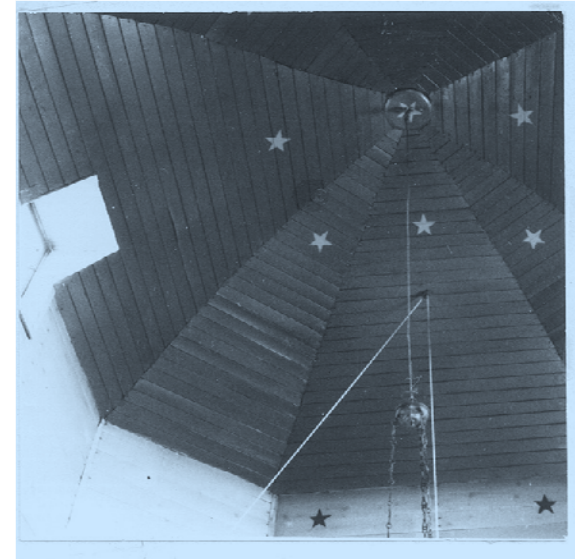


Figure 22.

St. Michael's Church, Gardenton. Interior of the dome.

Figure 23.

St. Michael's Church, Gardenton. Altar area, showing devotional pictures and handmade altar fixtures.

The iconostas, designed by Wasyl Chornopysky, is covered from floor to dome with framed icons, many of which were imported from Kiev, St. Petersburg, Moscow and Odessa and donated by the parishioners (Figure 23). The screen is pierced by the traditional three openings, with the Royal Doors of the central portal decorated by fretwork. Chornopysky also carved the colourful candelabras, scripture stand and table as companion pieces to the large wooden cross, dated 1902. Pennants and banners donated by the early parishioner's stand against the partition walls of the central nave. Several fine objects lie upon the altar within the sanctuary. The large Holy Gospel, printed in Church Slavonic, is bound in red velvet with engraved metal Figures and clasps. The chief carpenter of the original church, Wasyl Kekot, had carved an intricate wooden cross, dated 1897, for the church's consecration. Two years before the reconsecration ceremony, held in the fall of 1915, he fashioned a new crucifix. Both crosses, displayed in the church, exhibit exceptional skill and beauty.

St. Elias Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church at Sirko (Figure 24) was erected in 1909, and is slightly larger than St. Elie at Lennard due to the extended sanctuary. Other than this, both the Sirko and the Lennard churches are very similar in plan and form. Both are built on a rectangular plan extended on the short sides with curved vestibules and altars (Figure 25). The roof shapes of both are reminiscent of the broad thatched roofs of Ukrainian houses, but are distinguished from other early Ukrainian churches by the eave, which sweeps uninterrupted around the building. The Sirko structure initially suited the small congregation, but was replaced by a newer house of worship in 1950. The old church, nevertheless remains. It is used as the cemetery chapel and for individual worship.



Figure 24.
St. Elias Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Sirko.

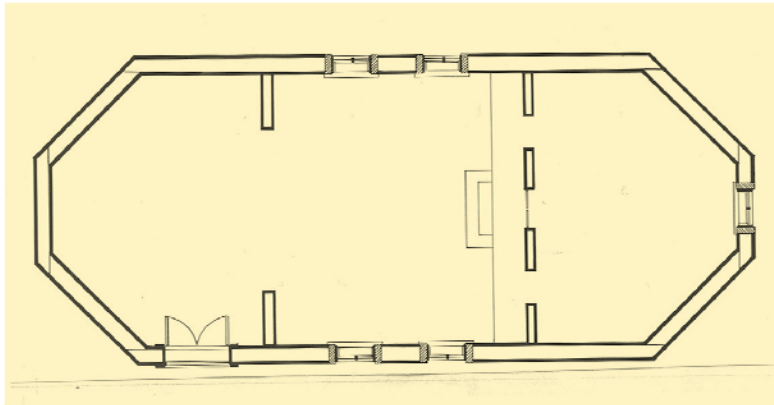


Figure 25.
Floor plan. St. Elias Ukrainian Orthodox Church,
Sirko.



Figure 26.

Bell tower of St. Alias church, Sirko. The roof of the tower is built of roughly laid vertical shakes similar in nature to planking. Bell towers were a ubiquitous feature on Ukrainian churchyard in Manitoba, just as they had been in Ukraine. Those in Manitoba were, like this one, simply constructed and animated with a few functional, but decorative elements.

The corners of the old church are probably of dovetail construction. The whole of the exterior was mud-plastered and whitewashed. Later this covering was hidden by wooden horizontal siding. The corners of the free-standing bell tower, however, have their dovetail joints exposed (Figure 26). The beams and joists used to construct the upper tower are joined with fairly elaborate connections which have been pegged. The same construction techniques were likely used in the church.

Although St. Elie Romanian Orthodox Church is not strictly of Ukrainian original, there are several reasons for its inclusion in this study. The building is the oldest Romanian Orthodox Church in Manitoba, and Ukrainians in the area did attend services there and may have contributed to its construction. Moreover, the church building itself closely resembles Ukrainian log church designs. Indeed, as noted above, its form, which is derived from Bukovynian domestic architecture, is closely allied with St. Elias at Sirko. St. Elie was built in 1908, replacing a smaller log edifice from 1904 (Figure 27). Between 1903 and 1904, until the first church was built, services were held out-of-doors.

Upon entering St. Elie one passes into a small vestibule. Above is the balcony for the cantor (ritual singer). A few short steps beyond is the nave. The view towards the iconostas is, as usual, unobstructed by any seating (Figure 28). Many of the icons which hang upon the iconostas were brought by the settlers to the new land (Figure 29) as were the banners and a number of holy articles. The altar itself is decorated with an elaborate altar cloth. A number of the church possessions, such as the candle holders and lanterns, were handcrafted. The walls of the interior are covered with pressed sheet metal of a type originally made at the turn of the century (Figure 30). Originally silver in colour, the walls have subsequently been painted blue. The ceiling is also a pale blue, implying the heavenly vault.



Figure 27.

St. Elie Church, Lennard, shortly after its construction. (St. Elie Romanian Orthodox Church Museum) A restoration project begun in 1979 has seen the church, which now functions as a museum, carefully restored.



Figure 28.

St. Elie Church, Lennard. This view shows the iconostas and icons.



Figure 29.

St. Elie Church, Lennard. Looking down from the cantor's loft the altar area, the Royal Doors can be seen in their closed position.



Figure 30.

St. Elie Church, Lennard. Detail of sheet metal wall panels.

Manitoba Wood Frame Churches

The three decades from 1900 to 1930 produced more churches – and most of these fairly modest wood frame structures – than any other period: at least 120. This wealth of productivity almost guarantees certain anomalies; the most noteworthy of these involves discrepancies between construction dates and sophistication of designs. A particular parish might be able to afford a very sophisticated building in 1905 complete with an internally expressed dome, while another parish constructing its church in 1925 – and expected to benefit from earlier examples – might build a considerably simpler structure. The building technologies involved in wood frame construction were clearly available to Ukrainian congregations at an early date; that they were not always used to their maximum effect can best be explained by depressed economic circumstances.

Holy Eucharist Ukrainian Catholic Church at Horod was erected between 1922-23 under the direction of Michael Hawrysh, a local carpenter/builder (Figure 31). The original cost of this structure was approximately \$2,500 and the building was probably constructed with much volunteer labour. Although the church has a gable roof – marked by three banyas – the interior boasts a barrel vault finished with tongue-and-groove boards with V-joints (Figure 32). The barrel vault is painted with representations of clouds upon a blue background. The walls are also decorated with a cloud motif, while the painted wainscoting is finished with a stenciled leaf pattern. The central opening of the iconostas is barred by a heavily-gilded pair of round-arched gates. These contain four medallion icons representing the Evangelists – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John – traditional portraits found on the Royal Doors.



Figure 31.

Holy Eucharist Ukrainian Catholic Church, Horod. This small white and green building is a noted local landmark.



Figure 32.

Holy Eucharist Church, Horod. View of the church from the central or Royal Gate in the iconostas looking west to the rear and the cantor's loft.

The Holy Ghost Ukrainian Catholic Church at Merridale, built in 1923, conforms to the three frame plan with the central section in this case larger than the outer two (Figure 33). However, the roof of this church reflects a style more prevalent throughout Ukraine; unlike, for example the Gardenton church, which at first was of a more regional character. While the sequence of internal spaces – vestibule, nave, sanctuary – is followed at Merridale, the interior of this church is a departure from the previous examples in terms of its limited applied ornament (Figure 34). There is no iconostas, although there are several small icons on the walls of the sanctuary with a large oil painting behind the main altar. Upon the altar is an elaborately-bound Bible. The handmade tabernacle, flanked by tall brass candlesticks, takes the form of a traditional Ukrainian church, with a large central dome and banyas (Figure 35). While the fine religious objects show fine ornamentation, the overall interior effect remains one of considerable simplicity.



Figure 33.
Holy Ghost Ukrainian Catholic Church,
Merridale.



Figure 34.
Holy Ghost Ukrainian Catholic Church,
Merridale. View down the nave showing the
barrel vault, chancel and altar.



Figure 35.
Holy Ghost Ukrainian Catholic Church,
Merridale. The tabernacle on the altar is a
miniature Ukrainian Cathedral.

St. Michael's Ukrainian Orthodox Church at Olha (Figure 36) was erected in 1904 under the supervision of John and Peter Kowtecki. This wood frame house of worship replaced a small log church of 1901 which served the Oakburn-Dolyny area until the 1930s. The plan of St. Michael's is cross-shaped and can be considered five-framed. The short arms of the cross – the apsidal transepts – contain side altars (Figure 37). Two towers with banyas adorn the front facade of the structure, with a small central cupola atop a two tier drum at the centre of the gable crossing. The interior of St. Michael's features many colourful wall murals and portraits, as well as gold stars painted on a heavenly blue vault (Figures 38 and 39). Banners and faux marble – painted wood and plaster – wainscotting add to the overall impact. The iconostas is a solid wall adorned with gold leaf and small individual icons.



Left: Figure 36.

St. Michael's Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Olha.

Above: Figure 37.

St. Michael's Church, Olha. This view shows the apsidal transept and chancel.



Figure 38.

St. Michael's Church, Olha. The vaulted apsidal chapels and nave contribute to the sense of spaciousness in the church.



Figure 39.

St. Michael's Church, Olha. From the middle of the ceiling the sun shines down in painted radiance, the interstices between the roof segments gilded in imitation of solar rays.

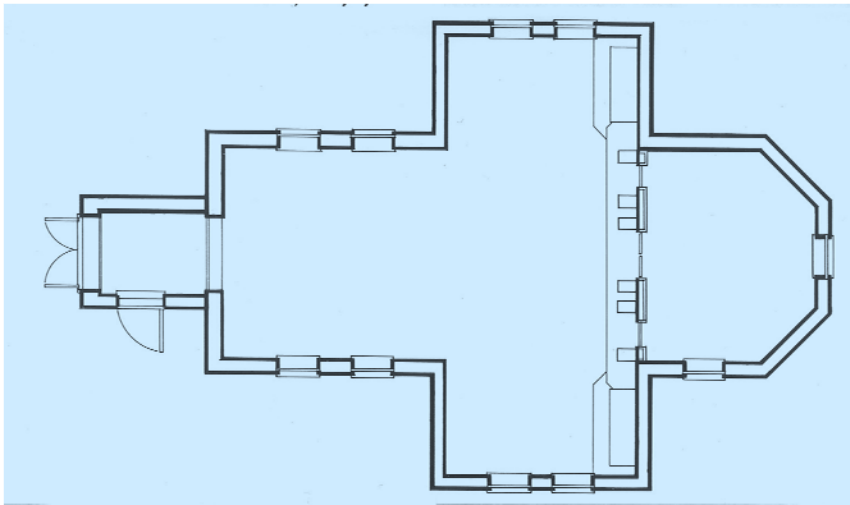
Construction on St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church at Dolyny (Figure 40) probably began in 1904 and concluded in 1907. The church was built on a cross plan with apsidal transepts (Figure 41). It bears round-arched windows, rose windows and the traditional banyas. The large dome at the crossing is a remarkable feature. Whereas many other Ukrainian churches of this era used a small dome at the crossing as a purely external decoration, the builders at Dolyny opened their large spherical dome to the interior. The interior is not only physically lighted by the windows in the dome, but its addition creates an airy sensation in the whole building. Within, the hand-carved iconostas dates from 1928 (Figure 42). From the vault of heaven – the inside of the dome – hangs a massive crystal chandelier suspended from a large central star representing the sun (Figure 43). The stained glass for a number of the windows was donated by individual parishioners. Such artistic adornments as faux marble, stenciled wall clouds, and decorative edging animate the whole interior.

Below: Figure 40.

St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church, Dolyny.

Left: Figure 41.

Floor plan. St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church, Dolyny.





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Figure 42.

St. John the Baptist Church, Dolyny. Iconostas.



Figure 43.

St. John the Baptist Church, Dolyny. Interior of cupola.

“Cathedral-Style” Churches

After the turn of the century, Ukrainian congregations often grew to a size where their small church buildings were impractical. The years from about 1920 to 1940 thus witnessed the construction of many large Ukrainian churches in Manitoba. These were no longer simple log or light wood frame structures like those built by the early settlers. The new churches were more elaborate structures, larger in scale and often more sophisticated in ornamentation; similar in conception to the large Ukrainian Baroque churches like the restored St. Sophia in Kiev, the Church of the Holy Trinity and the Chapel of the Three Saints. Although not technically cathedrals – which are the seats of bishops – these churches are so extraordinary, especially in a rural landscape, that they are frequently called “prairie cathedrals.”

Considering the modest nature of the log or wood frame churches examined previously in this study, the large churches designed for Ukrainian Catholic and Ukrainian Orthodox congregations in Manitoba during the 1920s, 30s, 40, and 50s are remarkable. Foremost among these are the Ukrainian Catholic churches designed by Father Philip Ruh. His designs for “cathedral-style” churches adorn the countryside outside Manitoba from Edmonton, Alberta to St. Catharines, Ontario. Research to date attributes 33 structures to this amazing man. Ruh’s influence also spread to other communities in less direct ways. He was often called upon by various congregations to discuss the designs for new churches and the two main contractors working for Ruh relied on his designs for the churches they built without his supervision. Ruh was prolific and his designs influential.

While there was not a prolific church designer like Father Ruh in the Ukrainian Orthodox community, there were several large Orthodox churches built after 1930 that can be considered “cathedrals.” Two of these – St. Michael’s Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Sandy Lake and Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Shortdale – are certainly of a size and nature that lifts them to “cathedral” status. These two buildings will be discussed after an analysis of Father Ruh and his designs for Ukrainian Catholic churches.

The Ruh Churches

Father Philip Ruh (Figure 44) was inspired by three strands of church architecture for his designs: European, Ukrainian and the vernacular. The architecture of Europe, especially the Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals of France, Germany and the Low Counties of which he had first-hand knowledge, were of considerable influence upon his designs. Ukrainian church architecture, studies during his stay in Ukraine was also clearly of great importance to him. In L'vov, a provincial capital, he would have seen churches of the elaborate Ukrainian Baroque as well as those reflecting the Byzantine heritage of the Eastern church. And on his visits to the countryside he would have admired many examples of rural wooden Baroque churches. Finally, there were the early churches that had been built on the Canadian prairies when Ruh arrived in 1911. These small, unpretentious buildings eloquently expressed the humble nature of pioneer existence. Often under the same physical and economic constraints, Ruh relied on local experience and ingenuity for the construction of his churches.



Figure 44.

Father Philip Ruh at the construction site of the Cooks Creek Grotto in 1959 - he was working on the Grotto at Cook’s Creek at the time of his death in 1962, at the age of 79.

Ruh thus combined a number of distinctive architectural elements, making them typical of his own style. While perhaps none were unique elements and, indeed, while many could be found in earlier Canadian Ukrainian churches, Ruh integrated them in a novel and distinctive manner. The first sense the observer gains upon scrutinizing one of Ruh's churches is of grandeur touched by flamboyancy. This impression is especially reinforced when a comparison is made with the ancestral log and modest wood frame churches. Ruh's churches are large and the dynamism of forms and colours allied them closely with Ukrainian Baroque churches. A discussion of Ruh's churches, with reference to five of his most significant designs will underline the significance of his work.

A cursory examination of St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church, Mountain Road (1924-25; destroyed by fire 1966), Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Portage la Prairie (1926-27; demolished 1983), Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic Church, Cooks Creek (1930-38), Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Holy Ascension, Winnipegosis (1930) and Church of the Resurrection, Dauphin (1935) (Figures 45-49) reveals that Ruh combined precepts and elements from Byzantine, Romanesque, Gothic, Ukrainian Baroque, and vernacular. Like the early Byzantine churches, Ruh's churches are in nearly every case cruciform in plan (Figure 50). The transepts, however, tend to vary in depth and outline. Some are short, like Cooks Creek or, as at Mountain Road, almost as long as the nave. The transepts can also be apsidal in form as with these two last examples, or rectangular, as with the transepts at Winnipegosis. There were other variations of plan that Ruh employed to distinguish each church. The Cooks Creek church, for example, has a nave that extends between two flanking towers. And with a hipped roof over the nave, the general impression is Romanesque.



Figure 45.

St. Mary's Ukrainian Catholic Church, Mountain Road (1924-25; burned 1966). (Provincial Archives Manitoba)



Figure 46.

Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Portage la Prairie (1926-27) as it looked in 1948. The church was demolished in 1983.

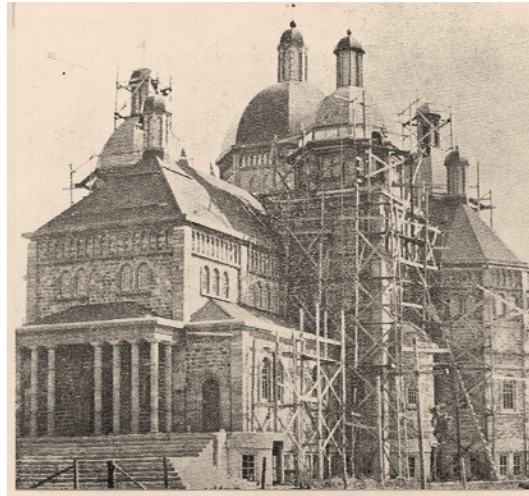


Figure 47.

Church of the Immaculate Conception, Cook's Creek, ca. 1937. (Jubilee Book of the Settlement of Ukrainians in Canada, p. 137)



Figure 48.

Ukrainian Catholic church of the Holy Ascension, Winnipegosis, shortly after its completion in 1930. (Mary Kohut)



Figure 49.
Church of the Resurrection, Dauphin, ca. 1935.
(Mary Kohut)

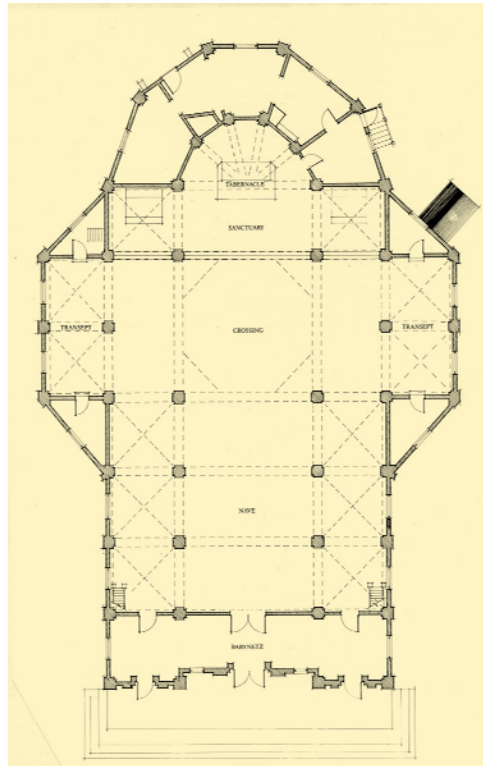
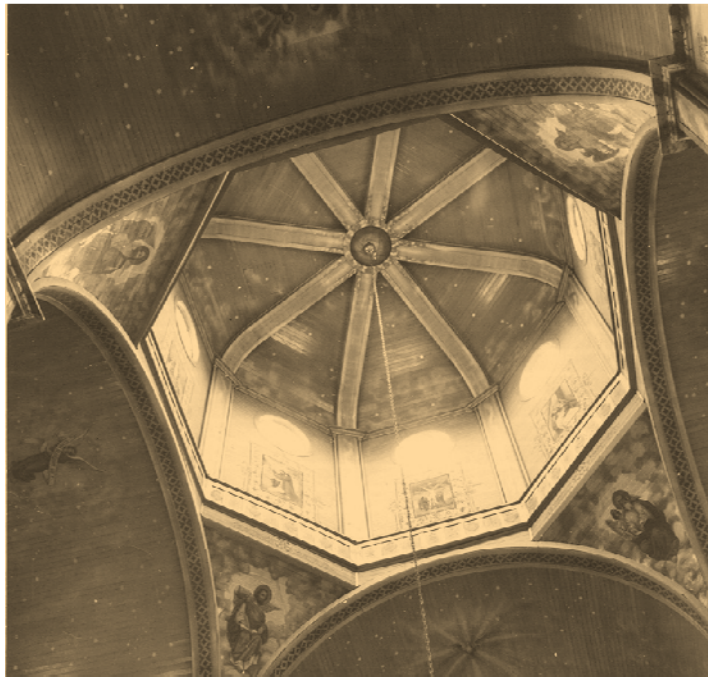


Figure 50.
Floor plan. Church of the Assumption, Portage
la Prairie.

The use of the twin flanking towers, capped with banyas was one of Ruh's most popular motifs, used on nearly all of his churches built after 1930. The two small banyas in conjunction with a large central dome represent the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. There was always a provision in the plan for the construction of a large dome at the central crossing; although often this ambitious feature failed to materialize. The alternating shingle pattern, originally evident for example on the Winnipegosis church, gave a polychromatic effect to many of his domed churches. Inside the church the transition from the square crossing to the octagonal drum of the dome was achieved by squinches (Figure 51). At the far end of the church, at the top of the cross plan, was the sanctuary, always apsidal in form and surmounted by a half dome (Figure 52).



Below left: Figure 51.

St. Mary's Church, Mountain Road. Each of the pendentives beneath the dome had a figure painted on it. (Provincial Archives Manitoba)

Below: Figure 52.

St. Mary's Church, Mountain Road. View towards the altar. (Provincial Archives Manitoba)



The decorative elements that Ruh used to define and animate the exterior of these churches were also variations on a theme. Romanesque and Neo-classical details were juxtaposed with and applied to Ukrainian banyas and domes. Round-arched windows and arcades are the most obvious of the Romanesque-inspired elements. Twinned arched windows were a favourite with Ruh and can be seen on nearly all his churches. Door openings were also round-arched, and often fitted with fan light transoms. Ruh frequently used a blind arcade as a decorative element in the twinned facade towers, around the dome drum and below the main dome. Variations on the blind arcade motif were also used in a variety of other situations, particularly in the panels of the drum and inside the church, where it would reappear as a decorative frieze or a column pattern on the balustrade and railings (Figure 53).

The interiors of Ruh's churches form a system of impressive vaults culminating in a domed crossing. Both the nave and transept ceilings were constructed as barrel vaults (Figure 54); the ceilings of the aisles were joined; the round arches were continued in smaller areas. In his larger churches – as at Mountain Road, Portage la Prairie and Cooks Creek – arcaded side aisles were augmented by semi-circular arches with square columns (Figure 55). The curves of these arches were often enhanced with exaggerated ribbing (Figure 56).

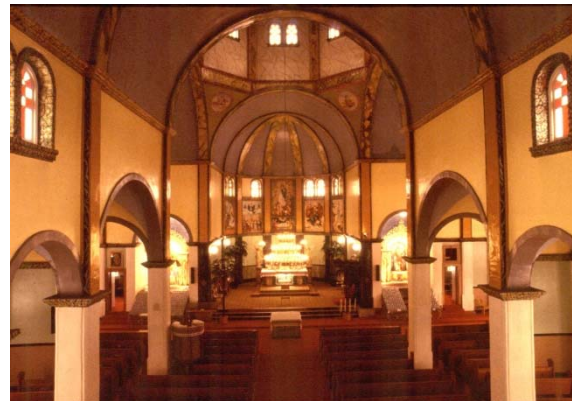


Figure 53.
Church of the Assumption, Portage la Prairie.
The balustrade of the cantor's loft, with its miniature columns and arches reflects the blind arcade motif which Ruh made use of on the exterior.



Top left: Figure 54.

Church of the Assumption, Portage la Prairie. View of the central crossing. Also visible is the apsidal form of the chancel with its half dome and the barrel vaulting of the nave and transepts.



Left: Figure 55.

Church of the Immaculate Conception, Cook's Creek. View down the main aisle toward the chancel and altar.

Above: Figure 56.

Church of the Assumption, Portage la Prairie. The accentuated ribbing of the dome and half dome is a particular design element which Ruh made use of repeatedly.

Although the interiors of all of Ruh's churches have been rendered exciting decoratively, through the years, several are spectacular. The resplendent interior of the church of the Resurrection in Dauphin, decorated during 1957 by Theodore Baran of Saskatoon – the foremost and most prolific of recent Ukrainian church artists – is wondrous (Figure 57). The beautiful icons, chandelier, vaulting, paneling, altar and decorative painting, create a drama to rival the rich and voluminous space of its Byzantine ancestors.

It should be noted that while Father Ruh likely intended the interiors of his church buildings to be colourful and vibrant, in most cases he did not actually supervise the interior decoration. Indeed in his own parish church at Cooks Creek, and in numerous others, most of the decorative additions and the internal colour scheme was accomplished by the parish itself, over many years, and continued during the decade following Ruh's death. Nevertheless, the final product complements Ruh's own design sense and it is likely that he would have approved.

Another interesting aspect of Ruh's churches, usually completed without Ruh's direct supervision, was the building material. The smooth marble surfaces of the interior, the tall marble columns and pilasters, the intricate stone arcades, the large cut stones on the exterior are, in fact, faux marble. These visual deceptions reflect not only Ruh's, and the parish's, heroic attempts to emulate the richness of European churches, but also underline an ingenious response to the restrictive economic conditions of the 1930s. Ruh, in partnership with numerous Ukrainian Catholic parishes, undaunted by economic and physical obstacles, undertook massive projects that today inspire respect.



Figure 57. Church of the Resurrection, Dauphin. Interior view towards the main altar showing the highly decorated auditorium.

Ukrainian Orthodox “Cathedral-Style” Churches

The designs for the sixteen Ukrainian Orthodox churches identified in this study that can be considered “cathedral-style” appear to be stem from the same basic design sense as Father Ruh’s. Because many of Father Ruh’s designs preceded most Orthodox “cathedrals”, it is tempting to attribute his influence. Alternatively, the designers of these churches may have relied upon the same Ukrainian precedents that Ruh recalled: the Baroque splendour of seventeenth and eighteenth century Ukrainian churches. This character is evident in two of the most fetching of Ukrainian Orthodox “cathedral-style” churches – St. Michael’s Ukrainian Orthodox, Sandy lake and Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox. Shortdale.

St. Michael’s Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Sandy Lake (1944-48) is a striking building which bears some general similarities to Father Ruh’s “cathedrals”, but springs from a slightly different sensibility (Figure 58). As in Ruh’s designs the straightforward progression of spaces – vestibule, nave, short transepts and apse – are clearly expressed at Sandy Lake. In contrast to Father Ruh’s predilection for a triangular pediment, a curved pediment with hounds-tooth edging graces the Sandy Lake Church. The semi-circular motif is pursued throughout the building, especially at window and door openings. The structure is dominated by a towering dome. On the entrance facade two large banyas flank a smaller central banya, all of which are crowned with filigreed Orthodox Crosses. While the church exterior is not as flamboyantly decorated as many of Father Ruh’s churches, the clean crisp design is nevertheless an elegant one.

Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Shortdale is a compact, tall, building whose isolation on a slightly rolling landscape makes it a special local landmark (Figure 59). The traditional progression of internal spaces is expressed in this design, which is, nevertheless, a unique response to that tradition. The large dome is truncated at the front facade, creating a heavy central form, akin to the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. A smaller dome pierces this expansive shell to light the interior. Four corner towers enclose the largest dome and their capping banyas provide a forceful vertical expression. The banya atop the central dome creates a deft punctuation to the whole structure.

The entrance facade reiterates the curved pediment motif at Sandy Lake. This motif appears to be a more common one in Orthodox churches – appearing in almost half of the Orthodox “cathedral-style” churches – than in Ukrainian Catholic “cathedrals”. At Shortdale, the broad curve is expressed twice, with a decorative moulding stretching below the actual pediment.



Figure 58.

St. Michael's Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church,
Sandy Lake (1944-48).



Figure 59.

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church, Shortdale.

Modern Ukrainian Church Designs in Manitoba

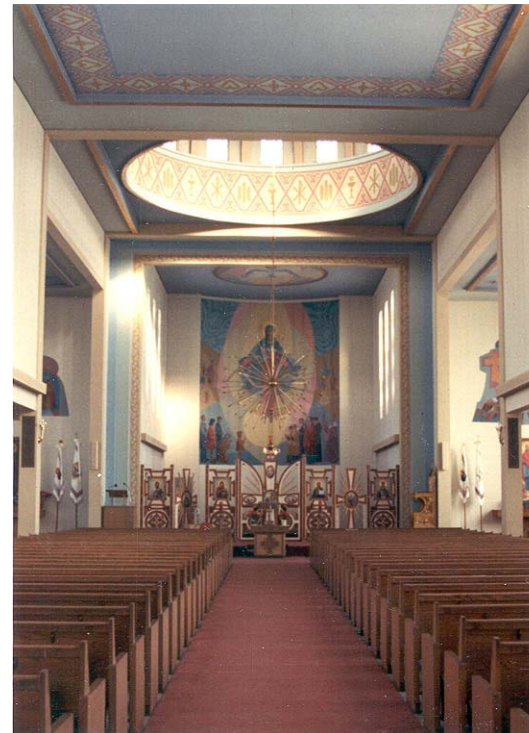
The trend away from traditional church designs such as those created by Ruh – which depended upon an architectural vocabulary of domes, banyas, towers and traditional floor plans – began in the late 1950s and early 1960s with the rise of university-trained architects grounded in the Modern Movement in architecture.

The break with the past which pervaded most schools of architecture following World War II had its effect on the majority of subsequent buildings. Although this transition was felt in Ukrainian church design, architects on the whole found an anchor in tradition, searching for new ways in which to interpret traditional elements. New floor plans and building shapes emerged as the result of the efforts of men such as Victor Deneka, who designed the Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Winnipeg (Figures 60 and 61) and Holy Ghost Ukrainian Catholic Church, Beausejour (Figure 62); with Radislaw Zuk in his designs for St. Michael's Ukrainian Catholic Church, Tyndall and Holy Family Ukrainian Catholic Church, Winnipeg (Figures 63 and 64); and with Alex Nitchuk of Green, Blankstein, Russell Associates, Architects and Engineers, for the Ukrainian Catholic Church of St. Nicholas, Winnipeg (Figure 65). These Ukrainian Canadian architects combined the form and functionality of modern design with details that recalled the earliest examples of Ukrainian church architecture. In most the result has been new churches that are innovatively conceived, modernly convenient and traditionally appointed.



Top left: Figure 60.

Blessed Virgin Mary Church. The cruciform plan is evident here and the dome is an important element of the design. The chancel is integrated into the main body of the building. Although the elements are reinterpreted, the large massing characteristic of Ruh's churches is present in Victor Deneka's design.



Left: Figure 61.

Blessed Virgin Mary Church. Rectilinear forms have here replaced the arched elements common in the interiors of earlier Ukrainian.

Above: Figure 62.

Holy Ghost Ukrainian Catholic Church, Beausejour. Deneka again casts the familiar forms of Ukrainian churches – the dome, the round arches and the dramatic bulk – into striking modern idioms.

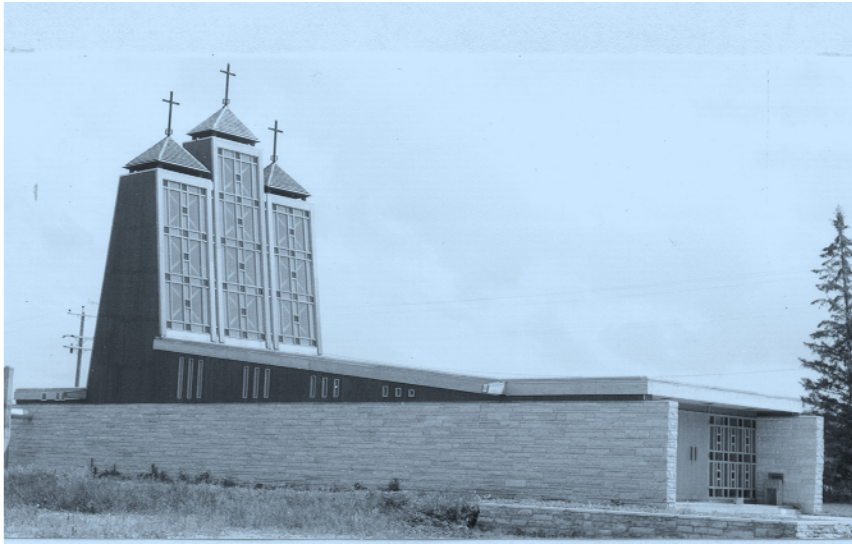


Figure 63.

St. Michael's Ukrainian Catholic Church, Tyndall. The low slung modernism apparent in this church is strongly contrasted with the vertical elements that recall the traditional dome-banya combinations of earlier Ukrainian churches.



Figure 64.

Holy Family Ukrainian Catholic Church, Winnipeg. Zuk reiterates the dynamism of horizontally and verticality in this design, crowning the towers with graceful arches.



Figure 65.

Ukrainian Catholic Church of St. Nicholas, Winnipeg. The ubiquitous dome of Byzantine churches becomes the dominant form in this design. Indeed, the building quite clearly resembles, in conception, the Church of the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople.