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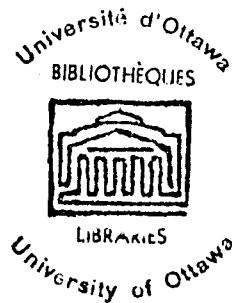
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UKRAINIAN CULTURAL TRADITIONS IN CANADA:
THEATRE, CHORAL MUSIC AND DANCE, 1891-1967

by Alexandra Pritz

Thesis submitted to the School of
Graduate Studies of the University
of Ottawa in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree
of Master of Arts



Ottawa, Canada, 1977

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CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

Alexandra Pritz was born November 12, 1945, in Austria. She received the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Visual Arts from the University of Alberta, Edmonton, in 1968.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to trace attempts made by the Ukrainians in Canada to mold themselves by means of their own cultural traditions, as a separate ethno-cultural entity, possessing their own innate values and distinct cultural characteristics.

This study deals with those cultural traditions that the Ukrainians in Canada perpetuated collectively: theatre, choral music and dance. Preservation and propagation of these cultural traditions gave the Ukrainian Canadians a feeling of social unity and ethnic identity, as a result of which they involved themselves in artistic group activities shortly after their arrival in Canada. This involvement in organized cultural activity has continued until the present day.

More attention is given to artistic ensembles, associations or groups which existed in Canadian cities with larger and more concentrated Ukrainian populations. These cities, particularly Winnipeg, Edmonton, and later, Toronto, provided their artistic ensembles with access to larger human resources than were available to groups working in smaller Ukrainian centres, or rural areas. As a result of this, artistic groups located in larger Canadian cities were often larger in size, able to produce more lavish productions, and had better audience turn-outs than those existing in more sparsely populated Ukrainian communities.

No attempt is made to present the complete history of each theatrical, choral or dance ensemble or association under review. Such a task is beyond the scope of a single study. However, an effort is made to discuss the larger

Ukrainian cultural groups and to highlight their major artistic achievements, in particular, those involving their fellow-Canadians.

Attention is focused on cultural leaders who were responsible for directing various artistic groups. This applied particularly to those individuals who made major contributions to the perpetuation of Ukrainian cultural traditions in Canada in their respective fields, and whose influence was more widespread and extended to a larger number of groups across the country.

In scope this study traces the historical and cultural events which motivated the Ukrainians to emigrate from Ukraine and follows their cultural development in Canada from the time of their first arrival in 1891 until the time of Canada's Centennial in 1967.

Ukrainians have been part of the diverse ethnic mosaic which has formed the basis for the first century of Canadian growth. Recognition of the contributions made by various ethnic groups came about on October 8, 1971, with the announcement, by Prime Minister P.E. Trudeau of Canada's Multiculturalism Policy. The announcement was timed to coincide with the opening of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress in Winnipeg. The Prime Minister stressed the need for equality and recognition of all Canadians, regardless of their ethno-cultural heritage.

For although there are two official languages, there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other. No citizen or group of citizens is other than Canadian, and all should be treated fairly ...¹

1

From the announcement speech by the Prime Minister as quoted in the address by the Honourable John Munro, Minister Responsible for Multiculturalism to the 25th National convention of the Ukrainian National Federation of Canada Inc., October 11, 1975 in Montreal.

Subsequent multicultural activity makes it clear the majority of Canadians accept both bilingualism and multiculturalism. In view of this, a study of the cultural traditions that have been fostered by the Ukrainians in Canada is both timely and relevant.

Ukrainian immigrants to Canada after 1891 did not intend to break all ties with Ukraine, nor did they forget the political and cultural oppression of their background. Canada afforded a political and cultural freedom which aided the fostering of their ethnic consciousness and crystalised their aims of Ukrainian cultural development.

Although the first Ukrainian immigration to Canada lacked a well-defined sense of identity, it was, nonetheless, aware that it was bound together linguistically and spiritually. It was also recognized that it shared a common cultural heritage, whose cultural traditions it was able to foster in the new land.

The struggle for independence in Ukraine during the 1917-1920 period focused Ukrainian Canadian attention overseas and gave the Ukrainians in Canada a new sense of ethnic awareness. The arrival of the second group of Ukrainian immigrants (many of whom had taken part in the establishment and defence of the Ukrainian state) following World War I, augmented the ranks of those Ukrainians already established in Canada. As a result of the influx of these Ukrainian patriots, organized Ukrainian cultural activities became more widespread. All Ukrainian life revolved around the numerous Ukrainian community halls throughout the country where theatrical, choral and dance performances were considered an indispensable part of cultural work. Widespread cultural activity among the Ukrainians, particularly during the 1920's

and 1930's, focused attention on this ethnic group and Ukrainian performers were often called upon to demonstrate their cultural traditions before their fellow Canadians.

The post World War II immigration brought a large number of professional actors, directors, singers, choral conductors and dancers to this country. Their arrival stimulated a renewal of cultural activity that had, to a great extent, all but ceased during the war years.

Ukrainians form one of the most culturally active ethnic groups in Canada. To date, however, there has been little detailed study of Ukrainian theatre, choral music and dance in Canada by students or scholars in any discipline. References to the subject in organizational histories and secondary sources are usually brief and often fragmentary. Comprehensive histories of the Ukrainian National Home in Winnipeg (edited by Semen Kowbel' and Dmytro Doroshenko) and in Edmonton (edited by Mykhailo Chomiak) have been written. These provide excellent general accounts of the theatrical and choral work undertaken by these organizations and contain information on the key aspects of the organizations' backgrounds. In addition to this, the history of the Ukrainian National Home in Winnipeg also includes brief accounts of the organizational work undertaken by affiliated Ukrainian National Homes in other urban and rural centres across the country. Unfortunately, these were written by various writers and the information they provide does not always deal with cultural activity. Also, many of the references are undocumented and, since they were written for anniversary celebrations, their treatments are subjective. Many of the other organizations that carried on organized cultural work have not, of this date, had their histories written.

Several general sources pertaining to Ukrainian dance have been useful to this study. Vasyl' Avramenko's two booklets on Ukrainian dance, music and costume provided information on his dance repertoire and philosophy of dance. Iryna Knysh's study of Avramenko, written to commemorate forty years of activity in the dance field, was useful in evaluating his role in the Ukrainian dance movement in Canada. Maria Pasternakova's survey of Ukrainian women involved in dance and choreography throughout the world provided some data on Ukrainian women working in the dance field in Canada.²

Background information for Ukrainian activities in Canada can be obtained from a number of studies which concentrated on the problems of Ukrainians in Canada. C. H. Young's sociological study, written as a result of intensive Ukrainian organizational activities during the depression years, dealt with the problem of their assimilation. Later studies of the Ukrainian Canadian community have dealt with specific aspects of their existence: V. J. Kaye wrote about immigration, P. Yuzyk about the two Ukrainian churches and the Ukrainians in Manitoba, H. Piniuta about various Ukrainian organizations and W. Veryha about the Ukrainian Canadian Committee. Several general textbooks have recently been published which provide interesting data about Ukrainian Canadians with some information pertaining to their organized cultural activities; two of the more useful ones³ are by O. Woycenko and M. H. Marunchak.

All of these sources, however, deal with Ukrainian theatre, choral music and dance only in a general manner, making no attempt to present a complete view. This study is based on this fragmentary information as well as on subsequent material located as the result of several years research. It is

therefore the intention of this study to present a more detailed account of Ukrainian theatrical, choral and dance activity in Canada than has been attempted previously and to view these forms of Ukrainian cultural expression in a more comprehensive way.

Among the valuable primary sources utilized in this study were those acquired by the National Ethnic Archives programme of the Public Archives of Canada. The records of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation and the Canadian Ukrainian Youth Association were valuable in terms of research information. The Archives of the Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre in Winnipeg, particularly the records of the Educational Summer Courses, were also useful. The archival information collected by the Ukrainian Canadian Arts Catalogue in Toronto provided invaluable information on Ukrainian dance in Canada in the post World War II period.

Private collections were also consulted. Dr. P. Macenko and R. Soltykevych provided information on choral music, S. Polujan and A. Kurdydyk assisted with theatre, and D. Nyzhankivska-Snihurowycz granted the author access to dance material in her possession. Various individuals who were actively involved in Ukrainian cultural activity in Canada granted personal interviews (S. Polujan, S. Semchyshyn, V. Dovhaniuk and M. Levyts'ka for theatre; P. Macenko and R. Soltykevych for choral music; D. Nyzhankivska-Snihurowycz, C. Kuc, L. Pavlychenko-Sotnikow, A. Lapchuk and J. Klun for dance).

The Ukrainian newspapers published in Canada were a rich source of information. Both the National Library in Ottawa and the Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre in Winnipeg have extensive holdings. Numerous jubilee books, almanacs, calendars and pamphlets commemorating various

anniversaries or special events published by various Ukrainian organizations were invaluable, as were various theatre and concert programmes. They are not catalogued and are scattered in numerous public and private holdings across Canada. Some are held by University libraries (Alberta, Manitoba, Ottawa), as well as by the National Library and Public Archives Library in Ottawa and the Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre in Winnipeg.

In spite of these available sources of data, a great deal of difficulty was encountered in obtaining precise and detailed information concerning organized Ukrainian cultural activities in Canada. Many Ukrainian organizations, particularly the smaller ones, did not keep complete records or archives of their cultural work, while other organizational archival collections have been destroyed (early archives of the Ukrainian National Home in Winnipeg by flood, early archives of the Prosvita Association in Kenora by fire, etc.) or lost (Ukrainian National Federation in Edmonton). Although many Ukrainian newspapers of the time carried extensive reviews of theatrical, choral and dance performances, these do not provide a total picture of the cultural work carried on. Publication of information depended upon reviews being written and sent in by individuals from the communities where the events had taken place, as a result of which coverage of cultural activities, especially in isolated rural communities, was often fragmentary. Research trips to Edmonton, Winnipeg and Toronto proved extremely valuable, in spite of the fact that many of the individuals who had actively participated in cultural work (especially in the early years) were no longer alive or could not be located.

Throughout this study Ukrainian names and surnames are given in the

English version used by the bearers, even when this does not conform to the rules of proper transliteration (for example, Myroslav Kuts' is given as Chester Kuc, Petro Marunchak is given as Peter Marunczak, etc.). When no English-language spelling is available the name is transliterated according to the Library of Congress system of transliteration employed throughout the study.³

In cases where Ukrainian quotations appear in the text, English translations (translated by the author) are provided in the appropriate footnotes. Names of all Ukrainian dramatic, choral and dance associations, ensembles and organizations are given in the English-language version used by the group. When no official English version of the name is available a translation is provided, with the Ukrainian name being used only the first time that it appears in a given chapter. In the case of titles of plays, choral works and dance numbers, names are used in the original language (in transliteration) with an English translation being given the first time they appear in the text (an exception to this are certain titles such as Nazar Stodolia or "Hopak", which do not lend themselves to translation and are given only in Ukrainian).

An attempt is made to give the author and date of each creative work presented. In many instances, however, such information is not available, either because the item (usually a play) is too obscure, or because such information was never recorded (choreographers and dates of dances, plays written in Canada, etc.). Where such information as author and date are available, they appear the first time the title of the work is used in the text.

3

See Appendix 1 for Table of Transliteration.

CHAPTER I

UKRAINIAN IMMIGRATION AND ORGANIZED COMMUNITY LIFE

Ukrainian Immigration to Canada

First Ukrainians

The first known Ukrainian immigrants to Canada were Vasyl' Eleniak and Ivan Pylypiw, farmers from Nebyliw, Galicia, who came to Montreal from Quebec City on September 7, 1891. Their arrival in Canada has generally been accepted by Ukrainian Canadian historians as the starting point for mass immigration of Ukrainians to Canada.¹ Thirty-three families followed Eleniak and Pylypiw to Canada, arriving at the Port of Quebec in 1892. Known as the "Nebyliw Group", they came from the village of Nebyliw, Kalush county in Galicia and settled in Alberta in the Edna-Star and Chipman area.² From this first permanent Ukrainian colony Ukrainian historians and sociologists have been able to trace a connective history of Ukrainians in Canada.

1

Historical research has indicated that Ukrainians were already in Canada prior to that date. It is believed that the military group known as the "De Meurons" or the "De Watteville" soldiers who arrived in Canada in 1813 had some Ukrainian members. In addition to this it is probable that some Ukrainians from Eastern Ukraine arrived in Canada under cover of the Mennonites ca. 1882 while others arrived from the United States in 1883. For more complete information see: P. Yuzyk, Slavica Canadiana (Winnipeg: Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences, 1955), No. 24, p.26, and M.H. Marunchak, The Ukrainian Canadians: A History (Winnipeg: Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences, 1970), pp.24-26.

2

M.H. Marunchak, V zustrichi z ukrains'kymy pioneramy Al'berty [Among Ukrainian Pioneers of Alberta] (Winnipeg: General Library "UKT", 1964), pp.13-15.

Causes for Emigration

Numerous factors necessitated Ukrainian emigration. Causes for this emigration are found in the political, social and economic conditions in the regions of Galicia and Bukovina, which were unfavourable to Ukrainians in their homeland where they were a politically subjugated people. After Austria's defeat by Prussia at Sadowa in 1866, the Hapsburg monarchy gave the Poles in Galicia governing power over the Ukrainian populace in return for Poland's promise of loyalty. The Poles, traditional adversaries of the Ukrainians, took every opportunity to discriminate against the Ukrainian masses and further their own interests. In Bukovina, Rumanians controlled government and suppressed the Ukrainians.³

Ukrainians were denied equal educational opportunities and were discriminated against by various administrative and judicial bodies, in which they had almost no representation. A separate Ukrainian nationality was denied them; attempts at establishing Ukrainian vernacular schools were blocked; repressive measures were used against them during elections and attempts were made to suppress their organizations.

Economic conditions, however, were the primary cause for the mass emigration of Ukrainian peasants. Abolition of serfdom by the Austrian government in 1848 did little to alleviate the economic lot of the Ukrainian peasant. Much of the land that had previously been owned by Polish and Rumanian aristocrats and by various churches and monasteries remained in their

³
P. Yuzyk, The Ukrainians in Manitoba: A Social History (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953), p.26.

possession while the land that was divided up among former serfs was barely sufficient to give them a living. As their population increased the peasants were forced to subdivide their plots. Toward the end of the 19th century this subdivision had reached the point where half the Ukrainian population in Galicia could no longer support itself from the land.⁴ High compensation payments to former landlords, taxes levied by the state, increased mortgaging of farm holdings, overpopulation, poverty, famine and disease ultimately forced the Ukrainians to seek a living elsewhere.

Large-scale Emigration

Ukrainian emigration to Canada started by V. Eleniak and I. Pylypiw did not reach large-scale proportions immediately. Upon his return to Galicia, Pylypiw was imprisoned for agitation favouring departure for Canada. Austrian officials and owners of large estates who depended on cheap labour spread fearful propaganda against Canada. Even conservative elements among the Ukrainian population opposed permanent emigration, fearing that it would be detrimental to Ukrainian interests in Galicia.

The "Prosvita" society (Society for Enlightenment) and the so-called radical party, whose undisputed spokesman was Ivan Franko, strongly advocated the necessity of emigration for the Ukrainian peasantry because of critical overpopulation problems. In July 1895 the "Prosvita" society published Dr. Joseph Oleskow's (Osyp Oleskiw) pamphlet Pro vil'ni zemli (About

4

I. Kholms'kyi, Istoria Ukrainy [History of Ukraine] (New York: T. Shevchenko Scientific Society, 1971), 2nd edition, p.344.

Free Lands) which supported emigration to Canada while warning the peasants against emigrating to Brazil, where they would find themselves on plantations replacing black labour that had been freed by the abolition of slavery.⁵

In 1895 at the request of the "Prosvita" society and with the approval of the Canadian government, Dr. Oleskow, a noted Ukrainian chemist, soil expert and educator, toured Canada, gathering information on farming conditions and spotchecking land which he considered suitable for Ukrainian settlement. Returning to Ukraine he published a second pamphlet O emigratsii (On Emigration) which appeared in December 1895 and organized his first group of agriculturalists for Canada, who landed in Quebec on April 30, 1896.⁶ Through Oleskow's efforts the Canadian government set up an immigration office in Winnipeg and hired a Ukrainian, Cyril Genik (Kyrylo Genyk-Berezovs'kyi), as an immigration officer.

Endeavours of the Canadian government, especially those of the Minister of Internal Affairs, Clifford Sifton, also contributed to a great increase in Ukrainian immigration. In an effort to populate the Canadian prairies, Sifton looked favourably upon Galicia's agrarian population and offered a financial incentive to various steamship companies whose agents received a "bonus" for each farmer whom they could recruit for settlement in the Canadian West.

⁵
Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.29.

⁶
V.J. Kaye, Early Ukrainian Settlements in Canada (Toronto: Ukrainian Canadian Committee, 1964), p.60.

The First Ukrainian Immigration

The first wave of Ukrainian immigration lasted from 1896 to 1914, when the outbreak of the First World War temporarily halted the steadily increasing flow of Ukrainian immigrants. The exact number of Ukrainians who entered Canada before 1914 is not known. Most were registered according to their country of origin rather than their ethnic and national background. Consequently, they were registered not only as "Ruthenians", "Galicians", and "Bukovinians", but also as "Austrians", "Russians", and sometimes "Poles" and "Rumanians". The term "Ukrainian" did not gain general acceptance and use until after World War I. This confusion in identification was partly due to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics classification and tabulation system of that time, and partly due to the immigrants themselves. Many of them were illiterate and after being subjugated for centuries were not nationally conscious. They nevertheless possessed a strong feeling of ethnic identity (common language, customs, etc.) but did not designate themselves by any one name.

It is estimated that over 180,000 Ukrainian immigrants emigrated to Canada by 1914, almost exclusively from Galicia and Bukovina, with a small percentage from Transcarpathia.⁷ Most who arrived during this period settled on the western prairie frontier in scattered colonies that

⁷ I. Tesla, "History of Ukrainian Settlement", Ukraine: A Concise Encyclopaedia, Kubijovic, V., ed. (Toronto: U. of T. Press for Ukrainian National Association, 1971), Vol. II, p.1152. Among these pioneer immigrants were also a few from Eastern Ukraine, but their number was almost negligible. Ukrainians from the territory occupied by Russia did not have freedom of movement and were forbidden to leave the country.

extended in an approximate diagonal line from the south-west corner of Manitoba, to the Peace River country in north-western Alberta. Almost all of them settled in rural areas, taking up the 160 acre homesteads which sold for \$10 and a pledge to cultivate the land. From the very beginning Ukrainian immigrants settled in compact groups, often with people from the same village or county taking up adjoining homesteads.

Most of the land offered to Ukrainian settlers was of secondary quality and living conditions were extremely harsh. The land could be made arable only by clearing forests, draining marshes, removing stones, and ploughing virgin soil. The lack of capital for the purchase of farm implements, furniture and even foodstuffs, coupled with the lack of knowledge of the English language and a high percentage of illiteracy among the pioneers, made life even more difficult. Only through their perseverance and endurance were the Ukrainians able to succeed in overcoming these problems and raising their standard of living.

Early Associations

Ukrainian settlers who arrived in Canada with the first wave of immigration were faced with a harsh struggle for existence. Upon arrival they were greeted with hostility and racial prejudice from the British segment of the population who saw only their outlandish sheepskin coats, their poverty and illiteracy, heard their foreign language, speculated on their alien background and vocally raised the issue of their "desirability" as future Canadian citizens. Finding themselves in a strange environment, unable to communicate because of the language barrier, plagued by loneliness

and a longing for their native homeland, the Ukrainian immigrants naturally turned to each other for comfort and support.

Settlement on farms in closely knit groups greatly influenced their development and played an important role in organized Ukrainian community life. Nearness to each other gave the pioneer settlers security in a new land while Canada's democratic ways provided an opportunity for expression not available to them before. In Canada, they were free to use their language and practice their old-country traditions with little interference from their non-Ukrainian neighbours.

From early settlement days Ukrainians in Canada have shown a strong will as a group to preserve their ethnic identity. This has been made evident by attempts to maintain their language, religion and culture not only by means of the family unit but also with group assistance from institutions and societies patterned on those of their native land. Organization into groups on the basis of old associations encouraged the Ukrainians in Canada to develop a unique Ukrainian-Canadian society: "neither Ukrainian nor Canadian, but with features of both — a marginal society with institutions peculiar to itself — its roots in the soil of the Ukraine but its structure and content increasingly modified in their adaption to the new situations."⁸

The church was the first forum of organized activity undertaken by Ukrainian immigrants. Religion had always been a vital force in the lives of their forefathers, who historically had been a deeply religious and God-fearing people. Religion was central to their total philosophy of life,

and it was natural that their descendants arriving in Canada with a centuries-old tradition of religious worship and ritual, establish church congregations and parishes as soon as the primary requirements for physical survival had been met. During the pioneer era the church served not only the spiritual needs of its followers, but their social, cultural, economic and political needs as well. The church building was often the first community structure to be erected and for many years all aspects of group activity revolved around it.

In their church rituals the Ukrainians who arrived in Canada with the first wave of immigration acknowledged the Byzantine, or Eastern, rite. Those emigrating from Galicia and Transcarpathia adhered to the Greek Catholic Church, while those arriving from Bukovina and Eastern Ukraine were followers of the Greek Orthodox Church.⁹ In terms of organizational jurisdiction, the Ukrainian Greek Catholics came under Rome's jurisdiction and the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox were aligned with the Russian Orthodox Church. Although small numbers of Ukrainians of other religious denominations also arrived with the first Ukrainian immigrants, Ukrainian-Canadian religious identity developed primarily on a dual religious base.

In addition to the churches, the more progressive villages in Ukraine had branches of the "Prosvita" society, whose parent body existed in Lviv, the capital of Galicia. The "Prosvita" society was established on December 8, 1868 as an educational-scientific society responsible for collecting and

9

For more complete information see: P. Yuzyk, "The History of the Ukrainian Catholic (Uniate) Church in Canada" (M.A. Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1948), and idem., "Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church of Canada" (Ph. D. Dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1958).

publishing ethnographic material relating to the life-style, customs and folk arts of the Ukrainian people.¹⁰ At its second convention, held in 1896, the aims of the society were altered, with the scientific aspect being replaced by the educational. Stress was placed on a system of voluntary education and self-help for the peasants, with the ultimate intention of assisting them in improving their economic condition. This was to be achieved by means of published material, lectures and the like. To reach the large, illiterate population, the "Prosvita" society organized reading halls where local priests, teachers, or better-educated peasant-farmers conducted regular reading sessions for those unable to read. Soon these reading halls became centres for community village life and by 1891 the "Prosvita" society was forced to broaden its scope of activities. Under its new constitution (adopted March 25, 1891) the society was empowered not only to present lectures, theatrical performances, concerts, etc., but also to start and manage village stores, to establish co-operatives and to offer legal as well as other advice.¹¹

Those immigrants who had contact with the "Prosvita" society in Ukraine realized its potential in organizing community life in Canada. The first "Prosvita" centre was established in 1898 by Rev. Pavlo Tymkevych in the Ukrainian community at Edna-Star, Alberta.¹² Numerous other such centres, usually called Prosvita Reading Associations (Chytal'nia Prosvita), appeared

10

A. Kachor, Rolia "Prosvity" v ekonomichnomu rozvytku Zakhidnoi Ukrainy ["Prosvita" in the Economic Development of Western Ukraine] (Winnipeg: Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences, 1960), UVAN Chronicle Series, No.18, p.10.

11

Ibid, p.17.

12

Svoboda [Freedom], Shamokin, later Scranton, Penn., U.S.A. August 4, 1898.

in various Ukrainian colonies across the country: in Alberta at Edmonton (1907); in Saskatchewan at Skalat (1906), Buchanan (1908), Quill Lake (1908), Dana (1908); in Manitoba at Sifton (1903), Brokenhead (1903), Riding Mountain (1905), Pleasant Home (1906), Mink Creek (1906); and in Ontario at Ottawa (1908), Port Arthur (1909), Toronto (1910). Many reading associations patterned after the "Prosvita" society were also organized under other names: Chytal'nia im. Taras Shevchenka (Taras Shevchenko Reading Association) in Edmonton (1900), Winnipeg (1903), Bonne Maddone (1907), Hamilton (1910), and Montreal (1913); Chytal'nia Postup (Progress) in Lethbridge (1904) and Calgary (1905); and Kanadiis'ka Rus' (Canadian Rus) in Beaver Hills (1907) and Portage La Prairie (1905).¹³

These reading associations were the first secular, cultural-educational societies organized by Ukrainians in Canada. Their educational role was deemed important and all of them made an effort to assemble libraries of books, periodicals and newspapers in the Ukrainian language published here and abroad. Besides their educational function, the cultural-educational societies also served to perpetuate Ukrainian folk culture. Thus, members created amateur dramatic groups, choirs, orchestras and later dancing ensembles; presented plays, concerts, lectures, debates, speeches, and celebrated national holidays in honour of Ukraine's great poets and heroes. In time, many of the more active communities also built their own Ukrainian community centres known as Ukrainian National Homes (Ukrains'ki Narodni Domy). These halls served, as did the Prosvita halls, various community interests and needs and were the centres for all activity within the Ukrainian community.

Education and the Press

Early Ukrainian settlers were keenly aware of the need for education. Though many of them were illiterate or only semi-literate, they wanted their children to acquire more schooling, in English and in Ukrainian. For this reason they actively supported the bilingual school system under which English and another language could be taught in public schools.¹⁴ By 1916 there were over four hundred school districts in Western Canada which conducted bilingual schools where children received instruction in both English and Ukrainian. In Manitoba, Ukrainian was the language of instruction, whereas in Alberta and Saskatchewan, classroom teaching of Ukrainian was permitted only between 3:00 and 4:00 in the afternoon.¹⁵ Despite exhaustive efforts by Ukrainians to maintain bilingual schools, public pressure forced the abolition of the bilingual school system in 1916.

With the closing of bilingual schools, Ukrainians resorted to a private system of Ukrainian education. Ukrainian instruction was provided either in vernacular native schools (ridni shkoly), located at parishes and community halls, which children attended after regular school hours, or in private daily schools run by various religious orders, where Ukrainian was taught along with a full programme of public school instruction. Ukrainians organized educational hostels where instruction was given in Ukrainian subjects for Ukrainian students attending high schools, teachers colleges

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The Manitoba School Act of 1897 stated that when ten pupils had French or any language other than English as their native tongue, then the education of those pupils could be conducted in both French or such other language and English in a bilingual system.

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Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.115.

and universities. These educational institutions, called "Bursas" or "Institutes", were founded in Winnipeg (Adam Kots'ko Bursa, 1915), St. Boniface (Metropolitan Andrey Shepticky Ukrainian Bursa, 1916), Saskatoon (Petro Mohyla Ukrainian Institute, 1917) and Edmonton (Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi Ukrainian Institute, 1918).

Early Ukrainian settlers in Canada had no Ukrainian-language press of their own. The first Ukrainian newspaper available to them was Svoboda (Liberty) published in the United States (privately, 1893-1908, and by the Ukrainian National Association since 1908). In 1903 Ukrainian Canadians founded their first newspaper, Kanadiis'kyi Farmer (Canadian Farmer), in Winnipeg. This newspaper was soon followed by others, many of which were short-lived, disappearing after two or three months, others lasting several years. Of the many newspapers coming into existence during this time, several survived early financial difficulties and became well established. This latter category includes: the already-mentioned Kanadiis'kyi Farmer (1903), independent, Liberal; Kanadiis'kyi Ranok (Canadian Morning, 1905), Presbyterian; Ukrains'kyi Holos (Ukrainian Voice, 1910), nationalist-Orthodox; Kanadiis'kyi Rusyn (Canadian Ruthenian, 1911), Catholic. All of them were published in Winnipeg, the centre of Ukrainian life in Canada.

These newspapers, in addition to being the instruments for dissemination of news, served as the medium of communication between various isolated Ukrainian individuals and groups. Those Ukrainians who did not understand the English language found the Ukrainian press indispensable in understanding the strange laws and customs of their adopted land. The press played a

vital role in keeping the Ukrainian language alive in Canada. Newspapers and annual almanacs published by a number of them were important outlets for aspiring Ukrainian writers in Canada, many of whom published their first works in the columns of the Ukrainian press.

The Beginnings of Identity

The majority of immigrants in the first wave of immigration did not possess a well-defined sense of identity, as is evident from the chaos which resulted regarding their identification when they entered Canada. Despite this, the "Ruthenians", "Galicians", "Bukovinians", and others, who laid the foundations for Ukrainian religious and cultural life in this country were aware that they were bound together linguistically and spiritually. They were also aware, although perhaps at first only subconsciously, that they possessed a common cultural heritage worthy of preserving and perpetuating in their adopted country whose democratic freedom provided them with virtually unrestricted opportunities for organizing their community life.

The growing awareness or identity of the Ukrainians was motivated at first by a desire and opportunity to assert themselves as a distinct ethnic identity which had a language, culture and tradition of its own, even though it had no independent country; later it was also motivated by the desire of the Ukrainians to take part in Canadian life, for they had decided that they would be staying in Canada permanently. The two motives have been complementary and not contradictory: developing an identity helped them gain the necessary self-esteem and respect outside the group and gave them the confidence to partake in Canadian activities; in turn, achievement outside their group contributed to the growth of a more distinct identity.¹⁷

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W. Darcovich, Ukrainians in Canada: The Struggle to Retain Their Identity (Ottawa: Ukrainian Self-Reliance Association, 1967), p.4.

The Second Ukrainian Immigration

Immigration to Canada, interrupted by World War I, resumed in the early-1920's, continuing, though somewhat restricted, into the 1930's. The second wave of immigration included people from Galicia and Bukovina, from the Polish annexed Volyn', the Kholm region, Polissia, and from Transcarpathia. The number of immigrants was limited by the Canadian government, with preference being given to those already having relatives in Canada, or to farmers and agricultural workers. The 1929 economic depression curtailed Ukrainian immigration almost entirely. In the period between the two wars, approximately 70,000 Ukrainians emigrated to Canada.¹⁸

Although the newcomers to Canada emigrated for basically the same economic and political reasons as those of the first settlers, they differed from their forerunners. Among them were a significant number of intellectuals, craftspeople, skilled tradesmen and former officers of the Ukrainian armies that had fought for Ukraine's independence. The rise and fall of an independent Ukrainian State (1917-1921) had given them a highly developed national consciousness. They were well versed in their own cultural and historical background and their arrival in Canada was not marked by any confusion as to their identity as had been the case with earlier immigrants.

The new immigrants were generally better off financially which enabled them to acquire better lands or establish their own enterprises. An increasing number of them settled in urban centres, many in Ontario or the larger cities of Quebec and British Columbia. Many regarded agricultural

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Ibid, p.1153.

work only as a necessary transitional measure until jobs could be found in the cities. Those who decided to remain on the land were usually well-to-do peasants, with substantial sums of cash.¹⁹

Because of their relative affluence the newcomers were able to adapt more easily to their surroundings and establish a standard of living similar to that of their neighbours. For this reason they did not suffer the severe problems of survival and adjustment with which the Ukrainian pioneers had to contend. In addition to this, Ukrainians already in Canada organized immigrant societies which offered the new settlers advice on land settlement, Canadian customs and law, language difficulties and other topics that were relevant to their new life.

Organizational Structure of the Second Immigration

Ukrainians arriving in Canada after the First World War encountered a Ukrainian society that had already evolved a definite pattern of group life. Churches, schools, local secular organizations and the Ukrainian press, though unco-ordinated, were well established. Some newcomers accepted these forms of organized community life and became actively involved in different sectors of it. Quite a large number, however, found existing forms of community activity unacceptable and began to create new ones.

Among the first organizations formed was the Ukrainian Self-Reliance League of Canada (Soiuz Ukraintsiv Samostiinykiv), founded in 1927 by

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V. Lysenko, Men in Sheepskin Coats (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1947), p.121.

Orthodox Ukrainians. Its affiliate organizations were the Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada (Soiuz Ukrainok Kanady, 1926) and the Association of Ukrainian Youth of Canada - SUMK (Soiuz Ukrains'koi Molodi Kanady, 1931). The official organ of the Ukrainian Self-Reliance League is Ukrains'kyi Holos. In 1932 the Ukrainian Catholics organized the Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood (Bratstvo Ukraintsiv Katolykiv), which conducted its activities in close affiliation with the Ukrainian Catholic hierarchy in Canada. In 1939 the Ukrainian Catholic Youth of Canada (Ukrains'ke Katolyts'ke Iunatstvo) was organized; in 1943, the Ukrainian Catholic Women's League (Liga Ukrains'kykh Katolyts'kykh Zhinok). The monthly magazine Biuletyn (The Bulletin) is its press organ.

In the category of secular, affiliated groupings, several political and social organizations were formed. They derived their ideological character from political movements prevailing in Western Ukraine in the 1920's and among political refugees in Europe. Thus, former veterans of the Ukrainian armies organized the Ukrainian War Veterans' Association (Ukrains'ka Strilets'ka Hromada) in 1928, and in 1932 established the Ukrainian National Federation (Ukrains'ke Natsional'ne Obiednannia). The Federation was non-denominational, anti-communist and strongly nationalistic in supporting Ukraine's freedom. Its component organizations were the Ukrainian War Veterans' Association, the Ukrainian Women's Organization of Olha Basarab (Orhanizatsiia Ukrainok Kanady im. Ol'hy Basarab, 1930), and the Ukrainian National Youth Federation - MUN (Molodi Ukrains'ki Natsionalisty, 1934). Its press organ is the weekly Novyi Shliakh (New Pathway).

A paramilitary and sports organization, the "Sich", was founded in

1924 by followers of the Hetman movement. The "Sich" organization had existed in Galicia in 1901 for the purpose of ideological-political and physical training. During the First World War this association developed into regular military units known as Ukrainian Sich Riflemen (Ukrains'ki Sichovi Stril'tsi). In Canada it existed primarily as a sporting association which in 1934 became the United Hetman Organization (Soiuz Het'mantsiv Derzhavnykiv). The semi-monthly Bat'kivshchyna (Fatherland) is their official press organ.

Ukrainians following pro-communist, pro-soviet ideology were organized into the Ukrainian Labour Temple Association (Stovaryshennia Ukrains'kyi Robitnychy Dim) in 1918, and incorporated as a dominion-wide cultural and educational organization in 1924 under the name Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association (Tovarystvo Ukrains'kyi Robitnycho-Farmers'kyi Dim). In 1940 the group was suppressed by the Canadian government. The association re-organized itself in 1943 as the Ukrainian Canadian Association and in 1945 became the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians (Tovarystvo Obiednanykh Ukrains'kykh Kanadtsiv). The group has its own weekly publication, Zhyttia i Slovo (Life and Word), published in Ukrainian, and also an English-language publication, The Ukrainian Canadian.

Dissension and Strife

A great deal of quarreling marked the life of Ukrainian-Canadian society in the period between the two World Wars. Many of the new immigrants considered the older settlers and Canadian-born Ukrainians too Canadianized.

The newcomers found the old-timers lacking in national consciousness, while they in turn, were regarded as being too nationalistic and radical. It was inevitable that antagonism, friction and rivalry would develop between the old settlers and the new. This animosity manifested itself most strongly in organized group activities.

During the 1920's Ukrainians were divided into three factions: the Greek Catholic, which supported the hetmanite-monarchial ideology; the Greek Orthodox, which defended republicanism; and the communist, which advocated Russian bolshevism and sovietism.²⁰ Antagonism between these sectors was extremely bitter and ideological principles were often lost sight of in campaigns aimed at discrediting each other's leaders.

The formation of the Ukrainian National Federation added another dimension to existing organizational strife. The Federation advocated unity and religious tolerance while calling upon its members to combat communism, defend Canada's democracy and support the struggle for Ukraine's independence. Primarily for its support of revolutionary means for liberating Ukraine, the organization drew upon itself the wrath of the other three groups who denounced its ideology. In the ensuing struggle both hetmanite-monarchist and communist factions lost considerable support — but not before massive smear campaigns, both verbal and in the press, had taken place.

Hostility among Ukrainians continued until 1940, when the Ukrainian Canadian Committee (Komitet Ukraintsiv Kanady) was formed. The initiative to organize came from several Ukrainian community leaders but encouragement

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P. Yuzyk, Ukrainians in Manitoba, p.92.

also came from the Federal Government which wanted to see more unity among Ukrainians to assist in the war effort. Differences were settled among the various organizations and the Committee became the supreme co-ordinating body for all Ukrainian secular organizations of dominion-wide magnitude, with the exception of the pro-communist, pro-soviet, anti-democratic and anti-religious groups. The Churches also gave their support to the new umbrella organization. Since its formation and incorporation with a dominion charter, the Ukrainian Canadian Committee, which represents the majority of Ukrainian Canadians, has acted as the official forum for this ethnic group.

The Ukrainian pro-communist groups were disbanded in 1940. On June 5 of that year the Canadian Communist Party, the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association and several other pro-communist organizations were outlawed by an Order in Council under the Defense of Canada regulations.

The Third Ukrainian Immigration

The third mass movement of Ukrainian immigrants to Canada was due to events caused by the Second World War. Immigrants in this group, who for the most part arrived in Canada between 1945 and 1954, were victims of war: displaced persons, prisoners of war and refugees who had fled from the Soviet regime. All considered themselves to be political émigrés and refused to ^{be}repatriated to the territories from which they had come because of the political situation created by the Soviet occupation of Ukraine. Many Ukrainians who had left their country during or after World War I and between the wars lived in Central Europe, also came to Canada with the third group.

In contrast to the two previous waves of immigration which had come from the western regions of Ukraine, the third group was composed of people from all parts of Ukraine. The majority of the third immigration settled in cities (often after one year of compulsory employment as farm, sugarbeet or pulp and paper labour) with about 80% settling in Toronto.²¹ Statistics indicate that Ukrainian immigration in the post-war years, 1946-1961, numbered 37,132 persons although the actual count was likely over 40,000.²²

Events of the war had made the third-wave immigrants a politically conscious group. Many had actively fought against various occupational regimes in Ukraine (Nazi-Germans, bolsheviks, communists) as combatants of the

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Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.575.

²²

Ibid, pp.570-571.

Ukrainian Underground Army. As a group they were strongly anti-communist. They did not recognize the political regime in Ukraine and regarded it as an illegal occupation force which had to be removed. The more extreme elements of the third immigration left their homeland with the intention of popularizing Ukraine's struggle for independence abroad, enlisting the support of western European nations in their fight, and eventually returning home to a liberated Ukraine.

Members of the third immigration came with average or advanced education. Many had received their training and schooling in Ukraine, while others had acquired new skills in various "displaced persons camps" in western Europe. Within the ranks of this group were many skilled craftspeople, technicians and professionals — doctors, lawyers, economists, engineers, and educators, to name only a few. In addition to this, there were also a fair number of intellectuals and members of the "cultural elite" — artists, actors, singers, musicians, dancers, poets, writers and journalists. In a majority of cases, besides their known trades, crafts and professions they already had a general knowledge of the language or the country in which they were settling.²³ For this reason it was easier for them to integrate into existing community life and many of them were able to continue their interrupted careers almost immediately, while others had to undertake refresher courses before they could pursue their chosen line of work.

²³

Ibid, p.575.

Group Activity Following the Second World War

Although numerically small, the third group of immigrants who arrived in Canada made a tremendous impact on Ukrainian-Canadian society. Some of the newcomers readily integrated into those forms of Ukrainian social structure that had been created by settlers of both previous tides of immigration as well as by Ukrainians born in Canada. Participation in these organizations by the new arrivals increased existing membership and gave moral support and fresh impetus for organizational activity.

Not all were able to adjust to existing conditions of community life. A situation parallel to the one which arose with the arrival of the second immigration developed. The new immigrants fostered a series of political and social organizations. The political organizations were closely based on various political groupings of Ukrainian émigrés in Europe. The Canadian League for Ukraine's Independence (Liga Vyzvolennia Ukrainy), founded in 1949, was the strongest of these organizations. Its official press organ is Homin Ukrainy (Echo of Ukraine), published on a weekly basis. The newcomers also established several new youth organizations: the Ukrainian Youth Association "Plast" (1948), the Ukrainian Youth Association of Canada - SUM (Spilka Ukrains'koi Molodi, 1948), which is ideologically affiliated with the Canadian League for Ukraine's Independence, and the Ukrainian Democratic Youth Association - ODUM (Obiednannia Demokratychnoi Ukrains'koi Molodi, 1950).²⁴

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For more complete information on organized Ukrainian youth in Canada see: P. Migus, "Ukrainian Canadian Youth: A History of Organizational Life in Canada 1907-1953" (M.A. Thesis, University of Ottawa, 1975).

Although some antagonism occurred between the new organizations and the old, it wasn't as severe as it had been during the 1930's. Gradually, the new groups also joined the Ukrainian Canadian Committee.

The third immigration brought to Canada a large number of scholars who strongly reinforced the first ranks of intellectuals who arrived after the First World War and others who completed their studies at Canadian and American universities. It was in the organization of the scholarly sector of community life that the newcomers made their most notable contributions. Not involved in religious or ideological rivalry, the intellectual elite formed research organizations and learned societies patterned after those in Ukraine. Among these were the T. Shevchenko Scientific Society (Naukove Товариство ім. Т. Шевченка), formed in 1949, the Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences - UVAN (Ukrains'ka Vil'na Akademiia Nauk), also formed in 1949 and the Ukrainian Canadian Research Foundation, formed in 1957. The new arrivals have helped to establish and staff Slavic Studies departments at universities, providing advanced training in Ukrainian subjects and enabling instruction in Ukrainian to develop beyond the elementary level.

CHAPTER II

UKRAINIAN THEATRE IN CANADA

Ukrainian theatrical art has a long and bright tradition in Canada. Amateur dramatic groups were among the first forms of organized life undertaken by early settlers, and it was from such groups that many organizations later developed. As Ukrainian communities established church groups, reading associations and Ukrainian National Homes, dramatic work flourished and became widespread. At the height of this theatrical activity there was hardly a Ukrainian community anywhere in Canada that did not have at least one amateur dramatic group.

This love for theatre and drama soon came to the attention of the non-Ukrainian sector of the population. By 1921 these theatrical efforts were being noticed by government officials as well:

It is submitted that here we have a real cultural movement, grotesquely crude as yet, but possessing the tremendous advantages of being a spontaneous expression of deeply seated racial aptitudes, and of being rooted in the common people. These people are in circumstances which in other races and in other ages have produced great literatures. They are numerous enough to have momentum and few enough to experience the cohesive forces of the sensation of being an unpopular minority. They have been transplanted to alien skies and find themselves at once yearning for their homeland and undergoing the exciting and disturbing experience of fitting into a new and imperious and overbearing type of civilization. Their ancestral religion is challenged. Their emotions are torn by the consciousness of racial defeat. And here we see these people before our eyes stretching forth their hands towards the drama and towards the poetry.¹

¹ Confidential memorandum on the Ukrainians sent by C.F. Hamilton, Commissioner for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Ottawa, to A.F. Sladen, Private Secretary to His Excellency the Governor General, August 31, 1921. (Public Archives of Canada. RG 7, G14, Vol. 103, p.7)

The theatrical groups often had large memberships not only because they provided their members with the opportunity to perform on stage, but because they offered them a chance to lead an active social life. In addition to regular rehearsals, members would meet almost every evening to read, discuss current events or to debate topical issues. The groups sponsored various parties, picnics, masquerades and other social activities at which members and supporters were given the opportunity to enjoy themselves and at the same time to raise much-needed funds. The dramatic associations often donated portions of their gate receipts or held special benefit performances in aid of various Ukrainian causes. During the years of dramatic activity in Canada, donations were made to the Native School (Ridna Shkola) in Galicia, to the Ukrainian Horod "Sokil" in Lviv, in aid of Ukrainian invalids and political prisoners, to the "bursa Adama Kots'ka", to the Red Cross, and for various national needs in Canada.

The primary aim of Ukrainian theatre in Canada, however, was not the raising of funds for various needs. Rather the early Ukrainian dramatic associations and groups were established by Ukrainian immigrants who felt they needed a bulwark to protect their national identity against high-pressure "assimilation" policies. Finding themselves in an alien and often hostile milieu, the Ukrainian settlers banded together and turned towards their own cultural and theatrical traditions for strength and enlightenment.

The numerous enthusiastically positive reviews in Ukrainian newspapers during the 1920's and 1930's support the fact that theatrical performances by the amateur dramatic groups were indeed fulfilling a need

within the Ukrainian community. Such statements of approval from their public assured the performers that their work was not viewed as simple self-gratification or merely a means of collecting money; they testified to the fact that the work was generally understood as a noble and easily accessible form of schooling for the masses and a means by which the level of cultural awareness of the Ukrainian population could be raised. Semen Kowbel', one of the pioneers of Ukrainian theatre in Canada, saw the work of amateur dramatic performers as a service to the Ukrainian community:

Вона (їх праця - О.П.) живими картинами вказувала на ті народні боляки та способи, як їх лікувати чи оминати. Пригадувала народові його славне минуле, його осяги, його гріхи та покаєння. Показувала добрі і злі сторони та їх наслідки. Вона була тим найкращим засобом морального виховання народу. Самі працівники-аматори окрім душевої насолоди і віри, що їх праця приносить ту моральну користь народові, не мали ніякої особистої користи матеріальної. Ті публичні оцінки і признання ще більше закріплювали в них ту віру.

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With living scenes it (theatrical work - A.P.) indicated the national ills and the means by which they could be healed or avoided. It reminded the people of its glorious past, its achievements, its sins and penitence. It showed the good and the bad sides and their results. It was the best method of moral upbringing of a people. The amateurs themselves, outside of the spiritual satisfaction and faith that their work fulfilled a morally useful need for their nation, had no form of personal material gain. Those public evaluations and acclaim strengthened that faith even more. (S. Kowbel' & D. Doroshenko, eds., Propamitna knyha Ukrain's'koho Narodnoho Domu v Vynny-pegu [Memorial Book of the Ukrainian National Home in Winnipeg] [Winnipeg: Ukrainian National Home, 1949], pp.153-154.

Theatrical Activity of the First Ukrainian Immigration

Early Theatrical Life in Winnipeg

On May 14, 1904 members of the Shevchenko Reading Society (Chyital'nia im. T.H. Shevchenka) staged H. Tsehlyns'kyi's 1889 comedy Argonavty (The Argonauts) in the home of Kyrylo Genyk in Winnipeg.³ This is reputed to be the first Ukrainian play presented in Canada.⁴ Later that year Ivan Antoniuk, a Ukrainian teacher from Kolomyia, produced Svatannia na Honcharivtsi (The Courting in Honcharivka, 1836) by H. Kvitka-Osnovianenko, also in the Genyk home.⁵

The early years of theatrical activity in Winnipeg were sporadic; groups forming, presenting several plays and then disbanding. With continued growth in cultural activity among the Ukrainians, various drama groups which had been formed in the reading associations and churches graduated from presenting simple one-act plays and sketches to full-fledged dramatic productions. On August 5, 1906, members of the Prosvita Reading Society (Chyital'nia

³ P. Krawchuk, The Ukrainians in Winnipeg's First Century (Toronto: Kobzar Publishing Company Limited, 1974), p.22, and also V. Lysenko, Men in Sheepskin Coats (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1947), pp.102-103.

⁴ Most writers agree that the first Ukrainian play was staged in Winnipeg in 1904. N. Kohuska mentions in Iuvileina Knyzhka Soiuzu Ukrains'koi Molodi Kanady 1931-1956 [Jubilee Book of the Canadian Ukrainian Youth Association] (Winnipeg: S.U.M.K., 1956), p.17, that Petro Zvarych organized a theatrical group and staged performances in Edmonton and Beaver Creek, Alberta in 1903. Specific details of these performances have not been located.

⁵ Knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipeg, p.23.

Prosvita) were the first in Canada to present I. Kotliarevs'kyi's operetta Natalka Poltavka (Natalie From Poltava, 1819).⁶

Organization of dramatic groups which were to become more permanent began in 1909. On February 20, 1909 the Ukrainian Socialist Drama Circle of Mykola Kropyvyns'kyi performed I. Franko's Ukradene shchastia (Stolen Happiness, 1893) and on May 23, 1910 the V. Vynnychenko Drama Circle (Dramatychnyi Kruzhok im. V. Vynnychenka), which was affiliated with the Winnipeg branch of the Ukrainian Social-Democratic Party, played I. Tohobochnyi's Maty naimychka (Servant Mother).⁷ Other Winnipeg groups involved in theatrical activity at this time were the Tobilevych Drama Circle (Amators'kyi Kruzhok im. Tobilevycha), the Singing-Dramatic Circle of the Prosvita Reading Association (Spivats'ko-Dramatychnyi Kruzhok Chytal'ni Prosvity) formed in 1910, and the youth organization, "Zaporizhs'ka Sich", formed in 1910, which presented plays from time to time until 1912, when a permanent singing and dramatic group was established.⁸

Three new dramatic societies were formed in Winnipeg in 1911. They were the Enlightening-Dramatic Society of Maria Zan'kovets'ka (Prosvitno-Dramatychne Tovarystvo im. Marii Zan'kovets'koi), the Dramatic Society of Ivan Kotliarevs'kyi (Dramatychne Tovarystvo im. Ivana Kotliarevs'koho) and the Ukrainian Dramatic Society "Boian" (Ukrains'ke Dramatychne Tovarystvo "Boian"). These groups soon took the leading role in Winnipeg's theatrical

⁶
Krawchuk, Ukrainians in Winnipeg, p.23.

⁷
Ibid, p.31.

⁸
Ukrains'kyi Holos [Ukrainian Voice], Winnipeg, April 17, 1912.

life and by 1913 established themselves as the strongest existing dramatic associations. They openly engaged in friendly competition not only for available actors and participants but also for audiences and performance space; with each group striving to produce something fresh and different for each theatre season. Of the three groups "Boian" was the largest.

"Boian", whose constitution was ratified June 15, 1912, was set up for the purpose of "promulgating the feeling of national consciousness and love for Ukrainian literature, culture and art"⁹ by means of theatrical and choral performances; establishing an extensive library; and publishing dramatic and musical works. The association attracted a large and talented membership and after a relatively short period boasted strong choral and dramatic ensembles. Under the direction of Maksym Pasichniak, the choral section of "Boian" grew in size and vocal power, becoming one of the leading Ukrainian choirs in Winnipeg. The dramatic section was headed by Semen Kowbel' who arrived in Canada in 1909 and immediately became involved in the theatrical life of Winnipeg. He was a man of multiple talents — for many years serving in the dual role of president of the association and director for all theatrical presentations where his abilities as actor, singer, administrator and dramatist came in play.

In the beginning "Boian", like most of the other dramatic groups in the city, used facilities of the Queens Theatre; but by 1913 it also began renting the more spacious Grand Opera Theatre. It was in the Grand Opera Theatre that "Boian" premiered M. Kropyvnyts'kyi's Nevol'nyk (The Prisoner,

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Knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipeg, p.176. From the constitution.

1872), T. Shevchenko's Nazar Stodolia (1843) and M. Staryts'kyi's Chornomortsi (Black Sea Kozaks, 1875). "Boian" was the first dramatic association in Canada to stage S. Hulak-Artemovs'kyi's Zaporozhets' za Dunaïem (Kozak Beyond the Danube, 1863), which it presented at the Queens Theatre on May 12, 1917.¹⁰ This required extensive staging and costuming but was undertaken by "Boian" at the height of competition among dramatic associations in Winnipeg.¹¹

The M. Zan'kovets'ka Dramatic Society was formed in the fall of 1911 by younger members of the Prosvita Reading Association located at the Greek Catholic parish of St. Nicholas.¹² Petro Iundak was appointed conductor of the choral section and Ivan Trach was delegated the responsibility of producing plays. The first production, Pobida svitla nad t'moiu (The Victory

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Ukrains'kyi Holos, May 34, 1917.

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In 1913 Makarenko brought a Jewish theatre troupe from the United States to Winnipeg to play an entire theatre season at the Queens Theatre. Counting heavily on the attendance of the local Ukrainian population, an almost exclusively Ukrainian repertoire was announced with the season commencing with Natalka Poltavka and Zaporozhets' za Dunaïem. Members of "Boian" were approached to act as supporting actors and extras for some of the larger productions that could not be entirely cast from among the ranks of the Jewish theatre troupe. "Boian" refused because the appearances by the Jewish troupe infringed on the amount of stage time that would be available to local Ukrainian dramatic associations for their own productions. Ukrainian audiences boycotted the performances with the result that the theatre season was cut short and Makarenko ended up selling his entire extensive Ukrainian wardrobe as well as musical scores for eight Ukrainian operas to "Boian" for the sum of \$100. The sheet music included the complete score for Zaporozhets' za Dunaïem orchestrated for twelve instruments. (Knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipeg, p.419.)

12

I. Trach, "Moi spomyny do istorii Tovarystva im. Marii Zan'kovets'-koi u Vinnipeg" [My Reminiscences of the History of the Mariia Zan'kovets'-ka Association in Winnipeg], Knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipeg, p.247.

of Light Over Darkness) was presented in the church basement January 27 and 28, 1912.¹³ This was followed with I. Bodrug's Ubiinyky (Killers, 1909) presented in May of the same year after which the dramatic society transferred its activities to the Yastremsky Hall. Their next production, M. Al'-bykivs'kyi's Okh, ta ne liuby dvokh (Oh, Don't Love Two), was presented September 7, 1912, and was well received.¹⁴ In October of the same year Natalka Poltavka was staged but did not meet with success as the association lacked the number of soloists required to cast an operetta; after this the group decided to limit itself to the production of easier dramas, comedies and historical plays rather than attempting musicals for which they were ill equipped. The group presented several outstanding works prior to the end of World War I. One of its most successful productions was the drama Sichyns'kyi-Potots'kyi, first staged on December 25, 1914, in the Queens Theatre and repeated on January 2, 1915.¹⁵ The play dealt with Galicia's recent past and was therefore of topical interest to Ukrainian audiences.¹⁶ Another outstanding production during this time was O. Sukhodol's'kyi's drama Khmara

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Ibid, p.249.

14

Ukrains'kyi Holos, September 7, 1912.

15

Trach, "Moi spomyny", pp.255-257.

16

The play dealt with the murder of M. Kahanets' by gendarmes, the assassination of Count Andrzej Potocki, Governor of Galicia in 1908 by Myroslav Sichyns'kyi and the subsequent trial of Sichyns'kyi. In Canada, Sichyns'kyi became somewhat of a national hero and Ukrainians in Canada held gatherings and signed petitions to the governments of Austria and Canada asking the Austrian government to grant him amnesty. Sichyns'kyi was pardoned and released in 1911.

(The Cloud), premiered on February 27, 1915.¹⁷

The I. Kotliarevs'kyi Dramatic Society was organized at the so-called "small" church of St. Volodymyr and Olga by members of the I. Kotliarevs'kyi Prosvita Reading Association (Chytal'nia Prosvita im. Ivana Kotliarevs'koho) but did not officially become affiliated with the reading association until 1913, at which time Vasyl' Kazanivs'kyi was elected president.¹⁸ In the beginning the drama group carried on its activities in the church school building and it was here that its first two productions — Na starosty lit (In Old Age) and Vykhovanets (The Ward) — were presented.¹⁹ Eventually the dramatic association vacated the church premises as a misunderstanding arose over control of proceeds from plays and moved its activities across the street to the Yastremsky Hall. In 1914 the I. Kotliarevs'kyi Dramatic Society presented I. Tobilevych's classic drama Beztalanna (The Hapless One, 1886)²⁰ and in 1915 presented M. Staryts'kyi's Nich pid Ivana Kupala (St. John's Eve, 1887).²¹ Highlights of the 1917-1918 theatre season were M. Kropyvnyts'kyi's Tytarivna (The Church Warden's Daughter, 1891) and I. Tobilevych's Lykha iskra pole spalyt' i sama shchezne (A Malevolent Spark Will Burn a Field and Itself Vanish, 1896).²²

¹⁷
Ukrains'kyi Holos, March 3, 1915.

¹⁸
Ukrains'kyi Holos, November 30, 1913.

¹⁹
V. Kazanivs'kyi, "Z moikh spomyniv" [From My Memoirs] , Knyha U.N.D. v. Vinnipeg, pp.270-273.

²⁰
Ukrains'kyi Holos, December 19, 1914.

²¹
Ibid, March 17, 1915.

²²
Knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipeg, p.146.

In 1913, under the initiative of T. D. Ferley, members of the three dramatic associations "Boian", M. Zan'kovets'ka and I. Kotliarevs'kyi, as well as others who were interested, met in a public meeting to organize the Ukrainian National Home Association (Tovarystvo Ukrains'kyi Narodnyi Dim). At first this new organization existed only on paper but members of the three amateur groups staged benefit performances to raise funds for acquiring a building. This was done in 1917 and the three dramatic associations transferred their activities to the Ukrainian National Home.²³

Several new dramatic associations were founded in Winnipeg during the war years. In 1916 the Singing-Dramatic Association "Banduryst" (Spivats'ko-Dramatychnyi Hurtok "Banduryst") was formed at the parish of St. Volodymyr and Olga. For many years the group was headed by Ivan Pylypiuk. Two smaller groups, which depended on members of the larger and better established associations to assist them in their more ambitious performances, were also formed at this time. These were the drama group of the T. H. Shevchenko Institute in Brookland (a suburb of Winnipeg) formed ca. 1915 and the Ukrainian Students Circle (Ukrains'kyi Students'kyi Kruzhok) formed in 1916.²⁴

Rural Manitoba

Although the first Ukrainian cultural-educational organizations

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Kazaniivs'kyi, "Z moikh spomyniv", p.213.

²⁴

"Ukrains'ki Tovarystva u Vinnipeg" [Ukrainian Associations in Winnipeg], Iliustrovanyi kaliendar "Kanadiis'koho ukraintsia" [Illustrated Calendar of the "Canadian Ukrainian"], Winnipeg, 1927, p.127.

appeared in rural Manitoba as early as 1903²⁵ (Sifton and Brokenhead) the distinction of being the first group to perform a play in rural Manitoba falls to the I. Ardan Prosvita in Plum Ridge. On October 16, 1906 it staged Svatannia na Honcharivtsi in the so-called "Galician School". The play was organized by the bilingual teachers in the district.²⁶

Other rural localities also became involved in theatrical activity at an early date. The town of Vita established the M. Pavlyk Reading Association (Chytal'nia im. M. Pavlyka) in a member's home in 1905 and in 1911 presented its first play, Buntivnyk (The Agitator), in the town hall. In 1915 V. Zherovs'kyi took charge of the amateur group and staged several works including Nazar Stodolia.²⁷ A dramatic group existed in Venlaw and in 1911 presented Ubiynyky in neighbouring Ethelbert. Etherbert had its own amateur group affiliated with the "Sich" Association which had been organized in 1907 and which presented plays in the local school.²⁸ Several other dramatic groups were active in Manitoba prior to the outbreak of the First World War. In P.O. Mears an amateur group was established with the help of school teachers at the T. Shevchenko Prosvita Reading Association in 1912.²⁹ The

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See Chapter I, pp.9-10.

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M.H. Marunchak, The Ukrainian Canadians: A History (Winnipeg: Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences, 1970), p.167.

²⁷

Knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipegu, p.681.

²⁸

Ibid, pp.490-491

²⁹

Al'manakh Tovarystva Ukrain's'kyi Robitnycho-Farmers'kyi Dim v Kanadi i Bratnikh Orhanizatsii 1918-1929 [Almanac of the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association in Canada and Affiliated Organizations] (Winnipeg: Labour-Farmer Publishing Association, 1930), p.84.

first plays presented in Brandon, Nastoiashchi (The True Ones) and Hostyna Sviatoho Mykolaia (The Visit of St. Nicholas), were performed by members of the Prosvita Reading Association in 1913.³⁰ In Transcona the "Sich" Reading Association (Tovarystvo Chytal'nia Sich) organized an amateur group to raise funds for the construction of a hall. In 1914 the group presented Okh, ta ne liuby dvokh.³¹ (In 1915 it changed its name to the T. Shevchenko Reading Association). Ukrainian students of the Metropolitan Andrey Shepticky Bursa in St. Boniface presented Shakespeare's Julius Caesar in 1916.³² The Star Association (Tovarystvo "Zoria") in Portage La Prairie established an amateur singing-dramatic association in 1915.³³

Edmonton

Edmonton was the second most active Ukrainian theatre centre in Canada prior to the end of the First World War. Regular theatrical activity began in Edmonton in 1911 with the formation of the "Boian" Association (Tovarystvo "Boian"), a singing and dramatic society which existed almost independently during its early years, excepting that its proceeds were earmarked for the construction of a Ukrainian National Home.³⁴ "Boian's"

³⁰ Ukrains'kyi Holos, January 9, 1913.

³¹ Ibid, January 7, 1914.

³² Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.201.

³³ Al'manakh TURFDim, p.74.

³⁴ M. Chomiak, ed., Propamiatna knyha Ukrains'koho Narodnoho Domu v Edmontoni 1906-1965 [Memorial Book of the Ukrainian National Home] (Edmonton: Ukrainian Catholic Council-Ukrainian National Home, 1966), p.110.

first director was Hryhorii Demkiv, while the first choral conductors were Teodor Panchyshyn, Nykolai Z'ombra and Vasyl' Smolyk. Since the association's activities were concentrated on the preparation of plays and the development of choral singing, it is not surprising that between 1912 and 1918 eighty-five plays and six concerts were presented, with the proceeds totalling \$5,149.39.³⁵ This figure itself attests to the great popularity of such performances, as admission to plays at this time was fifty and seventy-five cents.³⁶

Until 1917, when the Ukrainian National Home was completed and "Boian" transferred its activities to new premises, all performances were held in a Catholic school. Among the more notable performances prior to moving were Nakalka Poltavka (November 6, 1913³⁷), Ubiinyky (January 10, 1914³⁸), Nevol'nyk (June 11, 1914³⁹), and H. Khotkevych's Lykholittia (Troubled Times, 1906) on November 30, 1916.⁴⁰ The official opening of the Ukrainian National Home was celebrated with a performance of M. Arkas's opera Kateryna, presented September 20, 1917 by the combined forces of "Boian" and members of the M. Shashkevych Prosvita Reading Association (Chytal'nia Prosvita im. M. Shashkevycha) who had worked closely with "Boian" in raising

35

Ibid, p.110.

36

Novyny [News], Edmonton, January 6, 1914.

37

Ibid, November 8, 1913.

38

Ibid, January 6, 1914.

39

Ibid, June 9, 1914.

40

Chomiak, Propamiatna knyha, p.61.

funds for the building.⁴¹

Proceeds from theatrical performances and concerts had gone a long way towards providing funds for constructing the new building. These musical and dramatic endeavours were continued not only because they provided members of the National Home with a creative outlet for their talents, but also because proceeds from such presentations were required to cover mortgage payments for many years to come. In the new premises "Boian" increased its membership and continued its dramatic work.

Another amateur theatrical group began in Edmonton during the First World War. In 1915 former members of the Ukrainian Social-Democratic Party (U.S.D.P.) organized the Self-Education Society (Tovarystvo Samoobrazovannia). During its formative years the society was strictly a dramatic association and held its rehearsals above a restaurant owned by several workers. When the Edmonton branch of U.S.D.P. resumed its activities in 1916, it began working in close co-operation with the dramatic association which changed its name to T. Shevchenko Self-Educational Society (Tovarystvo Samoobrazovannia im. T. Shevchenka).⁴² The association appealed to many young Ukrainian workers in Edmonton and it quickly expanded. A choir was organized under the direction of Mathew Shatul's'kyi and the dramatic section was directed by I. Sokolov and I. Klybanovskyi. During the war years small performances were presented in a Presbyterian "bursa", larger concerts in various English theatres and more important plays were staged in the Ukrainian Nat-

⁴¹

Ibid, p.79.

⁴²

Al'manakh TURFDim, p.187.

ional Home.⁴³ During 1918, when the U.S.D.P. was outlawed in Canada, the T. Shevchenko Self-Educational Society managed, with difficulty, to obtain permission to carry on its musical and dramatic work.

Rural Alberta

Although Edmonton was the most active Ukrainian theatrical centre in the province it was not the first to present plays. The first amateur group was organized by Petro Zvarych in Beaver Creek and presented plays and skits for the community prior to 1903.⁴⁴

Vegreville had the most active Ukrainian theatrical group in rural Alberta. In 1909 performers from Vegreville staged Natalka Poltavka in Edmonton.⁴⁵ Plays had been presented in Vegreville at an earlier date but regular theatrical activity began ca. 1911 when the M. Sichyns'kyi Prosvita Association (Prosvitne Tovarystvo im. M. Sichyns'koho) was established and an amateur group was formed. Its first production Vyfleiems'ka Nich (Bethlehem Night) was presented in the town hall before Christmas 1912.⁴⁶ In 1914, a Ukrainian National Hall was built and the association became the T. Shevchenko Scientific Society (Naukove Tovarystvo im. T. Shevchenka).

⁴³

Ibid, p.188.

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Kohuska, Iuvileina Knyzhka SUMK, p.17.

⁴⁵

Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.197.

⁴⁶

"Uryvky zi spomyniv P. Zvarycha z Vegrevyl, Al'ta." (Excerpts from the Memoires of P. Zvarych of Vegreville, Alta.), Knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipegu, p.650.

Throughout the war years Illia Poraiko directed the choir and drama group.

Ukrainian plays were also presented in Myrnam and Speden at an early date. In Myrnam, a drama group and choir were affiliated with the M. Shashkevych Prosvita Reading Association, which was established prior to 1910.⁴⁷ In Speden, an amateur group was formed by local farmers in 1914, intending to raise funds and to involve prospective members in the establishment of a cultural centre. From their first efforts (a one-act play presented in the neighbouring settlements of Strii and Dawning), the I. Franko Association was formed the same year.⁴⁸

Saskatchewan

In Saskatchewan, theatrical activity among Ukrainians began in 1908 with the first production, Vyfleiems'ka Nich, being performed in the Sokal school by young people from the St. Julien district.⁴⁹

The first cultural-educational centres in Saskatchewan were established in Skalat in 1906 and Bonne Maddone in 1907. It is probable that many of the reading associations in the province included theatrical presentations among their activities. Dissemination of national culture among the people was one of the main topics under discussion at the public gathering (viche) of Ukrainians from every part of Saskatchewan held in Rosthern

⁴⁷
Al'manakh TURFDim, p.219.

⁴⁸
Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.173.

⁴⁹
Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.175.

on March 15 and 16, 1910.⁵⁰ This public assembly was composed of representatives from the twenty reading associations in Saskatchewan. Since the production of plays was one of the more popular means of educating the masses, it is probable that amateur dramatic groups existed in Saskatchewan prior to the First World War.⁵¹

British Columbia

British Columbians did not participate in theatrical activity to the extent of other westerners and played a minor role in Ukrainian cultural development prior to the end of the First World War. Ukrainians in Vancouver were the first to attempt organizational work. On September 9, 1906 the Ukrainian Club was formed.⁵² It subscribed to many Ukrainian and English language periodicals and worked diligently on behalf of its own labourers as well as the good of the Ukrainian national cause. In 1907 many of its members formed another organization, the Association "Borot'ba" (Tovarystvo "Borot'ba"), which in addition to holding discussions on various political and cultural-educational topics, had its own choir. It was the first Ukrainian organization in the province to form a drama group. I. Karalash was its first director.⁵³ Another Ukrainian cultural-educational

⁵⁰

Ibid, p.176.

⁵¹

Unfortunately, little relevant information has been located.

⁵²

Svoboda [Freedom], Scranton, Penn., U.S.A., September 20, 1906.

⁵³

Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.179.

centre — the Prosvita Reading Association — was also organized in Vancouver prior to the First World War. In 1914 its drama group presented I. Franko's Ukradene shchastia (Stolen Happiness, 1893), with the proceeds being sent to Galicia to assist I. Franko and M. Pavlyk.⁵⁴

Other organizations existed elsewhere in the province but in most cases their small membership did not permit any serious theatrical work. On February 28, 1909, however, many of the smaller Ukrainian associations in British Columbia came together to commemorate T. Shevchenko with a presentation of the play Vechernytsi (Evening Revelry). The commemoration was initiated by the Ukrainian Educational-Labour Association of Hosmer and was supported by Ukrainians from Fernie, Michelle, Coleman and Lily.⁵⁵

Quebec

The earliest theatrical activity in eastern Canada was undertaken by Ukrainians in Montreal. An amateur group of young people was affiliated with the Association in Care of Settlers which was formed in September, 1903. In 1906, the Youth Association affiliated with the Association of Ukrainians (as the older group had been re-named) presented Khto z Bohom, Boh bude z nym (Who is With God, Then God Will Be With Him); and later another play, a comedy, Pan Sekretar (Mr. Secretary).⁵⁶ Another Montreal cultural centre

⁵⁴
Ukrains'kyi Holos, April 22, 1914.

⁵⁵
Kanadiis'kyi Farmer [Canadian Farmer], Winnipeg, February 19, 1909 as quoted in Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.180.

⁵⁶
Ibid, p.209.

which presented Ukrainian plays was the Taras Shevchenko "Prosvita" (Prosvita im. Tarasa Shevchenka) founded in December, 1913 by Rev. I. Perepylytsia. Through its efforts Natalka Poltavka was first staged in Eastern Canada before the first World War.⁵⁷ In 1918 its drama group presented Perekhytryly (Outwitted).⁵⁸ No information has been located on Ukrainian theatrical activity in the province of Quebec outside Montreal.

Ontario

The earliest colony of Ukrainians in Ontario was in Fort William. Before Christmas 1905, a group of labourers gathered to form a cultural centre and sick benefit association⁵⁹ and in 1906 the Prosvita Association, as the group became known, held its first meeting and outlined as one of its aims the production of plays. By 1913 the group had raised enough money through such performances to purchase its own building which became a Ukrainian National Home. Plays were presented regularly and the 100th anniversary of T. Shevchenko's birth in 1914 was marked with a performance of Nazar Stodolia.⁶⁰

In West Fort William young Ukrainians formed a drama group in the winter of 1909 and organized a Prosvita Association. During that year two

⁵⁷

Ibid, p.210.

⁵⁸

Ukrains'kyi Holos, October 2, 1918.

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Svoboda, No. 3, 1905.

⁶⁰

Knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipegu, pp.635-640.

plays, Znimchenyi Iurko (Germanized George) and Straik (Strike), were presented. Proceeds from these performances were earmarked for construction of their own building which was completed ca. 1912. It became affiliated with the Ukrainian National Home in Winnipeg in 1915.⁶¹ A splinter group broke away from the West Fort William Prosvita in 1910 and formed "Zaporizhs'ka Sich", which presented plays and towards the end of 1911 constructed a Ukrainian National Home. This building was burned in 1912 and reconstructed in 1914.⁶²

In 1907 a Prosvita Association was organized in Port Arthur. The first plays produced by its amateur group were Medlovs'kyi's Kapral' Tymko (Corporal Tymko) and Vyfleiems'ka Nich.⁶³ The association built a Ukrainian National Home in 1918. A small drama group was organized in Sydney ca. 1913 by Illia Nahorniak and carried on its work in co-operation with the Catholic parish of the Holy Ghost.⁶⁴

Theatrical activity among Ukrainians in Toronto commenced in 1910 with the formation of the Ruthenian-Ukrainian Association of St. Nicholas (Rus'ko-Ukrains'ke Tovarystvo sv. Mykolaia), which was soon renamed the Taras Shevchenko Benefit Society (Ukrains'ke Zapomohove Tovarystvo im. Tarasa Shevchenka). Between 1910 and 1914 the society staged several plays in Toronto and surrounding districts. The prime instigator behind these performances was Mykhailo Guzhda. In 1916 an Amateur Circle (Amators'kyi Kruzhok)

⁶¹
Ibid, pp.725-726.

⁶²
Al'manakh TURFDim, p.154.

⁶³
Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.212.

⁶⁴
Ibid, p.216.

was organized within the Taras Shevchenko Ukrainian Benefit Society by Vasyl' Burtnyk and during its first theatre season presented eight plays. Members of the drama group were dissatisfied with the limited scope of the society and in 1917 broke away to form the Taras Shevchenko Prosvita Reading Association.⁶⁵

A drama group also existed at Toronto's St. Josaphat's Catholic Church (erected in 1910). Within the first two years of the group's existence fourteen plays were presented.⁶⁶ Several other drama groups were formed in Toronto during the First World War: Star (Zoria), Free Ukraine (Vil'na Ukraina), and the Workers Dramatic Group (Robitnychy Dramaichnyi Hurok).⁶⁷ All of these groups existed independently of each other.

The town of Kenora was one of the more active Ukrainian communities in Ontario. The T. Shevchenko Prosvita Reading Association was formed in 1915 and in the same year its drama group presented their first play, Kapral' Tymko, three times — twice in Kenora and once in Keewatin.⁶⁸ Directors for these performances were Petro Plishka and Dmytro Virun. During the early years of its existence the group carried on its work in members' homes and in 1918 constructed their own building.⁶⁹

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Knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipeg, p.701.

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Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.214.

⁶⁷

Al'manakh TURFDim, p.92.

⁶⁸

O. Woycenko, Ukraina Kenors'ka: Iuvileina knyha Chyital'ni Tovarystva "Prosvita" im. T. Shevchenka 1915-1965 [Ukrainians in Kenora: A Jubilee Book of the Ukrainian Literary Society of T. Shevchenko] (Kenora: Published by the Society, 1965), p.37.

⁶⁹

Ibid, p.16.

Cultural activity among Ukrainians in Ottawa began on July 12, 1908 with the formation of a "Prosvita" Cultural Centre.⁷⁰ Virtually no information has survived on the nature of its activities. Another organization, New Life (Nove Zhyttia), was formed on February 25, 1912 as a branch of U.S.D.P.. In 1913 a drama group and choir were organized under the direction of F. Morak.⁷¹ In Hamilton, the Taras Shevchenko Prosvita, which was formed in 1910, organized a singing-dramatic association soon after its formation.⁷²

⁷⁰ Kanadiis'kyi Farmer, August 7, 1908.

⁷¹ Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.213.

⁷² Ibid, p.214.

Ukrainian Theatre in Canada Between 1917 and 1939

Theatrical activity in Canada's Ukrainian community reached its peak of activity in the two decades between the wars. During the 1920's, and to a lesser extent the 1930's, the performing arts, and especially theatrical performances, were extremely popular among Ukrainian Canadians. The influx of new and more nationally conscious immigrants following the First World War brought new strength to existing dramatic groups and caused new ones to be organized. Many of the new immigrants settled in urban centres while others migrated to the cities after a transitional period spent in rural areas.

The 1920's saw the formation of numerous "workers" dramatic associations which became affiliated with the pro-communist Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association. These amateur groups, which called themselves "Dramspivhurtok" (an anagram derived from dramatic singing group), carried on their activities in various Ukrainian Labour Temples across the country. In several instances, earlier Ukrainian organizations and amateur groups affiliated with Ukrainian National Homes were also taken over by pro-communist elements.

Most dramatic groups were active between the beginning of September and the end of May (their theatre season) and suspended dramatic activities for the summer months. During the theatre season Sunday evening entertainment was a regular feature in the seven hundred Ukrainian Halls⁷³ (called

⁷³ P. Yuzyk, Ukrainian Canadians: Their Place and Role in Community Life (Toronto: Kliev Printers Ltd., 1967), p.64.

dim, meaning "home" in Ukrainian) across Canada. Most of these halls were equipped with a stage, costumes and stage decorations, the cost of which usually amounted to around one thousand dollars.⁷⁴ Those halls which did not have resident amateur groups endeavoured to present plays from time to time.

Winnipeg remained the Ukrainian theatrical centre of Canada; both in terms of quantity and quality of its productions. During the 1920's Winnipeggers were in the fortunate position of being able to view new productions almost weekly and each of the many dramatic groups in the city developed their own repertoire and devoted following. Edmonton and Toronto also gained prominence as centres of Ukrainian theatrical activity.

Winnipeg

Numerous Ukrainian dramatic associations flourished in Winnipeg during the early 1920's. Of these, the groups working out of the Ukrainian National Home — "Boian", M. Zan'kovets'ka and I. Kotliarevs'kyi — were the most active and powerful; but others also presented plays on a regular basis. There was a great demand for available performance space, often resulting in extended waiting periods for each group between productions. The loss of the Grand Opera Theatre through fire in 1918 made the shortage of adequate performance facilities in the city more acute. In 1919 the pro-communist Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association (U.L.F.T.A.) constructed a Labour

⁷⁴ Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.456.

Temple with good stage facilities. Presentation of plays by nationalistic Ukrainian drama groups in the labour temple presented certain difficulties — all plays had to pass U.L.F.T.A. censorship before being staged. This problem was alleviated in 1921 when the Ukrainian Prosvita Institute (Ukrains'kyi Instytut "Prosvita") renovated its building and added an auditorium that had a seating capacity of 1,000 and contained a large and comfortable stage. ⁷⁵

The Ukrainian Dramatic Society "Boian" was the largest Ukrainian dramatic association in Winnipeg. Although its theatrical repertoire encompassed many dramas and comedies, including such works as M. Kropyvnyts'kyi's Dai sertsiu voliu zavede v nevoliu (Give Your Heart Freedom and It Will Enslave You, 1886), H. Tsehlyns'kyi's Shliakhta-khodiachkova (Walking Gentry, 1886) and S. Kowbel's Divochi mrii (A Maiden's Dreams, 1918), "Boian" excelled in operas and operettas. The association was fortunate in having a strong choir as well as a large number of soloists who were able to fill leading roles that required an aptitude for acting in addition to singing. This, coupled with the fact that "Boian" had a fine orchestra provided all the necessary ingredients for successful musical productions. "Boian's" musical repertoire included such works as Zaporozhets' za Dunaiem, Chornomortsi, Natalka Poltavka and M. Staryts'kyi's Oi ne khody Hrytsiu ta i na vechornytsi (Don't Go to the Party Harry, 1890).

The M. Zan'kovets'ka Dramatic Society, lacking a strong choral section, developed, instead, a wide and varied repertoire of dramas, comedies and historical plays. Taking into account that plays were often repeated

from season to season, there were more than one hundred works in the association's repertoire.⁷⁶ Included were such works as B. Hrinchenko's Iasni zori (Bright Stars, 1894-1900), I. Tobilevych's Bat'kova kazka (Father's Tale, 1892), A. Kashchenko's Zoria novoho zhyttia (Star of New Life), K. Vanchenko-Pysanets'kyi's Kateryna Muzhychka (Katherine the Peasant, 1896), M. Kropyvnyts'kyi's Pomyrylys' (Reconciled, 1869), V. Vynnychenko's Moloda Krov (Young Blood, 1913), M. Staryts'kyi's Rizdviana Nich (Christmas Eve, 1872) and Taras Bul'ba (1881), I. Franko's Uchytel' (The Teacher, 1894) and I. Hushalevych's Pidhiriany (People of the Foothills). At its height, the association had an active membership of one hundred thirty-three, the majority being male.⁷⁷

The I. Kotliarevs'kyi Dramatic Society concentrated its activities on the production of ethnographic plays and works from the classical Ukrainian theatre. Included were I. Tovilevych's Beztalanna, Bondarivna (The Coopers Daughter, 1884), and Lykha iskra pole spalyt' i sama shchezne (A Malevolent Spark Will Burn a Field and Itself Vanish); M. Kropyvnyts'kyi's Tytarivna, Hlytai abozh pavuk (The Profiteer or the Spider, 1882), Dai sertsiu voliu, zavede v nevoliu; M. Staryts'kyi's Nich pid Ivana Kupala (St. John's Eve), Tsyhanka Aza (Aza the Gypsy Woman, 1890) and Za dvoma zaitsiamy (Chasing Two Hares, 1883); as well as minor works such as I. Tohobochnyi's Zhydivka-vykhrestka (The Converted Jewess). In addition to this, the association was the first to stage V. Kazanivs'kyi's V nediliu rano zillia kopala

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Trach, "Moi spomyny ...", p.254.

⁷⁷

Ibid, p.258

(Early Sunday Morning She Dug Herbs), adapted from a novel by O. Kobylians'ka (later it was performed by other dramatic groups across the country).⁷⁸

The three above-mentioned dramatic associations functioned independently under individual charters but co-operated in all aspects pertaining to the Ukrainian National Home. For all important celebrations, like the annual commemorative concerts in honour of T. Shevchenko or I. Franko, the three groups pooled their talent in presenting a single performance. At such times each association provided its strongest singers to form one choir (having several hundred singers from which to choose, the resulting choir would truly be of outstanding quality). The success of such joint appearances prompted the proposal that the groups officially amalgamate as part of the Ukrainian National Home. In 1919 the active membership of the three groups comprised over three hundred members — and if non-active members (those who no longer participated in stage productions due to age, etc.) were taken into account the number exceeded five hundred.⁷⁹ Many members, especially those of "Boian", were opposed to the union, arguing that the resulting organization would not allow members the same degree of active participation and involvement in stage presentations as was afforded by the activities of three separate groups. After extended discussions and much expression of faith and good will, the three dramatic associations joined in 1922 to become the Singing-Dramatic Section of the

⁷⁸ Kazaniivs'kyi, "Z moikh spomyniv", pp.275-276.

⁷⁹ "Zluka dramatychno-spivats'kykh tovarystv z Ukrain's'kym Narodnym Domom u Vinnipegu 1922 r." [Amalgamation of the Dramatic-Singing Associations With the Ukrainian National Home in Winnipeg 1922], Knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipegu, p.161.

Ukrainian National Home (Spivats'ko-Dramatychna Sektsiia Ukrains'koho Narodnoho Domu), which became the strongest single Ukrainian theatrical group in Canada.

Along with a wealth of artistic experience, each of the three groups brought with it a long record of successful performances in Winnipeg and surrounding districts — and a great deal of material wealth. In giving up their individual charters they each donated their collections of books, sheet music, costumes, props, stage sets and financial assets to the Ukrainian National Home. The resulting library became the largest Ukrainian library in Canada and the huge wardrobe and collection of stage props and sets could fill the requirements of any theatrical production of the time. The total material assets donated by the three associations to the National Home were valued as follows: I. Kotliarevs'kyi Dramatic Society \$1,675.53; M. Zan'kovets'ka Dramatic Society \$3,335.05; and "Boian" \$2,293.00 — a total of \$7,303.68.⁸⁰

The Singing-Dramatic Section was united under the leadership of S. Kowbel' and V. Kazaniys'kyi. Both were very talented, had long histories of theatrical experience and could be considered pioneers of the amateur theatrical movement in Canada. They were both playwrights and could provide their group with original material for performance. Although they were primarily responsible for stage work I. Trach, I. Mandziuk and V. Babienko were also called upon to direct various plays. The musical section was

⁸⁰
Knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipeg, pp.345-348.

headed by V. Svystun, M. Pasichniak, P. Iundak and E. Turula.⁸¹ In addition to first-rate dramatic and choral ensembles, the Ukrainian National Home had its own set designer, P. Sych, and a fine orchestra that provided accompaniment for various productions. With such an abundance of talent under one roof the Singing-Dramatic Section was in a position to stage anything from opera and tragedy to light-hearted comedy and musicals with equal ease.

The concentration of these creative forces allowed for the staging of difficult dramatic works that had previously been inaccessible to any one Ukrainian drama group in Canada. The Ukrainian National Home was the first to stage V. Vynnychenko's Chorna Pantera i Bilyi Medvid' (The Black Panther and the White Bear, 1911) which was presented on December 30, 1922⁸² and repeated on February 20, 1926.⁸³ On March 24, 1923 S. Cherkasenko's tragedy Pro scho tyrsa shelestila (What the Steppe Grass Murmured About, 1918) premiered in Canada.⁸⁴ Other dramatic works premiered in Canada by the Singing-Dramatic Section of the Ukrainian National Home include the second part of B. Lepkyi's trilogy Mazepa (1926-1929), adapted for the stage by S. Kowbel' as Nedospivana pisnia (Unfinished Song, 1934), O. Barvins'kyi's Pavlo Polubotok, V. Vynnychenko's Kol Nidre (Song of Israel), M. Staryts'kyi's Marusia Bohuslavka (1897) and the historical drama Duma

⁸¹ Kazaniivs'kyi, "Z moikh spomyniv", p.276. For more information on the choral section of the Ukrainian National Home Choir see Chapter III.

⁸² Ukrains'kyi Holos, January 3, 1923.

⁸³ Ibid, February 17, 1926.

⁸⁴ Ibid, March 28, 1923.

pro Nechaia (Tale About Nechai).

From its beginning the Singing-Dramatic Section became the unrivaled leader of the Ukrainian theatrical movement not only in Winnipeg, but in all of Canada during the period between the two wars. Although it was responsible for the most lavish and ambitious productions there were several other dramatic groups in Winnipeg that had long performance histories, and who, although unable to compete with the Ukrainian National Home, continued to stage performances with a degree of regularity.

One of the largest of these groups was the Singing-Dramatic Association "Banduryst" which in 1922 became affiliated with the Ukrainian Prosvita Institute. Ivan Pylypiuk directed the group during its early years. Between 1929 and 1933 the group was under the direction of Pylyp Ostapchuk, during which time such works as Strashna pimsta (Horrid Revenge), Chara odnostroiu (The Magic of a Uniform) and U pazukhakh Cheka (In the Claws of the CHEKA) were presented.⁸⁵ Between 1933 and 1934 P. Ostapchuk directed the highly-trained musical-dramatic Theatre "Rusalka" which was sponsored by the local branch of the Ukrainian National Federation.⁸⁶ The latter presented plays in Winnipeg and toured a number of farm settlements, presenting popular Ukrainian repertory. In 1934 and 1935 Ostapchuk was dramatic director for the Markian Shashkevych Reading Association.⁸⁷

85

V.B., "Dramatychnyi Kruzhok pry Inst. Prosvita u Vinnipeg" [Drama Circle of the Prosvita Institute in Winnipeg], Kaliendar Kanadiis'koho Farmera [Calendar of the Canadian Farmer], Winnipeg, 1931, p.125.

86

Chomiak, Propamiatna Knyha, p.126.

87

F.A. Macrouch, ed., Ukrainian Year Book and Ukrainians of Distinction (Winnipeg: F.A. Macrouch, 1954), p.61.

Opposing the above-mentioned "nationalist" dramatic associations, the pro-communist Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association had several dramatic groups of its own. When a Labour Temple was completed in 1919 the V. Vynnychenko Drama Circle transferred its activities to this location. The name of the group was soon changed to V. Vynnychenko Enlightening-Dramatic Association (Prosvitno-Dramatychne Tovarystvo im. V. Vynnychenka) and by 1923, became the Dramatic-Singing Group of the Ukrainian Labour Temple (Dramatychno-Spivats'kyi Hurtok Ukrains'koho Robitnychoho Domu).⁸⁸ Another group, the Ukrainian Working Theatre (Ukrains'kyi Robitnychi Teatr) was formed in 1919 and was composed primarily of former members of the Tobilevych Drama Circle. By 1923 their name had been changed to Theatrical Working Studio (Teatral'na Robitnycha Studiia).⁸⁹ These two groups regularly presented theatrical and choral performances.

Although a healthy spirit of competition existed between various dramatic groups in Winnipeg (each group boasting of its own actors, choirs and soloists) and although every group functioned independently, the aim of each was virtually the same — that of keeping alive Ukrainian cultural heritage in a new land — and to this they co-operated and assisted each other.⁹⁰ Often actors and singers from better established drama groups

88

Al'manakh TURFDim, p.9.

89

Ibid, p.26.

90

This co-operation did not include dramatic groups associated with the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association. There was never any co-operation between the "nationalist" and "communist" camps. After 1921 when it was no longer necessary for nationalist groups to rent stage facilities from the Ukrainian Labour Temple, the relationship between the two camps became one of open hostility.

donated their advice and talents to assist smaller groups in staging more ambitious programmes. Occasionally experienced theatre people such as V. Kazanivs'kyi published articles in Ukrainian newspapers discussing the role of dramatic associations in the community and giving advice about selection of plays, costuming and characterization.⁹¹ The Ukrainian National Home in Winnipeg rented out costumes not only to other groups in the city but also to centres such as Toronto, Montreal, Edmonton, Saskatoon and Fort William.⁹² Co-operation existed most strongly when it came time to be seen by non-Ukrainian audiences.

Ukrainian dramatic associations usually made an effort to invite English critics to view their better productions, providing them with choice complimentary seats and an interpreter to explain the action. The resulting reviews greatly aided in generating interest in Ukrainian theatre among non-Ukrainians, and in time Ukrainian plays became quite popular. In 1936 the Little Theatre of Winnipeg, an English amateur theatrical group interested in encouraging talented young people to go into theatre seriously, invited the Ukrainian "Prosvita" Institute to stage a Ukrainian play before an English audience. The choice of play was left to the Ukrainians, but it was to be directed by Little Theatre's John Craig. After careful deliberations, and with the promise of assistance from the Ukrainian National Home, it was decided to stage M. Kropyvnyts'kyi's Nevol'nyk. The "Prosvita" Institute filled most of the leading roles while the National Home provided extra

⁹¹

V. Kazanivs'kyi, "Pered otvoreniam sezonu", Ukrains'kyi Holos, July 29, 1922.

⁹²

Knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipegu, p.150

singers and dancers in order to maximize the production's success. The play ran at Winnipeg's Orpheum Theatre on November 26, 27 and 28 and met with critical approval:

A vivid, fascinating blend of acting, dancing and singing, the Little Theatre's production of "The Prisoner", which opened at the Orpheum Theatre Thursday evening, brings the general public into direct contact with a talented group of Winnipeg's Ukrainian citizens.

There was a spontaneity about the performance, Thursday, that carried the audience — and it was a sizable one, for an opening night — along on a wave of enthusiasm. The play is given in the native language and for that reason Shevchenko's poetic utterances are lost to the spectator unfamiliar with the tongue. But it is quite apparent that here is a group of players who have something significant to say and do and the ability to project their roles with a sure touch. There are telling bits of pantomime, striking vocal inflections and a happy absence of self consciousness. ⁹³

Rural Manitoba

Several dramatic associations that had been formed by the first settlers in rural Manitoba continued to flourish. In Vita, D. Uhryniuk became director of an amateur group after the First World War and a Ukrainian National Home was built in 1919.⁹⁴ Under the influence of left-ist elements the T. Shevchenko "Prosvita" Association became a branch of the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association.⁹⁵ In St. Boniface, a

⁹³

F.A.M., "Colorful and Vivacious Play by Ukrainian Cast Charms Audience", Winnipeg Free Press, Winnipeg, November 28, 1936.

⁹⁴

Knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipeg, p.682.

⁹⁵

Al'manakh TURFDim, P.72.

permanent drama group was organized in 1927 when the T. Shevchenko "Prosvita" Association built a Ukrainian National Home.⁹⁶

During the 1920's several other dramatic groups in rural Manitoba were organized or later taken over by groups affiliated with the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association. In East Kildonan, a drama group was formed in 1920 and presented its first play, Bortsi za mrii (Fighter for Dreams) at the Ukrainian Labour Temple in Winnipeg. By 1923 the group had a membership of forty.⁹⁷ An amateur drama group was established in Winnipeg Beach in 1922 by members of the Ivan Franko Prosvita. In 1925 the group became a branch of the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association.⁹⁸ In Brokenhead, amateur theatricals were occasionally presented from 1918 but a more permanent group was not formed until 1927 when a Labour Temple was completed.⁹⁹ Other amateur groups were formed by Ukrainian pro-communist elements in Morwina (1926), Janow (1923), The Pas (1928) and Leban (1927).¹⁰⁰

Edmonton

Edmonton remained the centre of Ukrainian theatrical activity in Alberta as it had in the period prior to the First World War. The Singing-

⁹⁶
Knyha U.N.D v Vinnipeg, p.665.

⁹⁷
Al'manakh TURFDim, pp.66-69.

⁹⁸
Ibid, p.75.

⁹⁹
Ibid, pp.81-82.

¹⁰⁰
Ibid, pp.80-89.

Dramatic Section of the Ukrainian National Home (formerly "Boian") continued to be the leading theatrical group in the city.

The arrival of Osyp Pryima in Edmonton on December 1, 1928 marked the beginning of a new phase of theatrical work at the Ukrainian National Home. He was hired to be the drama director, choir master, teacher of the Native School (this meant teaching singing, dancing and playing on musical instruments in addition to teaching regular school subjects), and cultural-educational co-ordinator of the Ukrainian National Home. In addition to this he painted many of the stage sets for productions.¹⁰¹ He conscientiously carried out his duties and in one year "managed to produce not more and not less than forty-one plays, nine of these with children, and to present fourteen concerts, not counting six picnics, a bazaar, carnivals, etc."¹⁰² During his stay several plays were presented in Edmonton for the first time: I. Ia. Lytsyk's Vyfleiems'ka Nich (Bethlehem Night, published 1926); Zaporozhets' za Dunaiem; Oi ne khody Hrytsiu ta i na vechornytsi; Marusia Bohuslavka; H. Luzhnyts'kyi's Motria; and Iu. Fed'kovych's Dovbush — to name just a few.¹⁰³ In February 1934 Pryima returned to Saskatoon.

Pylyp Ostapchuk arrived in Edmonton on December 9, 1935. He had received his dramatic training in Ukraine and had been actively involved in Ukrainian theatrical life in Winnipeg. He agreed to come to Edmonton on the

¹⁰¹ Chomiak, Propamiatna knyha, p.295.

¹⁰² Ibid, pp.121-122.

¹⁰³ Various issues of Zakhidni Visti [Western News], Edmonton, 1929-1931 and Ukrains'ki Visti [Ukrainian News], Edmonton, 1932-1933.

condition that the cultural work load would be shared by others. In addition, he was to be guaranteed a minimum monthly salary of \$50 or 25% of all profits from performances he directed.¹⁰⁴ At his request the stage was rebuilt, and with the responsibility divided — between Ostapchuk, L. Nakhvostach as choral conductor and N. Onyshchuk as musical director — work proceeded smoothly.

Under Ostapchuk's direction and training, the amateurs improved their performing skills. His approach to theatre was more professional than which the players had been accustomed to and his personal appearances (usually in supporting roles) set the standard for the group. Reviews from this period all attest to the fact that performances staged under Ostapchuk's direction were of a markedly high quality. Some plays presented under his direction were: the comedy Proch z mushchynamy (To Hell With Men); Svatannia na Honcharivtsi; Tsyhanka Aza; M. Kropyvnyts'kyi's Vii (1896); the comedy Svii do svoho (To Each His Own); Dvadtsiat' dniv tiurmy (Twenty Days of Prison); Bat'kova kazka and Marusia Bohuslavka.¹⁰⁵

In 1936 Ostapchuk organized the Blue Tie (Synia kravatka), a dramatic ensemble composed entirely of young people. The fifty-six members of Blue Tie (derived from the blue ties which the group adopted as a trade-mark) were younger members of the Ukrainian National Home, who felt they were not given enough opportunity to perform in regular plays. Under the direction of Ostapchuk and Nakhvostach, the younger group was soon staging musical

¹⁰⁴

Chomiak, Propamiatna knyha, p.126.

¹⁰⁵

Ibid, pp.126-129.

and dramatic productions. The enthusiasm with which the young performers approached their work was refreshing and their productions were well attended. Unfortunately, both Ostapchuk and Nakhvostach left Edmonton at the end of 1936 and with their departure Blue Tie ceased to exist.

Between 1937 and 1939 Vasyl' Smolyk, A. Ostapchuk and Kost' Kantor were responsible for cultural work at the Ukrainian National Home. Constant turn-over of leadership made regular presentation of plays difficult: the low salary (\$30 per month) paid by the Ukrainian National Home, and the heavy demands placed on the paid cultural worker made the position unappealing to most. At the request of the National Home, Osyp Pryima returned to Edmonton in June 1939 and worked there until 1948, thus providing the required experience and stable leadership necessary for carrying on the cultural work.

The drama group of the T. Shevchenko Self-Educational Society underwent a difficult period immediately following the First World War. In 1919 it was evicted from the Presbyterian "bursa" whose premises it had been renting and in 1920 M. Shatul's'kyi, its choir master and I. Sokolov, one of its directors, left Edmonton. On November 20, 1920 a Ukrainian Labour Temple was acquired and in 1921 the drama group became a "Dramspivhurtok". In its new location the amateur group continued its activities and by 1928 had grown to fifty members.¹⁰⁶ The choirmaster was D. Vykhrestov and I. Klybanovs'kyi continued as director. The group flourished until 1940, at which time it was forced to suspend its activities along with all other pro-communist groups in Canada.

¹⁰⁶

Al'manakh TURFDim, p.190.

Other Alberta Centres

The theatrical group of the T. Shevchenko Scientific Society of Vegreville continued to be the most active Ukrainian drama group in rural Alberta during the period between the two wars. Until 1928 Illia Poraiko directed plays, conducted a choir and taught at the Native School. Under his direction the group performed in Vegreville, Edmonton and Mundare. During the group's first twenty years of existence (until ca. 1942) some sixty plays and forty concerts were staged.¹⁰⁷

Several new dramatic groups were formed in southern Alberta by pro-communist Ukrainians during the 1920's. In 1922 a Ukrainian Labour Temple was established in Lethbridge and in an effort to attract a larger membership a "Dramspivhurtok" was organized.¹⁰⁸ Calgary's Self-Education Society (Tovarystvo Samoobrazovannia) had presented plays prior to 1920 but the construction of a Ukrainian Labour Temple increased its membership, and by 1928 the amateur group had forty members.¹⁰⁹ Dramatic groups were also established in several southern Alberta coal-mining centres: Coleman (1919), Lake Eliza (1920), Belleview (1922), Medicine Hat (1922) and Pakhan (1927).¹¹⁰

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"Uryvky zi spomyniv...", p.653.

¹⁰⁸

Al'manakh TURFDim, p.201.

¹⁰⁹

Ibid, pp.193-194.

¹¹⁰

Ibid, pp.199-213.

Saskatchewan

Theatrical activity amongst Ukrainians in Saskatchewan was not as well developed as in the other prairie provinces. In December 1918 the V. Vynnychenko Drama Circle (Dramatychnyi Druzhok im. V. Vynnychenka) was organized in Moose Jaw. During its first years of existence it produced plays and concerts and established a Ukrainian school for members' children. The group quickly expanded and in 1922 constructed its own building which became a Labour Temple in 1925.¹¹¹ During the 1920's dramatic groups were also formed in Canora, Veregin and Saskatoon. A Dramatic Group (Dramatychnyi Hurtok) was formed in Canora in 1925. Friction developed among various ideological factions within the group; the more nationalistic members broke away; and in 1926 those who remained became a branch of TURFDim.¹¹² In Veregin a dramatic group was formed in 1925 at the Ukrainian Labour Temple.¹¹³ Theatrical work was carried out by Saskatoon's Ukrainian National Home following the First World War. In 1924 another amateur group was organized in Saskatoon at the Ukrainian Labour Temple.¹¹⁴

British Columbia

Many Ukrainian dramatic associations in British Columbia were formed

¹¹¹

Ibid, pp.173-177.

¹¹²

Ibid, pp.178-179.

¹¹³

Ibid, p.181.

¹¹⁴

Ibid, pp.168-170.

by pro-communist "workers" organizations. This is not surprising as most Ukrainians in the province were employed in coal mines and logging camps. Some of the earlier dramatic associations like the "Prosvita" Reading Association of Vancouver, however, continued their theatrical work as before. In 1923 the association became a Ukrainian National Home and in 1925 acquired its own building.¹¹⁵

Two labourers' organizations were established in Vancouver in the early 1920's — a branch of the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association and the Vynnychenko Association. In 1922 the two groups joined to become the Ukrainian Educational-Labour Association (Ukrains'ke Robitnyche Naukove Tovyrystvo) and established a dramatic group.¹¹⁶ In Revelstoke, a cultural-educational centre, the Unity Association (Tovyrystvo Iednist'), was formed in 1921. By 1924 the group constructed a Labour Temple and organized a "Dramspivhurtok".¹¹⁷

Quebec

In Quebec, Ukrainian theatrical activity was concentrated in Montreal as it had been before the First War. The Taras Shevchenko Prosvita, which had been established in 1913, continued its theatrical work in the period between the two wars. Another Montreal association, the Markiiian Shashke-

¹¹⁵

Knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipeg, p.675.

¹¹⁶

Al'manakh TURFDim, pp.221-223.

¹¹⁷

Ibid, pp.226-227.

vysh Prosvita Reading Association (Chytal'nia Prosvita im. Markiiana Shashkevycha), which had been established at an earlier date became involved with theatrical presentations after the First World War and in 1919 presented the play Na vidpust do Kyieva (To Kiev For Holidays).¹¹⁸ In 1920 the association Freedom (Volia) was formed.¹¹⁹ A large portion of the members of the Shashkevych Prosvita also joined Freedom, resulting in the demise of the reading association. A large and active drama group was organized at Freedom and, through their performances, attracted much attention. In 1922 the group was reorganized into a branch of the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association. In 1928 the drama group had a membership of thirty-six.¹²⁰

Ontario

In the period between the two wars Toronto became increasingly more important as the Ukrainian theatrical centre of Ontario. The dramatic group of the Taras Shevchenko Prosvita Reading Association continued its theatrical work and by 1926 had performed fifty-seven plays and staged eleven concerts.¹²¹ Between 1921 and 1926 it worked in co-operation with the Greek Catholic Church in West Toronto. Each play was presented twice, one Saturday in the city, the next in the parish hall. On January 19, 1926 the reading association

¹¹⁸

Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.210.

¹¹⁹

Ukrains'kyi Holos, May 14, 1919.

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Al'manakh TURFDim, p.102.

¹²¹

Knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipegu, p.705.

received a provincial charter and became the Ukrainian National Home Association, acquiring its own hall in 1928.¹²² In the new premises theatrical work continued with renewed vigour. Plays were presented twice a week (Saturdays and Sundays) with the result that almost all available Ukrainian plays written in Ukraine and Canada were staged at some time by amateurs of the Ukrainian National Home. Between the beginning of 1926 and the end of the 1946 theatre seasons, four hundred fifty-seven plays were presented.¹²³ Directors for various productions were S. Kuryliw, Iu. Kunikeych, N. Iasens'kyi, I. Mykhailuniv, I. Ivasiechko, O. Tsukornyk and M. Iarymowich.¹²⁴

In 1919 the three Toronto dramatic associations that had been formed in 1917 — Star, Free Ukraine and Workers Dramatic Group — amalgamated into the association "Zluka", which in turn became a branch of the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association in 1921.¹²⁵ In West Toronto, where Ukrainian organizations existed separately, theatrical activity was undertaken by the association Free Ukraine, organized in 1919 as an educational institution and drama group with a membership of three hundred sixty.¹²⁶ Two other West Toronto drama groups — Star and the Theatrical Company (Teatral'na Druzhyna) — were formed in 1920. A great deal of rivalry developed between the three West Toronto groups, but it was resolved when they amal-

122

Ibid, p.706.

123

Ibid, p.709.

124

Ibid, p.710.

125

Al'manakh TURFDim, P.93.

126

Ibid, p.98.

gamated into another association called "Zluka". In 1924 the West Toronto "Zluka" became a branch of the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association.¹²⁷

Ukrainian drama groups in Hamilton and Kenora, which had been organized by the first group of immigrants, continued their activities. In Hamilton, the singing-dramatic association of the Taras Shevchenko Prosvita actively engaged in theatrical work. In 1930 the group was directed by a Mr. Mostovyi, the Native School teacher.¹²⁸ In Kenora, the T. Shevchenko Prosvita Reading Association continued its work without serious interruption until the outbreak of the Second World War. In 1923 its building and all early archives were lost through fire, but a new hall was constructed by Semen Kowbel' of Winnipeg in 1924 and theatrical activities resumed. According to minutes of meetings and records of the association, there have been two hundred seventy-seven theatrical performances presented by the group between 1924 and 1959.¹²⁹ The most intensive period of work by the dramatic group was between 1931 and 1943.

In Fort William the drama group of the Ukrainian National Home underwent a difficult period during the 1920's. In 1922 friction developed between nationalist and pro-communist factions and for a brief period of time the hall became a Ukrainian Labour Temple. The matter was eventually resolved in court in favour of the nationalist Ukrainians but the building

127

Ibid, p.99.

128

Iliustrovanyi kaliendar "Kanadiis'koho Ukraintsia", Winnipeg, 1930, p.60.

129

Woycenko, Ukraina Kenors'ka, p.37.

was not returned to them until 1924 at which time the drama group resumed its activities. The evicted pro-communist members established a branch of the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association in 1925 and formed a "Dramspivhurtok" of their own.¹³⁰ The drama group of the Ukrainian National Home in West Fort William continued to flourish. In 1919 it performed V. Syrotenko's Ternovyi vinok (Crown of Thorns)¹³¹ and in 1920 S. Kowbel's Divochi mrii.¹³² In 1920 the National Home became a Labour Temple.¹³³

A similar pro-communist take-over occurred in Port Arthur. In 1918 the Prosvita Association built a Ukrainian National Home and in 1920 changed its name to Ivan Franko Association. In 1923, when political differences between members became unmanageable, the pro-communist element took possession of the National Home and it became a Labour Temple. The nationalist-ically oriented Ukrainians split away from this group and renewed their activities in a new hall. Those who remained formed a thirty-five member "Dramspivhurtok".¹³⁴

Ukrainian pro-communist organizations which presented plays were also established in other Ontario centres. In Kitchener, the I. Franko Association was formed in 1919 and in 1921 became a branch of the Ukrainian

130

Al'manakh TURFDim, p.152.

131

Ukrains'kyi Holos, March 12, 1919.

132

Ibid, May 19, 1920.

133

Al'manakh TURFDim, p.157.

134

Ibid, p.147.

Labour-Farmer Temple Association with its own "Dramspivhurtok".¹³⁵ In St. Catharines a Labour Temple and drama group were formed in 1927.¹³⁶ Other drama groups were established in Ford City (1923), Kapuskasing (1924), Thorold (1924), Fort Frances (1925) and Windsor (1927).¹³⁷

Decline in Ukrainian Theatrical Activity

The economic depression of the 1930's effectively curtailed the growth and development of Ukrainian theatre in a number of Ukrainian communities across Canada. Numerous dramatic associations disbanded as workers left settlements in search of employment. Some of the more fortunate groups, usually those affiliated with the larger and better established organizations such as the Ukrainian National Home in Winnipeg, Edmonton and Toronto, continued to function, albeit on a more modest scale, thanks to generous loans and donations from their more affluent members.

Theatrical activity among Ukrainians associated with the Ukrainian Labour Temples was halted in 1940 when the Canadian Communist Party, the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association and several other pro-communist organizations were outlawed by the Canadian government.

The Second World War left no Ukrainian community untouched. During 1939-1945 activity of all drama groups was greatly weakened, reduced or in

¹³⁵
Ibid, p.114

¹³⁶
Ibid, p.120

¹³⁷
Ibid, pp.114-161.

many instances stopped altogether. The older leaders and more experienced members left to serve in the Canadian Armed Forces, leaving behind only old people, women and children. The large growth of war industry caused a mass migration of young people from rural districts to cities, where they lacked parental guidance and found themselves in unfamiliar surroundings. As a result many of them became indifferent, scornful, and sometimes downright hostile to their Ukrainian heritage.

A new generation of young people grew up during the 1940's that was greatly handicapped by its lack of knowledge of the Ukrainian language, usually speaking it only with great difficulty and unable to read or write Ukrainian. Ukrainian drama was virtually inaccessible to them and theatrical activity among Ukrainians began to decline. As the older generation could no longer carry on the entire responsibility for stage productions, the theatrical movement degenerated. The rich, classical dramatic repertoire of Ukraine was gradually pushed off the stage, and its place was taken over by domestic Canadian productions. In place of earlier performances of top-rated works, chosen with attention to their dramatic worth and prepared with detailed care in presentation and execution, weekly Sunday afternoon concerts with a "silver collection" became the vogue. The place of the more serious dramatic works of the 1920's and 1930's was now taken over by comical or satirical one-act skits, usually written by the performers to suit particular occasions. Such concerts were normally rounded out by several vocal and instrumental numbers. To encourage parental attendance, children of the native schools presented songs and dances. Ukrainian theatre in Canada all but ceased.

Ukrainian Theatre in Canada Following the Second World War

A Dramatic Revival

Post Second World War immigration to Canada was responsible for a major influx of professional artists: actors, directors and singers. These highly skilled theatre people received their training in Ukraine and many of them had been members of professional theatre companies in Kiev, Kharkiv and L'viv. They came to Canada with the hope of continuing their theatrical careers but found no viable professional Ukrainian language theatres in which to work. Having brought with them a wealth of knowledge and experience, they began to work in amateur theatre with the enthusiasm and dedication of the true professionals that they were.

Among those who came to Canada with the third wave of immigration were: Hryhorii Man'ko-Iaroshevysh, Mykhailo and Hanna Tahaiv, Ivan and Mariia Hirniak, Lavro Kempe, Maria Marko-Kempe, Slav Telizhyn, Volodymyr Dovhaniuk, Iurii Bel's'kyi, Mykhailo Lial'ka, Mariia Slusarivna, Iurii Pocheniuk, Isai Chornovol, Semen Polujan, and Mykola Sokhaniivs'kyi. Most settled in Toronto and it was there that the new creative energy was first applied.

Post War Theatrical Activity in Toronto

Several Ukrainian dramatic groups existed in Toronto during the 1950's often with the same actors participating in more than one group or

moving from group to group during various theatre seasons. Sometime ca. 1950 Hryhorii Iaroshevych gathered a group of Toronto professionals and amateurs to form the Ukrainian National Theatre (Ukrains'kyi Narodnyi Teatr). The company, which occasionally performed under the name Ukrainian National Theatre "Renaissance" (Ukrains'kyi Narodnyi Teatr "Renesans"), presented plays in Toronto, surrounding Ukrainian centres in Ontario and other provinces; and on June 3, 1951 the group performed Zaporozhets'za Dunaïem at the Ukrainian National Home in Edmonton.¹³⁸ In its repertoire the group included such plays as M. Staryts'kyi's Oï ne khody Hrytsiu ta i na vechornytsi and Chornomortsi, and I. Tohobochnyi's Maty Naimychka. An active Musical Dramatic Ensemble (Muzychno-Dramatychnyi Ansambl') was affiliated with the Toronto branch of the Ukrainian National Federation. This group was under the artistic direction of Mykhailo Tahaiv and included in its repertoire such ethnographic works as Tsyhanka Aza (presented in 1955¹³⁹) and a stage adaptation of T. Shevchenko's Haidamaky (presented in 1955¹⁴⁰). In 1959 Tahaiv left the Ukrainian National Federation and established the Theatre of the "Ukrainian Home" (Teatr pry "Ukrains'komu Domi"), which opened with M. Staryts'kyi's opera, Utoplēna (Drowned Girl, 1883).¹⁴¹ Musical director for the production was Lev Turkevych and H. Iaroshevych played one of the roles. Soon afterwards, L. Kovalenko's

138

Chomiak, Propamiatna knyha, p. 265.

139

Theatre programme. October, 23, 1955, U.N.F. Auditorium, Toronto.

140

Theatre programme. May 20, 1956, U.N.F. Auditorium, Toronto.

141

Theatre programme. January 4, 1959, Ukrainian Cultural Centre, Toronto.

Domakha was presented by the same group.¹⁴² The amateur group of the Ukrainian National Federation also continued its theatrical activities and its production of Ia. Barnych's Hutsulka Ksenia (Ksenia, the Hutsul Girl) was filmed by the Orbit Film Corporation of Toronto. Director for the film was Nestor Ripets'kyi, Vasyl' Hul'tai was the producer and Halyna Holyns'ka was musical director.¹⁴³ In 1956 the Musical-Dramatic Ensemble of the Ukrainian National Federation presented the North American premiere of L. Lisevych-A. Kurdydyk's Lytsari Zaliznoi Ostrohy (Knights of the Iron Spur). The play was directed by Lavro Kempe, musical direction was provided by Stepan Humilowych and Nadia Pavlychenko-Buchan was choreographer.¹⁴⁴

The Ukrainian Drama Studio "Zahrava" (Ukrains'ka Dramatychna Studiia "Zahrava") was founded in 1953 and has remained as one of the few Ukrainian theatrical groups to continue working until the present day. Under the dynamic leadership of its Director, Slav Telizhyn, the group has attained a high level of professionalism in its productions. S. Telizhyn received his dramatic education in Lviv and worked as assistant director in the experimental drama studio of prof. S. Skotnyts'kyi in Warsaw; and "Zahrava's" assistant director, Iurii Bel's'kyi, was a student of Iosyp Hirniak. They have both strived to produce works of high artistic calibre that would prove

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Theatre programme. March 1, 1959, Ukrainian Cultural Centre, Toronto.

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Souvenir programme booklet of the film.

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Theatre programme. November 28, 1965, U.N.F. Auditorium, Toronto. The play was first performed in 1934 by the Ukrainian National Theatre of I. Tobilevych in Stanislav, Ukraine. It was directed by Mykola Bentsal'. (A. Kurdydyk interview, May 5, 1976, Winnipeg.)

challenging for audiences and performers alike.

"Zahrava's" first production, Triumf Prokurora Dal's'koho (The Triumph of Prosecutor Dal's'kyi) by K. Hupalo, was presented in 1953 and was followed with Brandon Thomas's Charlie's Aunt (which had been translated into Ukrainian during the 1930's by P. Hurs'kyi as Titka) in March 1954.¹⁴⁵ Along with these straight dramatic works "Zahrava" has presented several stage renditions of dramatic poems by L. Ukrainka. These have required the players to perform not only as talented actors, but also as masters of dramatic recitation. In December 1954 "Zahrava" presented L. Ukrainka's Advokat Martiiian (The Advocate Martianus, 1913) and in 1967 her Kassandra (Cassandra, 1907).¹⁴⁶ Other plays presented by "Zahrava" between 1953 and 1967 were: Prolisky (Snowdrops) and Kurier U.P.A. (Courier of the U.P.A.) in 1955; Moral' pani Dul's'koi (The Morals of Mrs. Dul's'ka) in 1956; and Sluha dvom panam (Servant of Two Masters) in 1963.¹⁴⁷ Between 1960 and 1962 the group underwent a crisis period and did not stage any plays.

Of special interest are two outstanding non-Ukrainian plays that were staged by "Zahrava" in translation. These were works by Norwegian poet and dramatist H. Ibsen and contemporary French dramatist J. Anouilh. Ibsen's drama Gengangere (Ghosts, 1881) was presented in R. Shcherbatiuk's

¹⁴⁵

Information provided by V. Dovhaniuk of "Zahrava", Toronto.

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B. Hoshovs'kyi, ed. Slovo plamenem vzialos': mystetstvo zhyvoho ukrains'koho slova [The Word Became Flame: the Art of the Spoken Ukrainian Word] (Toronto: "Yevshan Zillia", 1972), pp.66-67.

¹⁴⁷

Information provided by V. Dovhaniuk, Toronto.

translation as Prymary (literary editor for the play was V. Revuts'kyi).

It was premiered in Toronto February, 1958.¹⁴⁸ Anouilh's L'Alouette (1953, English translation, The Lark, 1955) was presented in V. Myrosh's translation as Zhanna D'Ark (Zhaivoronok) in 1959 and again in 1964.¹⁴⁹ The play, which at the time of presentation was one of the popular works in the contemporary French theatre, is the spiritual adventure of Jeanne D'Arc, a rebel rejecting the world, its order, and its trite happiness. Set at the scene of her trial in Rouen, the play establishes her as a symbol of courage and patriotism, representing the triumph of good over evil.

"Zahrava" has intentionally refused to stage ethnographic plays with singing and dancing. Instead, the group has strived to be part of the Canadian theatrical mainstream, presenting demanding dramatic works of world stature, exploring contemporary methods of stage presentation and execution, and challenging Ukrainian audiences to take a renewed interest in Ukrainian theatre in Canada.

Ukrainian Theatre in Edmonton

In Edmonton, the Ukrainian Dramatic Ensemble (Ukrains'kyi Dramatychnyi Ansambl') was formed in 1952 through the efforts of two professional

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Theatre programme and information supplied by V. Dovhaniuk, Toronto.

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Information provided by V. Dovhaniuk.

actors from Ukraine — Isai Chornovol and Semen Polujan (whose stage pseudonym was Dmytro Pelykh). They gathered some of the better actors from other dramatic groups in the city, and within a short period of time built a strong performing unit. Within the ensemble, I. Chornovol was the artistic director, while S. Polujan was the producer, with both also acting in various plays.

The ensemble made its debut in 1952 with a performance of L. Kovalenko's Domakha, a play dealing with events in Ukraine between 1924 and 1929 when private farms were being collectivized.¹⁵⁰ Two plays were presented during the 1953 theatre season — M. Kropyvnyts'kyi's drama Dai ser-tsiu voliu, zavede v nevoliu¹⁵¹ and I. Tobilevych's Suieta (Vanity, 1903).¹⁵² I. Tobilevych's comedy Rozumnyi i Duren' (The Wise Man and the Fool, 1885) was the only production of 1954.¹⁵³

These theatrical performances were well received and the group developed a sizeable following, but by 1955 personal differences between director and producer were coming to the forefront. In 1955 the ensemble presented T. Shevchenko's Nazar Stodolia (together with P. Nishchyns'kyi's "Vechernytsi") at St. John's Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox Auditorium.¹⁵⁴ The

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Chomiak, Propamiatna knyha, p.141.

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Theatre programmes. August 15 and November 15, 1953, Ukrainian National Home, Edmonton.

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Theatre programme. August 30, 1953, U.N.F. Auditorium, Edmonton.

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Theatre programme. July 25, 1954, Ukrainian National Home, Edmonton.

¹⁵⁴

Theatre programme. March 25, 1955, St. John's Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox Auditorium, Edmonton.

cathedral choir, directed by O. Iefymchuk, and a thirteen-piece orchestra, conducted by P. Paush, provided musical and vocal support for the cast. The sets for this production (as well as for the others) were by Vadym Dobrolige. This was by far the most lavish and ambitious production undertaken by the Ukrainian Dramatic Ensemble and it was their last. The artistic temperaments of Chornovol and Polujan did not permit any further collaboration, the group disbanded, and the actors returned to other dramatic groups in the city.

Among other dramatic groups which flourished in Edmonton during the post World War II period were the drama groups affiliated with the Ukrainian National Home, the Ukrainian National Federation and the Ukrainian Youth Association.

At the Ukrainian National Home the singing and dramatic association, whose earlier history has been discussed, continued its work until the mid-1950's. O. Pryima directed the group until 1948, after which various productions were directed by I. Chornovol, M. Sokhanivs'kyi and D. Murynka. The 1949-1950 period was one of the more interesting theatre seasons, with Lev Turkevych of Toronto taking charge of cultural activities and staging M. Arkas's Kateryna in Edmonton and Mundare and M. Staryts'kyi's Oi ne khody Hrytsiu ta i na vechornytsi.¹⁵⁵

Theatrical activity at the Ukrainian National Federation had commenced in the mid-1930's.¹⁵⁶ Its amateur dramatic group became extremely

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Chomiak, Propamiatna knyha, pp.133-141.

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I. Knysh, Na sluzhbi ridnoho narodu: Orhanizatsiia Ukrainok Kanady 1930-1955 [In Service of Our Homeland: The Ukrainian Women's Organization of Canada] (Winnipeg: OYK, 1955), p.251. Attempts at locating earlier archival material pertaining to this group have been unsuccessful.

active after World War II and endeavoured to present several productions each month. During 1950 it presented thirty-four different productions.¹⁵⁷ The group did not have a resident director and at various times this role was fulfilled by I. Chornovol, O. Tsukornyk, S. Grokh, V. Nin'ovs'kyi, V. Grokh, V. Stetsura and Iu. Poluiko, naming just a few. Sometime ca. 1952 V. Skorups'kyi became the regular director and under his direction the group staged some interesting work. In 1952 they staged I. Franko's dramatic poem Ivan Vyshens'kyi (1900).¹⁵⁸ Costumes and make-up for the production were by Ivan Keywan and sets were designed by Vasyl' Zaluts'kyi. The outstanding 1953 production was L. Ukrainka's Lisova pisnia (Forest Song, 1912), a work derived from folksong and popular legend which explores the universal conflict between exalted dream and base reality.¹⁵⁹ This production was repeated in 1955.¹⁶⁰ One of the last works presented by the amateur group of the Ukrainian National Federation was I. Tohobochnyi's Maty Naimychka, which was performed in 1961 under the direction of I. Chornovol.¹⁶¹

The SUM Drama Group of Edmonton (Edmonton's'kyi Sumivs'kyi Hurtok)

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S. Grokh, "Zvit kul'turno-osvitnoi pratsi filii UNO v Edmontoni za chas 1 sichnia do 31 hrudnia 1950" [Report on the Cultural-Educational Work of the U.N.F. in Edmonton from January 1 to December 31, 1950] (U.N.F. Archives, Edmonton.)

158

Theatre programme. September 28, 1952, U.N.F Auditorium, Edmonton.

159

Theatre programme. September 6, 1953, U.N.F. Auditorium, Edmonton.

160

Theatre programme. March 5, 1955, U.N.F. Auditorium, Edmonton.

161

Theatre programme. March 26, 1961, U.N.F. Auditorium, Edmonton.

existed during the 1950's as part of the cultural activities of the Ukrainian Youth Association — SUM. The director of the group was M. Sokh-anivs'kyi with D. Murynka as assistant director. K. Hupalo's Triumf Prokurora Dal's'koho was presented in 1954.¹⁶² Other works produced by the group include the drama Chornohora v ohni (Chornohora in Flames) and the comedy Artysty (The Artists).

From time to time other Ukrainian organizations in Edmonton presented plays although they did not have resident dramatic groups of their own. An example of such a performance is the 1957 presentation of I. Franko's Lys Mykyta (Mykyta the Fox, 1890) which was staged by the Edmonton branch of the Ukrainian Youth Association "Plast" commemorating the 100th anniversary of Franko's birth.¹⁶³ The work was adapted for stage and directed by V. Skorups'kyi. Sets were designed by V. Dobrolige and music was conducted by S. Yaremenko.

Theatrical Activity in Winnipeg

Winnipeg saw a change in its theatrical life after World War II. Amateurs associated with the Ukrainian Prosvita Institute (whose early theatrical activities have already been related) continued to work on a more modest scale and they did not bring anything new or exciting onto the post-

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Theatre programme. April 25, 1954, Ukrainian National Home, Edmonton.

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Theatre programme. May 19, 1957, U.N.F. Auditorium, Edmonton.

war theatrical scene. Several interesting plays were staged immediately after the war by amateurs of the Ukrainian National Federation. During the late-1940's they presented Zaporozhets' za Dunaiem several times and with the arrival of Dmytro Chutro and Aleksander Liubymiv, musical theatre in Winnipeg took on a new look. Sometime ca. 1947 they staged two operas in the Ukrainian language — M. Lysenko's Taras Bul'ba and G. Puccini's Madama Butterfly (1904). Many singers were brought in from outside Winnipeg for these productions and the lead role of Taras in Taras Bul'ba was sung by non-Ukrainian professional singer Walter Kay Stafford of New York, who learned the entire role in the Ukrainian language.¹⁶⁴

The Ukrainian Theatre of Winnipeg was formed by Cecil Semchyshyn after Winnipeg's Sisters of the Holy Family approached him to stage a religious pageant. Semchyshyn took two plays (one with an all-female cast and the other with an all-male cast) dealing with the Passion of Christ and combined them into the production Rozpry Ioho (Crucify Him) which premiered in 1962.¹⁶⁵ Response to the production was so encouraging that the idea of establishing a permanent Ukrainian theatre was considered and in 1963 the Ukrainian Theatre of Winnipeg was incorporated. A board of directors, made up of influential members of the Ukrainian community, was established with the main task of raising funds to cover operating expenses for the company.

Its first production, the musical Marusia (better known as Oi ne khody

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From a taped interview with Cecil Semchyshyn at the Manitoba Provincial Archives, Winnipeg, May 3, 1976.

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Theatre programme. April 12, 13 and 14, 1962, Playhouse Theatre, Winnipeg.

Hrytsiu ta i na vechornytsi), ran successfully for three nights at the Playhouse Theatre in 1965, with professional actress Joan Karasevych in the title role. This was soon followed by performances of Natalka Poltavka in Winnipeg and Kenora, Ontario. Encouraged by the tremendous financial and critical success, the group began preparations on its most lavish and ambitious production — Zaporozhets' za Dunaiem. It was presented at the Playhouse Theatre in the fall of 1966 (and later repeated in Dauphin, Manitoba) and featured Marta Kokol's's'ka of New York and Oksana Bryn' of Minneapolis. In addition to these major productions, the Ukrainian Theatre of Winnipeg repeated the pageant Rozpny Ioho for four consecutive years (three times in Ukrainian and finally in English, using several professional English actors and the Mennonite Children's Choir). The group's first attempt at non-musical theatre was a presentation of B. Thomas's Charlie's Aunt (presented in Ukrainian as Titka). Another production, "Vechir Opery" (An Evening of Opera), featured excerpts from Ukrainian opera classics which were performed by professional Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian singers such as Victor Neufeld.

The Ukrainian Theatre of Winnipeg, owing allegiance to no Ukrainian organization, brought together some fine professional and amateur talent. Cecil Semchyshyn, who received his theatrical training in Toronto and appeared for many years on CBC, was artistic director of the company. The producer was Ray Michael, who later distinguished himself in Canadian theatre as director of the Vancouver City Stage. Costumes were designed by Maryka Gawron, who also designed for Stratford, the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, the Manitoba Theatre Centre and the Rainbow Stage. Set designers have all been

professionals who worked for the CBC and the Manitoba Theatre Centre: John Harris designed Rozpny Ioho; Taras Korol' provided sets for Marusia and Zaporozhets' za Dunaiem; and Peter Kachmarek produced design for Natalka Poltavka and Titka. Through Semchyshyn's personal connections, the group received considerable support from the CBC and the Manitoba Theatre Centre, who often lent them costumes and props from their own collections. The production Rozpny Ioho was outfitted entirely by the CBC.¹⁶⁶

In 1967 the Ukrainian Theatre of Winnipeg disbanded. Semchyshyn's commitments during Canada's centennial as Director of the Manitoba Folk Arts Council and as one of the prime organizers of Winnipeg's "Folklorama" prevented him from devoting much attention to the group. As its activities waned Ray Michael moved to Vancouver and the group, which had shown so much potential, ceased to exist.

An interesting development in Ukrainian theatre in Canada was the formation of Winnipeg's Ukrainian Children's Theatre (Ukrains'kyi Dytiachyi Teatr). Established in 1960 under the artistic direction of Irena Turkevych-Martynets', the group has continued to work until the present day. Former ballerina Daria Nyzhankivska-Snihurowycz has been choreographer for all productions while Natalia Leontowych-Bashuk has been the group's producer. The group has a small repertoire of children's plays, the most notable of which is M. Lysenko's Koza Dereza (1888), which has been presented in several locations in Canada and was featured during "Ukrainian Days" at Expo 67 in Montreal. The group is noted for its lavish costumes and its chief appeal lies in the fact that all performers are children.

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C. Semchyshyn interview.

Ukrainian Theatrical Repertoire in Canada

Although the preceding account of theatrical activity among Ukrainians in Canada is by no means exhaustive, it does, nowever, indicate the great popularity and widespread practice of this branch of Ukrainian culture. Its most productive phase occurred between 1917 and 1939, during which time hundreds of plays were staged by various Ukrainian dramatic groups across the country.

Plays Written in Ukraine

Most plays presented in Canada were written by authors in Ukraine. Many of these were classic plays written by the great Ukrainian dramatists of the nineteenth century, while others were lesser-known works. Ivan Kotliarevs'kyi's (1769-1838) operetta Natalka Poltavka (1819), which gave rise to the birth of genuine Ukrainian dramaturgy (specifically adapted to the requirements of the theatre and truly Ukrainian in form and content) and which marked the beginning of the development of Ukrainian secular theatre, was the most popular play presented in Canada. Other Ukrainian operettas, quite different from the western European type, with music of distinctly ethnographic character and based on populist comedy, such as Hryhorii Kvitka-Osnovianenko's (1778-1843) Svatannia na Honcharivtsi (The Courting in Honcharivka, 1831) and Zaporozhets' za Dunaiem (Kozak Beyond the Danube, 1863) by Semen Hulak-Artemovs'kyi (1813-1873) were also extremely popular in Canada. It is the ethnographic plays — that is folk dramas with music, songs

and dances; that held the greatest appeal for Ukrainian Canadians. Among the playwrights whose works were often performed were Marko Kropyvnyts'kyi (1840-1910), Mykhailo Staryts'kyi (1840-1904) and Ivan Tobilevych (Karpenko-Karyi, 1845-1910). M. Kropyvnyts'kyi wrote more than forty plays, mostly melodramas and comedies. In them he carefully copied peasant life, romanticizing its ethnographic characteristics. Although at times he used the "slice-of-life" technique in his plays, he nevertheless always retained his fondness for melodramatic effect. Of his plays Pomyrylys' (Reconciled, 1869), Nevol'nyk (The Prisoner, 1872), Dai sertsiu voliu zavede v nevoliu (Give Your Heart Freedom and it Will Enslave You, 1882), Hlytai abozh pavuk (The Profiteer, or the Spider, 1882), Tytarivna (The Church Warden's Daughter, 1891) and Vii (1896) were staged in Canada prior to World War II and Utoplena (Drowned Girl, 1881) was first presented following the war. M. Staryts'kyi wrote about thirty-five plays, many adapted from the plays of other authors who lacked knowledge of theatre: Chornomortsi (The Black Sea Kozaks, 1875), based on the work of Iakiv Kukhareno (1800-1862); the ethnographic comedy Za dvoma zaitsiamy (Chasing Two Hares, 1883), based on the work of Ivan Nechui-Levyts'kyi (1838-1918); Rizdviana Nich (Christmas Eve, 1872), a musical comedy based on an adaptation of Mykola Hohol' (1809-1852), and others. Staryts'kyi attained a prominent place in Ukrainian dramaturgy as the creator of historical-romantic ethnographic dramas, and as an opera librettist (especially for the operas of Mykola Lysenko [1842-1912]). Staryts'kyi's Rizdviana Nich, Chornomortsi, Taras Bul'ba (1881), Za dvoma zaitsiamy, Nich pid Ivana Kupala (St. John's Eve, 1887), Tzyhanka Aza (Aza, the Gypsy Woman, 1890), Oi ne khody Hrytsiu, ta i na vechornytsi (Don't Go to the Party,

Harry, 1890) and Marusia Bohuslavka (1897) were all presented in Canada. I. Tobilevych, as a playwright, was more modern than Kropyvnyts'kyi or Staryts'kyi, and his plays have realistic delineation of character and psychological development. He wrote close to twenty plays of various genres (comedies, tragedies, etc.). Through his works "Ukrainian dramaturgy moved away from ethnographic naturalism, from simple spectacle, to a panorama of the Ukrainian village, intensified by social insight and artistry and portraying the social and psychological nature of the village people".¹⁶⁷ In Canada, his Bondarivna (The Cooper's Daughter, 1884), Beztalanna (The Hapless One, 1886), Bat'kova kazka (Father's Tale, 1892) and Lykha iskra pole spalyt' i sama shchezne (A Malevolent Spark Will Burn a Field and Itself Vanish, 1896) were performed prior to 1939 and his Suieta (Vanity, 1903) and Rozumnyi i Duren' (The Wise Man and the Fool, 1885) were first presented during the 1950's. In addition to this, many minor ethnographic plays written in Galicia during the second half of the nineteenth century (especially those of Ivan Tohobochnyi and Hryhorii Tsehlyns'kyi [1853-1912]) were popular among early Ukrainian immigrants. These plays, and many others like them, dealt with Ukraine, its people, and its history. Reflecting either in dramatic or comic fashion the events of the past, they served to remind the Ukrainians in Canada of their heritage, of the customs and traditions of their forefathers, of their glorious past, and of their struggle for freedom and dignity.

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V. Haievs'kyi and V. Revuts'kyi, "Ethnographic Theatre and the Beginnings of Modern Theatre (1881-1917)", Ukraine: A Concise Encyclopaedia, V. Kubijovic, ed. (Toronto: U. of T. Press for Ukrainian National Association, 1971), Vol. II, p.638.

Ukrainian plays, not ethnographic in character, have also been presented in Canada. The realistic plays of Volodymyr Vynnychenko (1880-1951) dealt to a great extent with social problems and were thematically removed from the peasant to the town setting. Vynnychenko, in addition to delineating character, strove for dynamic action and his plays went beyond the confines of ethnographic theatre, approaching rather the dramas of John Galsworthy (1867-1933) and August Strinberg (1848-1912).¹⁶⁸ In Canada, Vynnychenko's Chorna Pantera i Bilyi Medvid' (The Black Panther and the White Bear, 1911), Moloda krov (Young Blood, 1913) and Kol Nidre (Song of Israel) were successfully presented prior to 1939. Following World War II several dramatic works by Lesia Ukrainka (Larissa Kosach-Kvitka, 1871-1913) were first presented on Canadian stages. L. Ukrainka wrote about twenty plays and like many contemporary foreign Modernist writers, drew her subjects from various historical periods. The subject matter of her dramatic works were taken either from antiquity, early Christian times, or the Middle Ages, with the exception of Lisova pisnia (The Forest Song, 1912), which is based on Ukrainian folk-songs and popular legends. The play is a symbolic drama full of psychological insight and is characterized by lyricism, melodiousness, and an incomparable richness of language. In her dramatic works, Ukrainka showed an affinity with Symbolist playwrights such as Gerhart Hauptmann (1862-1946) and Maurice Maeterlinck (1862-1949).¹⁶⁹ Of her dramatic works Advokat Martiian (The Advocate Martianus, 1913), Kassandra (Cassandra,

168

Ibid, p.638.

169

Ibid, p.638.

1907) and Lisova pisnia were performed in this country.

Sources of Supply

The majority of these plays were published in Western Ukraine and were readily accessible to Ukrainians in Canada. With the widespread rise in popularity of Ukrainian theatrical productions in Galicia during the second half of the nineteenth century,¹⁷⁰ various publishing houses and private publishers began producing inexpensive collections of Ukrainian dramas, comedies, sketches, monologues and operettas (complete with musical score). The "Rusalka" publishers in Lviv established their Teatral'na Biblioteka (Theatrical Library) in answer to the demand for copies of plays. The series was edited by Hryhorii Hanyliak and came out with a new work each month at a cost of two dollars American for an annual subscription. The distributors in Canada were the Ukrainian Booksellers in Winnipeg and the Ukrainian Bookstore in Edmonton. A similar publishing venture was carried on from Tarnopil, where the publisher V. Krell' printed the Podil's'la Teatral'na Biblioteka (Theatrical Library of Podillia). His publications were available in Galicia, Czechoslovakia, the United States and Canada, where they were sold by the Ukrainian Bazaar bookstore in Winnipeg.

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The first professional Ukrainian theatre in Galicia was established by the "Rus'ka Besida" Society in 1864 in Lviv. The Ruthenian National Theatre (Rus'kyi Narodnyi Teatr", as it was called, was first directed by Omelian Bachyns'kyi. (R. Ia. Pylypchuk, "Teatr na zakhidnoukrains'kykh zemliakh" [Theatre in Western Ukrainian Lands], Ukrains'kyi Dramatychnyi Teatr [Ukrainian Dramatic Theatre] [Kiev: "Naukova Dumka", 1967], p.283.)

Ukrainian Canadian Playwrights

With rapid growth and development of the Ukrainian dramatic movement in Canada, a need for new works was soon felt. This became even more apparent after World War I when the inflow of literary works from Western Ukraine was slowed down. As audiences became more accustomed to attending theatrical performances regularly, they became more demanding and critical: old repertoire, constantly repeated, soon became monotonous not only to the audiences, but also the players. Current events in Canada and Ukraine which lent themselves for staging, and were of topical interest to Canadians, prompted Ukrainians in Canada to write their own plays. New Ukrainian works began appearing on Canadian stages as early as 1909¹⁷¹ but the greatest number of new plays were written in Canada between 1917 and 1939.

In the beginning these were generally staged from manuscripts and many of them have since been lost. Those which appeared in print, usually at the authors own expense, survived and continued to be performed by various groups. Many of these plays portrayed events surrounding Ukraine's independence, while others were set in Canada. Although the majority of these were not of a particularly high literary standard, they nevertheless appealed to the public and satisfied its need for something new.

This period of dramaturgical productivity was not of very long duration, as authors soon realized that it was often impossible to recover

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Ivan Bodrug's drama Ubiynyky (Killers) was the first Ukrainian play published in Canada. It appeared in Winnipeg in 1909 and went through three editions. (Yuzyk, Ukrainian in Manitoba, p.139.)

expenses involved in publication of their works. Many of them stopped spending money on publishing their efforts and writing all but ceased.

Semen Kowbel' (1877-1965), who resided in Winnipeg, was the most prolific Ukrainian playwright in Canada. His first drama, Divochi mrii (A Maiden's Dreams, 1919), published in Winnipeg and Ternopil, became extremely popular and was performed in Canada, the United States and in Western Ukraine, where it became part of the repertoire of the I. Tobilevych wandering theatre.¹⁷² Kowbel' also wrote a series of five-act plays based on Bohdan Lepkyi's (1872 - 1941) trilogy Mazepa: Nedospivana pisnia (Unfinished Song), Na tsars'komu sudi (In the Tsarist Court-House), Baturyn (The Kozak Stronghold), Na ruinakh Baturyna (On the Ruins of Baturyn) and Na zhertvennyk slavy (For Glory's Altar). Although each play was a complete entity within itself, most were not performed as they occasionally demanded a cast of one hundred. Kowbel' wrote sixteen theatrical works and many of his shorter plays like Virna sestra to zoloto (A True Sister is Gold), Ukrainizatsiia (Ukrainization), Delegatsiia do raiu (Delegation to Paradise) and Povisyvsia (He Hung Himself) were popular with Canadian audiences.

The second most prolific Ukrainian Canadian playwright was Dmytro Hun'kevych (1893-1958), who began his career shortly after World War I. He resided in Winnipeg until 1934, when he moved to Toronto. Hun'kevych wrote fifteen plays (dramas, comedies, children's plays, etc.); most of his five-act plays were published in Lviv, and the shorter ones in Winnipeg.¹⁷³

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Propamiatna knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipeg, p.620.

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For a list of plays written by Ukrainian Canadian playwrights see Appendix 2.

Vasyl' Kazanivs'kyi (b. 1889), also of Winnipeg, wrote several plays that were published in Winnipeg and in Lviv by the "Rusalka" publishers. Kazanivs'kyi's Pimsta za kryvdu (The Revenge) was based on a novel by I. Nechui-Levyts'kyi and his V nediliu rano zillia kopala (On Sunday Morning She Dug the Herbs), adapted from Ol'ha Kobylans'ka's (1863-1942) novel of the same name, was performed in Canada, the United States and Europe. In addition, Kazanivs'kyi wrote a series of one-act plays.

The first dramatic works by Oleksander Luhovyi (Oleksander Ovruts'kyi-Shvabe, 1904-1962) began appearing in Canada ca. 1933. Luhovyi, who arrived in Canada following World War I, set all of his plays against a background of events dealing with the struggle for Ukraine's independence (1918-1922). His plays are deeply patriotic in nature.

Several plays by Vasyl' Tulevitriiv (Viktor Lysenko, b. 1886) were published and performed in Canada during the 1940's. His drama Taka ii dolia (Such is Her Destiny), dealing with events that had taken place in Carpatho-Ukraine in 1938, was successfully staged in Hamilton and other Canadian centres. Tulevitriiv also wrote a comedy, Vesele i shchaslyve zhyttia (Happy and Lucky Life), which portrayed the actualities of Ukrainian life behind the Iron Curtain.

In the works of Myroslav Irchan (Andrii Babiuk, 1896-1936) Ukrainian drama was exploited solely in the interests of the communist movement. Irchan arrived in Winnipeg in 1923 from Galicia as a fully accredited member of the Communist Party. All of Irchan's plays are revolutionary and propagandist and were extremely popular in the Ukrainian Labour Temples throughout Canada. His drama Dvanadtsiat' (The Twelve, 1923), portrayed a

filibustering expedition against the Polish landlords. Irchan's most popular drama was Rodyna shchitkariv (The Family of Brushmakers), which portrayed the destruction of a bourgeois republic and the establishment of the "dictatorship of the proletariat".¹⁷⁴ Other plays followed the Bolshevik revolutionary pattern: Buntar (Mutineer), Pidzemel'na Halychyna (Underground Galicia), and Tragediia Pershoho Travnia (The Tragedy of the First of May). It is ironic that Irchan returned to the Soviet Ukraine and was sent to the slave labour camps of Solovky in the Arctic.

Other Ukrainian playwrights who made a contribution to Ukrainian dramaturgy in Canada were Petro Chaikovs'kyi (1883-1938), Honore Ewach (Onufrii Ivakh, 1900-1964), Pylyp Pylypenko (Pylyp Ostapchuk, b. 1898), Mykhailo Krypiakevych (b. 1897) and Mykhailo Petrovs'kyi (b. 1897), to name only a few.¹⁷⁵

Non-Ukrainian Plays

The vast majority of plays staged in Canada by various Ukrainian dramatic associations, circles and groups have been written by Ukrainian playwrights living in Ukraine or Canada. In addition, however, some non-Ukrainian plays (in Ukrainian translation) have been performed in Canada by Ukrainian dramatic ensembles. Probably the first such play to be performed was William Shakespeare's (1564-1616) drama Julius Caesar (1599-1600) which was

¹⁷⁴

Yuzyk, Ukrainians in Manitoba, p.139.

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See Appendix 2 for list of works.

presented by students of the Metropolitan Andrei Sheptycki Bursa in St. Boniface, Manitoba in 1916.¹⁷⁶ Unfortunately, attempts at locating more specific information about this production have been unsuccessful. Brandon Thomas's (1856-1914) comedy Charley's Aunt (1892) was translated into Ukrainian during the 1930's by K. Hupalo as Titka and was staged by Ukrainian drama groups in Winnipeg and Toronto. The Ukrainian Dramatic Studio "Zahrava" presented two outstanding non-Ukrainian productions during the 1950's and 1960's. Henrik Ibsen's (1828-1906) Gengangere (Ghosts, 1881) was translated by R. Shcherbatiuk and staged as Prymary. Jean Anouilh's (b. 1910) play L'Alouette (1953, translated into English as The Lark, 1955) was translated for "Zahrava" by V. Myrosh in 1959 as Zhanna D'Ark (Zhaivoronok). The play was successfully presented two times.

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Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.201.

Summation

From this account it is evident that a vigorous theatrical movement existed among Ukrainians in Canada. Ukrainian theatre flourished because it fulfilled a definite social need for the immigrants and provided them with cultural-educational activity. The amateur theatrical associations, circles and groups provided early settlers with a sense of community identity, a much needed social outlet and a useful aid in instilling national values and ideals in succeeding generations. Staged dramatic performances were valuable not only because they provided their audiences with an easily acceptable form of education and entertainment but also because they were the means by which the amateur groups could raise funds for organizational and national needs.

Initial stages in development of Ukrainian theatre in Canada occurred in the early 1900's, before World War I, at which time Ukrainian dramatic performances in public were banned by the Canadian government along with publication of periodicals in foreign languages. The Order in Council of September 25, 1918 (P.C. 2384) prohibiting, inter alia, the holding of meetings conducted in a foreign language, was repealed on April 2, 1919 by Order in Council P.C. 702 and dramatic performances were once again permitted.¹⁷⁷

In the 1920's and 1930's, the performing arts in general, and dramatic presentation in particular, were extremely popular among Ukrainians.

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From a letter written by E.L. Newcombe, Deputy Minister of Justice, on June 6, 1919 in answer to a request for permission to stage a Ukrainian play from members of the Porcupine Miner's Union in Timmins, Ontario written on May 27-30, 1919. (Public Archives of Canada. Department of Justice, RG 13, A 2, Vol 37, file #1471).

At this time the popularity of Ukrainian theatre was at its peak and hundreds of dramatic ensembles were engaged in stage work across the country. In spite of glowing newspaper reviews at the time it is doubtful that many of these performances were of a high artistic calibre, with the exception of productions presented by well established ensembles in the larger cities. The responsibility for directing dramatic work within a community was generally that of the hired Vernacular Native School teacher, who included it among his various other tasks. Since stage performances of some sort were demanded almost weekly (this is especially true of the 1930's), it was unrealistic to expect high calibre theatre art. It was not important that most productions had little professional quality — they were heavily attended by appreciative audiences and allowed a creative release for the players.

The period between the two wars was also notable because of the efforts made to stage new dramatic works, in addition to the traditional Ukrainian stage repertoire (predominantly ethnographic in nature), that had been written in Ukraine. It was a productive period during which a number of Ukrainian immigrant writers in Canada wrote original plays, or adapted popular literary works for the stage. The majority of these Canadian plays, though perhaps not of high literary quality, were nevertheless important, because they concerned themselves with contemporary events that had occurred in Ukraine and Canada, and in their own way focused attention on issues of topical interest to Ukrainian Canadians.

During World War II, theatrical activity among Ukrainians in Canada came to a virtual standstill. The youth had been removed to military service and those who remained could not continue the theatrical work on their own. Migration to cities caused many rural communities to suspend

cultural activities, never to resume them after the war ended. In the cities a large sector of the Ukrainian youth was assimilated and refused contact with their cultural heritage, or lost knowledge of their mother tongue. The loss of Ukrainian language was reflected more strongly on Ukrainian theatre than on any other form of cultural expression. As a sizeable segment of the community (i.e. the prospective performers and audience) lost its facility in the Ukrainian language, Ukrainian theatrical performances could not attract the kind of audiences needed to keep most dramatic groups functioning, even on an amateur level.

Post World War II immigration yielded a large number of professional theatre people who worked to establish Ukrainian theatrical ensembles in some of the larger Canadian cities. Theatrical performances presented by these groups attracted audiences, but these productions were sparse and never became generally popular, as they had been during the years between the two wars. Though many of the new immigrants dreamed of establishing a professional Ukrainian theatre, existing material and cultural conditions made the realization of the dream impossible. In spite of this, a few dramatic ensembles continue to function on an active amateur level, and although unable to mount large theatrical repertoires, they endeavour to occasionally stage more serious dramatic works and to carry on, within their means, the Ukrainian theatrical tradition in Canada.

CHAPTER III

UKRAINIAN CHORAL ART IN CANADA

If a people's temperament is expressed in their culture, then the Ukrainian temperament is musical. Ukrainians are a nation of singers. For centuries song has been an inseparable part of a Ukrainian's soul and has encompassed all aspects of his life. It has been a manifestation of his nature and the best expression of his emotional and spiritual experiences. As early as the seventeenth century foreign observers noted the widespread love of singing and knowledge of rules of choral music in Ukraine and praised the choral technique and artistic level. The Syrian archdeacon Paul of Aleppo, who visited Ukraine in 1653, considered the singing of Ukrainian choirs superior to that which he had heard in Moscow, while the Protestant minister of Saxony, Herbinus found Ukrainian choirs more pleasing than the choruses of Western Europe.¹

It has been said that when a group of Ukrainians meet, their first move is to organize a choir.² Oleksander Koshyts', a key figure in the development of Ukrainian choral art in Canada, stated:

Пісенна творчість нашого народу огорнула пісню
не тільки життя окремої одиниці з колиски до домо-
вини, але і життя всієї нації у всіх її проявах і

1

Z. Lysko, "History of Ukrainian Music: Eleventh to Seventeenth Centuries", Ukraine: A Concise Encyclopaedia, V. Kubijovic, ed. (Toronto: U. of T. Press for Ukrainian National Association, 1971), Vol. 2, p.581.

2

W. Paluk, "Why Do We Sing in Choirs?", Canadian Cossacks: Essays, Articles and Stories on Ukrainian-Canadian Life (Winnipeg: Canadian Ukrainian Review Publishing Co. Ltd., 1943), p.51.

змінах від передісторичних часів аж до наших днів.³

With a centuries-old tradition of choral singing, it was natural that the Ukrainian immigrants would transport this aspect of their cultural heritage to the new land. Choral art was one of the first branches of Ukrainian national culture to be developed by Ukrainian settlers in Canada, and the first aspect of their cultural heritage to be appreciated by their fellow citizens.

Early Ukrainian Canadians were conscious of the beauty of their songs and proud of their legacy of choral music. Whenever the occasion presented itself, they participated in festivals with their fellow citizens (their first such appearance took place in 1897 at the Dominion Day festival on the Saskatchewan prairies).⁴ By the mid-1920's, choral performances by Ukrainians before non-Ukrainian audiences drew large crowds and critical acclaim: "These people have secrets in the art of song that go deeper than technique ... two dozen Ukrainians can sing their folk-songs with a barbaric intensity and a sheer beauty that is unforgettable".⁵

3

The choral art of our people enfolds with song not only the life of a separate individual from cradle to grave, but also the life of the entire nation in all its manifestations and changes from prehistoric times until our days. (In: P. Macenko, "Narodna pisnia i tanok" [Folk Song and Dance], Ukrainian Folk Dance: A Symposium [Toronto: Ukrainian National Youth Federation, 1961], p.26.)

4

M.H. Marunchak, The Ukrainian Canadians: A History (Winnipeg: Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences, 1970), p.453.

5

F.R. Livesay, "Songs and Dances of the Ukrainians", The Canadian Magazine, Toronto, January, 1927, Vol. 67, No. 1.

Early Ukrainian Choral Activity in Canada

Church Choirs

In Canada, the first Ukrainian parishes were established by Rev. Nestor Dmytrenko in 1897 at Stuartburn and Terebowla in Manitoba and at Edna-Star in Alberta.⁶ By 1900 there were six parishes with their own churches (Winnipeg, Gonor, Stuartburn and Sifton in Manitoba and Edna-Star and Rabbit Hill in Alberta).⁷ New church parishes continued to appear and by the outbreak of World War I almost every Ukrainian community in Canada had at least one church congregation with its own resident choir.

Church choirs were among the first Ukrainian choral units to be established in Canada. In the Eastern religious rite, to which the majority of settlers belonged, all church services were accompanied by singing. It is probable that in the beginning the entire congregation sang in chorus without an appointed conductor during church services. However, as parishes became better established, separate church choirs were organized. These choirs sang at religious services and at most community functions associated with the parish. The church choir of Winnipeg's Ukrainian Greek Catholic parish of St. Nicholas was organized in 1910 by Iurii Magalias and was composed of twenty-seven men and women. It was the first

⁶ Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, pp.100-101.

⁷ Ibid, p.103.

Ukrainian choir organized in Winnipeg and one of the first large Ukrainian choirs in Canada.⁸

Choral Sections of Theatrical Groups

Choral music was an integral part of early Ukrainian theatrical productions. Beginning with the 1904 Winnipeg production of H. Kvitak-Osnovianenko's Svatannia na Honcharivtsi (The Courting in Honcharivka, 1836),⁹ Ukrainian plays containing popular folk songs and dances have been included in the repertoires of most Ukrainian dramatic associations in Canada. The most popular Ukrainian musical work presented on Canadian stages was the 1819 opera-vaudeville¹⁰ Natalka Poltavka, by I. Kotliarevs'kyi, which was first staged in Winnipeg in 1906.¹¹ The music for this work was originally written by M. Vasyliiev and later re-written by M. Lysenko.¹² Another

8

S. Kowbel & D. Doroshenko, eds., Propamiatna knyha Ukrain's'koho Narodnoho Domu v Vynnypegu [Memorial Book of the Ukrainian National Home in Winnipeg] (Winnipeg: Ukrainian National Home, 1949), p.260.

9

Ibid, p.23.

10

The opera-vaudeville was a form of play in which spoken dialogue was interspersed with songs, the words of which were closely related to the on-going action and which were used to disclose a dramatic situation or the psychology of a character. (L. Arkhimovych, T. Karysheva, et al, eds., Narysy z istorii ukrains'koi muzyky [Outline of the History of Ukrainian Music] [Kiev: "Mystetstvo", 1964], Vol. 1, p.184.)

11

P. Krawchuk, The Ukrainians in Winnipeg's First Century (Toronto: Kobzar Publishing Company Limited, 1974), p.23.

12

Narysy z istorii ukrains'koi muzyky, pp.190-191.

favourite with Canadian audiences was S. Hulak-Artemovs'kyi's Zaporozhets' za Dunaiem (Kozak Beyond the Danube, 1863), the first Ukrainian lyrical-musical opera ever written.¹³ Both musical score and libretto were written by Hulak-Artemovs'kyi. The work premiered in Canada in 1917 in a performance given by Winnipeg's Ukrainian Dramatic Society "Boian" (Ukrains'ke Dramatychne Tovarystvo "Boian").¹⁴ Other musical works first performed in Canada by "Boian" of Winnipeg include T. Shevchenko's Nazar Stodolia (1843), with music composed by P. Nishchyns'kyi,¹⁵ M. Kropyvnyts'kyi's Nevol'nyk (The Prisoner, 1872), with music by M. Kropyvnyts'kyi himself, and M. Staryts'kyi's Chornomortsi (The Black Sea Kozaks, 1875), with music by M. Lysenko.¹⁶ M. Staryts'kyi's Nich pid Ivana Kupala (St. John's Eve, 1887) was first performed in Winnipeg in 1915 by the Dramatic Society of Ivan Kotliarevs'kyi (Dramatychne Tovarystvo im. Ivana Kotliarevs'koho).¹⁷ The opera Kateryna (1899) by M. Arkas, based on the poetry of T. Shevchenko, was first performed by the "Boian" Association (Tovarystvo "Boian") in

13

Ibid, p.199.

14

Ukrains'kyi Holos [Ukrainian Voice], Winnipeg, May 23, 1917.

15

Although Nishchyns'kyi completed the music for only one act of Nazar Stodolia, his "Vechernytsi" [Evening Revelry], as the second act is called, became very popular. Parts of it, in particular "Zakuvala ta syva zozulia" [The Grey Cuckoo Called], an epic-dramatic song telling of the suffering endured by Ukrainian kozaks in Turkish bondage (for male chorus), is considered a classic of Ukrainian choral music. It has been included in the repertoires of many Ukrainian male choruses in Canada.

16

Knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipeg, p.142.

17

Ukrains'kyi Holos, March 17, 1915.

Edmonton in 1917.¹⁸

Due to the widespread popularity of Ukrainian musical theatre in Canada, many dramatic associations developed strong choral sections as part of their performing ensembles. The more affluent drama groups hired separate musical directors or choirmasters to train and direct their choral sections. In many cases, the choral sections of dramatic groups also functioned as independent choirs, participating in all musical productions and presenting choral concerts of their own on such occasions as the annual commemorations of T. Shevchenko, I. Franko, or Ukraine's independence. Prior to the end of World War I, several singing-dramatic associations became renowned in Canada for developing choral music as well as drama. Among them were the Ukrainian Dramatic Society "Boian" (conducted by Vasyl' Svystun and Maksym Pasichniak) and the Dramatic Association of Ivan Kotliarevs'kyi (conducted first by K. Korykora and later by I. Haievs'kyi and Petro Iundak), both of Winnipeg, and the "Boian" Association (conducted by Teodor Panchyshyn, Mykolai Z'ombra and Vasyl' Smolyk) of Edmonton.¹⁹

18

M. Chomiak, ed., Propamiatna knyha Ukrain's'koho Narodnoho Domu v Edmontoni 1906-1965 [Memorial Book of the Ukrainian National Home] (Edmonton: Ukrainian Catholic Council-Ukrainian National Home, 1966), p.79.

19

For more detailed information on choral sections of dramatic associations see CHAPTER II, "Ukrainian Theatre in Canada".

Oleksander Koshyts' and Ukrainian Choral Music in Canada

A central role in the development of Ukrainian choral music in Canada was played by Oleksander Koshyts', one of the leading figures in the history of 20th century music in Ukraine. Koshyts' was an outstanding conductor, composer and ethnographer who made lasting contributions to both religious and secular Ukrainian music.

Oleksander Koshyts' (1875-1944) was born in Kiev and received his musical training at Kiev's M. Lysenko Music School (Muzychna Shkola im. M. Lysenka), where he conducted and worked with Mykola Lysenko, the "Father of Ukrainian Music", between 1906 and 1912. Lysenko had a deep respect for Koshyts's talents and in a 1910 letter to H. I. Marchenko, wrote that Koshyts' "is a capable and talented man. He stands as conductor of the Kiev university choir and tours with it to various cities, collecting funds from these concerts to aid poor students. His researches are valuable. He conducts choirs very well...".²⁰

During the first two decades of this century Koshyts' gained fame as a choral conductor in Kiev. He conducted the Kiev university choir from 1909 and from 1911 conducted the choir of the Imperial Music School (Imperators'ke Muzychne Uchylyshche). In 1912 he became choirmaster for the M. Sadovs'kyi theatre and also continued directing his other choirs. When the Kiev Conservatory of Music was opened in 1913 Koshyts' was hired to teach choral singing.

20

O. Min'kovs'kyi, ed., Oleksander Koshyts': Ukrains'ki narodni pisni dlia mishanoho khoru [Oleksander Koshyts': Ukrainian Folk Songs for Mixed Choir] (Kiev: "Mystetstvo", 1965), p.2.

Between 1916 and 1917 he conducted the Kiev City Opera. In 1918 he helped organize the Ukrainian Republican Capella (later Ukrainian National Choir).

For Koshyts' Ukrainian choral music was "the most characteristic creation of our culture".²¹ From 1893 he collected folk song material in the Kiev region and between 1903 and 1905 in Kuban (where he collected and notated over 500 Kuban kozak, Ukrainian and other songs). O. Koshyts' worked actively as a composer, primarily in the field of artistic adaptation of Ukrainian folk songs. He became an incomparable song interpreter, developing his own style, and his own principles of elaboration of folk song material.

Пісня -- музичне оповідання про те, чи інше, а тому вона містить в собі всі елементи драми. А через те композитор повинен розробляти її по куплетах в низку музичних картин. Це -- єдиний певний спосіб виявлення всього сюжету. А те не тільки можливе, але ж і необхідне й бажане, бо народна пісня, як продукт творчості колективної містить в собі стільки драматичного матеріалу, що в дійсності вона не може бути повністю вичерпана.²²

The rich and varied folk song themes provided Koshyts' with a challenge that seldom left him content with only one or two variations (especially in

21

From a letter written by O. Koshyts' to P. Macenko January 30, 1941. (Vidhuky mynuloho: O. Koshyts' v lystakh do P. Matsenka [Echoes of the Past: O. Koshyts' in Letters to P. Macenko] [Winnipeg: Iwan Ilchyshyn, 1954], p.47.)

22

Song is a musical story about one thing or another and for this reason contains within itself all elements of drama. Because of this, a composer must develop it, by means of couplets, into a series of musical scenes. This is the only sure way of disclosing the entire subject. And that is not only possible, but also indispensable and important, because the folk song, as a product of collective creativity, encloses within itself so much dramatic material that, in actual fact, it cannot be fully utilized. (O. Koshyts' as quoted in Min'-kova'skyi, Oleksander Koshyts', p.4.)

his mature years) of a given song. He was extremely sensitive to the content of Ukrainian folk songs and his approach to their interpretation was not only that of a composer, but also that of a conductor and performer. Koshyts' could visualize in which couplet, and in which place, a voice or a certain part of the melodic line should be underlined; by which artistic means the character of separate phrases and sentences should be shaded; and the method by which the content, not only of the entire song, but of each separate couplet should be disclosed.

Пісня має самодостатню красу, а тому ніяких прикрас акомпанементу вона не потребує. Пісню треба будувати а-капела. Як жолудь, вона містить в собі всі ознаки пишного дуба, котрий повинен виростити композитор. Гармонійний уклад пісні, так само, як і контрапункту, треба брати з самої пісні, з її власних елементів, бо в протилежному разі вона буде одягнена в чужу одежу ...²³

O. Koshyts's sensitivity to Ukrainian choral music made him an outstanding conductor, while his natural-born pedagogical skill made him an unforgettable teacher. In Canada, both sides of Koshyts's talent came into play. His contribution to the development of Ukrainian choral music in Canada was first made through the tour of his Ukrainian National Choir, and later, through his involvement with the Educational Summer Courses.

Song has intrinsic beauty and, because of this, does not need to be adorned with accompaniment. Song should be built up acappella. Like an acorn it holds within itself all the attributes of the mighty oak which must be nurtured by the composer. The harmonic structure of a song, in the same way as its counterpoint, must be taken from the song itself, from its own elements, otherwise, it will be dressed in strange clothing... (Ibid.)

O. Koshyts's Ukrainian National Choir

Choirs in the Ukrainian community experienced substantial growth in the period after World War II. An important factor in this development was the Canadian tour of the Ukrainian National Choir (Ukrains'kyi Narodnyi Khor), directed by O. Koshyts'. The large, mixed chorus, organized during the period of Ukrainian statehood (1918-1920), began its world tour in 1919 as the Ukrainian Republican Capella (Ukrains'ka Republikans'ka Kapelia). It was sent on the tour by Simon Petlura and the government of the Ukrainian Republic in an effort to combat the prevailing hostile propaganda, which claimed that Ukraine did not exist and that Ukrainians were a people without a distinct culture.

Щоби показати світові, що український народ існує і що він є висококультурним народом, вислано в світ Українську Капелю. І люди, які чули про Україну, чи не чули, слухають нині чудові українські співи, подивляють їх, пишуть про них в своїх часописах, розбирають їх красу, а тимсамим признають існування українського народу і його культуру. Кого нема, той не може мати такої капелі, а хто некультурний, той не може мати пісень, якими захоплював би ся світ. ²⁴

24

In order to show the world that the Ukrainian nation exists and that it is a highly cultured nation, the Ukrainian Capella was sent out into the world. And people, who had or had not heard about Ukraine, today listen to lovely Ukrainian songs, marvel at them, write about them in their press, analyze their beauty and by the same token acknowledge the existence of the Ukrainian people and their culture. He who does not exist, cannot possess such a capella, and he who is without culture, cannot have songs with which to captivate the world. (Ukrains'kyi Holos [Ukrainian Voice], Winnipeg, December 24, 1919.)

In 1920 the Ukrainian Republican Capella became the Ukrainian National Choir and under this name continued performing. The Ukrainian National Choir, dubbed the "Human Symphony Orchestra" by the European press, made a triumphant concert tour which lasted five years (1919-1924) and visited sixteen countries: Western Ukraine, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Switzerland, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Poland, Spain, the United States, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Cuba and Canada.²⁵ During its five-year tour the choir was reorganized several times and at various times consisted of between thirty-five and seventy-five voices.²⁶ Wherever Koshyts's choir performed, it astounded both audiences and musicologists and received superlative reviews from the press.

The choir visited Canada in 1923 and presented concerts in Winnipeg, Toronto and other Canadian cities. These performances created a genuine interest in, and feeling of awe towards Ukrainian vocal art in the most respected Canadian music circles. For local Ukrainian conductors the Ukrainian National Choir concerts demonstrated the existing possibilities within the Ukrainian choral music field. Emulating the Koshyts' choir, local groups paid stricter attention to their own performances, striving to achieve more refined and disciplined choral ensembles of their own.

Koshyts's Ukrainian National Choir was disbanded on May 7, 1924 by Max Rabinow, the impresario who had arranged the tour through North and South America.²⁷ Koshyts' settled in New York, and continued working in the

²⁵

Ibid, May 21, 1924.

²⁶

Min'kovs'kyi, Oleksander Koshyts', p.3.

²⁷

Ukrains'kyi Holos, May 21, 1924.

Ukrainian choral field, organizing a new Ukrainian National Choir in 1926, which performed in Winnipeg in November of that year with Vasyl' Avramenko's Ukrainian dancers.

The Educational Summer Courses

O. Koshyts paid a great deal of attention to pedagogical work and it is in the training of conductors that a major portion of his contribution to Ukrainian choral music in Canada lies. Koshyts's involvement in the Educational Summer Courses (Vyshchi Osvitni Kursy)²⁸ in Winnipeg between 1941 and 1944 was largely responsible for raising the level of cultural awareness and musical knowledge among course participants, many of whom later continued to work in the Ukrainian choral field in this country.

The Educational Summer Courses, originally known as the Conductor-teacher's Courses (Dyrygents'ko-uchytel's'ki Kursy), were vital to the development of choral activity among Ukrainian Canadians. Organized in 1940 by the Ukrainian National Federation, the courses were designed to meet the need for educated cultural leaders within the Ukrainian community, especially the need for choral and orchestral conductors and Native School (Ridna Shkola) teachers.²⁹ The courses were open to all high school graduates, Native School and public school teachers, choral and orchestral conductors, cultural leaders

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For more information on the courses see Appendix 3.

29

P. Macenko, "Dyrygents'ko-uchytel's'ki Kursy" [Conductor-teacher's Courses], press release written May 18, 1940 at Saskatoon and sent for publication to Novyi Shliakh [New Pathway], Kandiis'kyi Farmer [Canadian Farmer] and Ukrains'ki visti [Ukrainian News]. (Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre, Winnipeg. Archives of the Educational Summer Courses.)

at various Ukrainian halls, and to those recommended by the Ukrainian National Federation. Students were selected without reference to their religious or political (with the exception of the communist) affiliations.

The two-month courses, which in 1942, became the Educational Summer Courses, were held annually in Toronto or Winnipeg. They were total immersion courses with eight-hour classes daily (except Saturday and Sunday), and often with additional evening lectures. Students selected one of two programmes of study -- one designed for conductors, the other for Native School teachers. The conductors' course included conducting (technique, practice, familiarity with choral literature), intonation and rhythm, musical theory (transposition, harmony, musical form, history of music), and lectures on the history of Ukrainian secular and religious music. This course also provided instruction on playing a musical instrument and choral singing. The Native School teachers' course consisted of lectures on Ukrainian language, history, literature, geography, singing and orchestral work.³⁰

Although the original courses were later expanded to cover a broader range of Ukrainian subjects, including culture and folklore, their emphasis remained on music.

For four consecutive summers (he died shortly after completing the fourth summer in 1944) O. Koshyts' taught at the Educational Summer Courses and headed the music department. He was instrumental in setting up the course curriculum and always stressed the practical aspect in his teaching:

30
Ibid.

Я вважаю, що курсанти багато не здобудуть, коли я буду напомповувати їх лектурою. Бо це ж таки остільки широке поле для розмов і балаканини, що можна говорити два місяці день і ніч, а слухач вийде з опухлою головою й всієї користи буде, що скаже 'Ой, та й велику культурну спадщину ми маємо!' ... моя праця повинна носити практичний характер цілковито: треба на ділі показати характерні пісні і характер їх виконання, одночасно робити культурні екскурси з якої будь дрібниці, щоб встановити певні асоціації у курсанта, закріпити їх, а разом змалювати все, що є особливого і в характері його творчості, в його історії, способі музичного думання й вислову, в його побуті, настроях, поглядах, ідеалах і т.д. ...³¹

Koshyts' believed that only by working in a practical way with Ukrainian choral music would it be possible to achieve any tangible results. The practical approach to choral training also served to resolve the theoretical questions involved with choral work and artistic adaptation of musical material.

Oleksander Koshyts' left an indelible mark on the Educational Summer Courses, and through them, on Ukrainian choral music in Canada. He was one of the great popularizers of Ukrainian folk songs and religious songs of this century and through his teaching, set the standard for future choral instruction. He believed that the Ukrainian choral tradition, which had been nurtured

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I consider that the course participants will not achieve much if I pump them with lectures. The field for discussion is so broad, that it would be possible to speak for two months, day and night, and the listener would depart with a swollen head and the only benefit would be that he would say 'Oh, what a vast cultural heritage we have! [...] my work should be of a totally practical nature: it is necessary to demonstrate characteristic songs and the character of their execution, simultaneously making cultural digressions on the basis of any trifle in order to fully establish certain associations in the course participants, reinforcing them and at the same time outlining everything that is in keeping and in character with the people and in character with its creativity, its history, method of musical thinking and expression, its mode of life, feelings, outlook, ideals, etc. ... (From a letter by O. Koshyts' to P. Macenko, January 30, 1941.)

by countless, un-named thousands of Ukrainians through the centuries, was worthy of preservation. Those students who had the good fortune of studying under this master conductor, benefited from the high calibre of his instruction and left the courses with a deep love for Ukrainian song and an abiding respect for the traditions of Ukrainian choral art.

Ukrainian Choral Music in Canada 1917-1939

Winnipeg

Several Ukrainian choirs were formed in Winnipeg during the 1920's. In 1922 a quartet was organized at the Prosvita Reading Association by Kost' Andrusyshyn. Within a few months the quartet expanded into a full-fledged choir and came under the direction of Mykhailo Levak. In 1923 K. Andrusyshyn resumed control of the choir and continued to conduct it for many years. The choir limited itself to performing at the Prosvita Reading Association and by 1929 became known as the Iu. Fed'kovych Choir (Khor im. Iu. Fed'kovycha).³² Another Ukrainian choir was established ca. 1921 in Elmwood at the Reading Association of the Greek Catholic parish by Maksym Levyts'kyi. By 1928 this choir had forty singers and sang during church services and at concerts presented at the Reading Association.³³

Of special significance in the field of Ukrainian choral art in Canada following World War I was the formation of Choir "Canada" (Khor "Kanada") and the organization of the Ukrainian National Home Choir (Khor Ukrains'koho Narodnoho Domu).

32

Ukrains'kyi Holos, November 6, 1929.

33

In addition to this, several church choirs also existed in Winnipeg in the post World War I years: at the Greek Catholic parish of St. Volodymyr and Olga (conducted by I. Haievs'kyi); at the church of the Basilian Fathers (conducted by P. Ruta); at the Greek Catholic Church of St. Mary the Protectress (conducted by Mr. Vesnii); and at the Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Cathedral (conducted by V. Swystun and M. Pasichniak). (Vinnipezhets', "Muzyka i spiv mizh Ukraintsiamy v Kanadi, ohliad za rik 1928" [Music and Singing Among Ukrainians in Canada, a Survey for the Year 1928], Narodnyi Iliustrovanyi kalendar Kanadiis'koho Farmera [National Illustrated Calendar of the Canadian Farmer], Winnipeg, 1929, p.119.)

Choir "Canada" and the Ukrainian Prosvita Institute of Winnipeg.

In 1922 the Singing-Dramatic Association "Banduryst" (Spivats'ko-Dramatychnyi Hurtok "Banduryst") of Winnipeg transferred its activities from the St. Volodymyr and Olga parish to the Ukrainian Prosvita Institute, where it existed independently but co-operated with the Institute in all Ukrainian matters.³⁴ "Banduryst" formed a small choir, with I. Haievs'kyi as conductor; but under his direction the choir made little progress.³⁵

In 1923, Prof. Evhen Turula arrived in Winnipeg from Germany and the same year organized Choir "Canada" in association with the Institute. Turula had made a name for himself in the field of choral and orchestral music in Europe and had successfully conducted choirs in Ukraine, Austria and Germany. His choirs had toured Germany, Denmark, Holland, Switzerland and Czechoslovakia and he arrived in Canada, already as a famous conductor.³⁶ In Winnipeg he organized his choir as a completely independent organization, hoping that in this way, he would be able to attract the best available choral voices from various existing groups. By gathering Winnipeg's strongest Ukrainian forces around him, Turula felt he might be successful in attaining the same level of artistic excellence in the execution of Ukrainian choral works as he had recently done in Europe. Although the choir functioned as

³⁴ V. Baleshta, "Khor Instytutu Prosvity u Vinnipeg" [The Choir of the Prosvita Institute in Winnipeg], Iliustrovanyi kaliendar "Kanadiis'koho ukrainsia" [Illustrated calendar of the "Canadian Ukrainian"], Winnipeg, 1929, p.72.

³⁵ "Muzyka i spiv mizh Ukraintsiamy v Kanadi", p.119.

³⁶ Baleshta, "Khor Instytutu Prosvity", p.72.

an independent entity, its rehearsals were held at the Prosvita Institute, the majority of the singers in the choir were its members and the choir performed under the Institute's sponsorship.

On March 2, 1924 Choir "Canada" presented its first concert at Winnipeg's Board of Trade Auditorium before more than 1,000 people.³⁷ The programme consisted of Ukrainian Christmas carols, ^{liturgical} songs and a collection of Ukrainian-Canadian songs, arranged by Turula and presented under the title "Ukrainets' v Kanadi" (A Ukrainian in Canada). Winnipeg audiences had recently had the opportunity of hearing the O. Koshyts' Ukrainian National Choir and they found many similar features in the new choir's performance. Turula's choir was well voiced, highly disciplined and trained in the European manner, with singers committing all music to memory and singing without notes. Turula insisted on this method of training because:

Співак, котрий знає свою частину мелодії на пам'ять, співає без помилок і в місто глядіти у ноти, може усе мати очі звернені на диригента, та прищучитися до його проводу. Вишколений в сей спосіб хор може виконати усі тонкості музичної динаміки, перейти з грімкого форте до найніжнішого піаніссімо, звільнити плав пісні, та прискорити її, або нагло урвати.³⁸

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"Rik 1924" [Year 1924], Iliustrovanyi kaliendar "Kanadiis'koho ukrainsia" [Illustrated Calendar of the "Canadian Ukrainian"], Winnipeg, 1925, p.136 and also Ukrains'kyi Holos, March 26, 1924.

38

A singer who knows his part of the melody by heart, sings without error and in place of looking at his notes, is able to concentrate his attention on the conductor and subordinate himself to his direction. A choir trained in this manner can perform all the subtleties of musical dynamics, ^{go} from a thunderous forte to the tenderest pianissimo, free the flow of song, speed it up, or sharply cut it short. (E. Turula, "Ukrains'kyi Khor" [Ukrainian Choir], Iliustrovanyi kaliendar "Kanadiis'koho ukrainsia" [Illustrated Calendar of the "Canadian Ukrainian"], Winnipeg, 1927, p.99.)

This inaugural performance impressed the large audience and it received much critical acclaim from the Ukrainian and English press. As a result of its success, the choir was invited to represent the Ukrainian population in the City of Winnipeg's 50th Jubilee celebrations. On June 24, 1924 Choir "Canada", accompanied by an orchestra, performed before City Hall and for its singing received an official letter of commendation.³⁹ The choir also entered a float (designed by Turula on the theme "Ukrainian Music") which was awarded first prize in the anniversary parade.

In July 1926 Choir "Canada" presented eight concerts at the Winnipeg Exhibition. The choir, which at that time numbered ninety-three male and female voices, presented a programme entirely composed of Ukrainian folk songs. They sang in full national dress and were the most popular feature of the Exhibition grandstand show which was seen by some 6,000 viewers.⁴⁰

Turula's choir quickly established a solid reputation. It was soon regarded as one of Winnipeg's showpieces and was called upon to represent the city at several official functions. In the fall of 1926 the choir performed at an official reception arranged by Winnipeg's Board of Trade for visiting tourists from the United States. The following year Winnipeg played host to an International Agricultural Congress; Turula's choir was again requested to entertain the visiting dignitaries from Europe, North America and Asia.⁴¹ In 1927 the choir was also involved in Victoria Day celebrations

³⁹ Ukrains'kyi Holos, June 25, 1924.

⁴⁰ Baleshta, "Khor Instytutu Prosvity", pp.72-73.

⁴¹ Ibid, p.73.

held in Assiniboia Park, where along with Vasyl' Avramenko's dancers they represented the Ukrainian community.⁴²

From its first performances Choir "Canada" showed promise of becoming a true Canadian showcase for the rich cultural heritage of Ukraine's choral art. It had a talented director who was capable of training singers and arranging choral material for presentation; it had won artistic acclaim and acceptance from Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian audiences alike; it was respected as an artistic unit worthy of representing the city of Winnipeg. Yet, in spite of all of this, it did not manage to last long and by mid-1927 Turula resigned as its director and the choir disbanded. It is difficult to determine the reasons, but perhaps the observations of a local citizen of the time might give a hint as to the reason for the choir's demise:

На жаль цей хор почав поволи тратити свою життєву силу і здатність, а це як раз по причині недбайливості його членів для спільної праці. Тут проявився у практиці тотя типічна черта широкої української натури з негативного боку. Ми запалюємось нараз до якоїсь роботи, поборюємо початкові труднощі, хочби вони були і не малі. Але цей запал подібний до солом'яного вогню, що спалахає і опісля скоро згасне. [...] Дивний народ ми Українці! Ми любимо це руйнувати, що тяжко здобували.⁴³

⁴² "With the Folk", Manitoba Free Press, Winnipeg, May 26, 1927.

⁴³ Unfortunately, this choir gradually began to lose its vital strength and usefulness, and this was exactly due to the unwillingness of its members to work together. Here that typical feature of the broad Ukrainian nature showed itself in a negative way. Some task sets us afire, we overcome the initial difficulties, even if they are considerable. But this fervor is like a straw fire that flares up and then quickly goes out. We Ukrainians are a strange people. We like to destroy what we have constructed with such difficulty. ("Muzyka i spiv mizh Ukraintsiamy v Kanadi", pp.119-120.)

Turula went on to become the conductor of the Ukrainian National Home Choir in Winnipeg while some members of Choir "Canada" formed the choir of the Ukrainian Prosvita Institute.

In 1928 the Prosvita Institute Choir was conducted by Vasyl' Baleshta. During this period it presented weekly Sunday concerts at the Institute and assisted the Singing-Dramatic Association "Banduryst" in its productions. During this time the choir, numbering sixty men and women, performed at the Walker Theatre on the occasion of the "Trade Exposition of Canadian Immigrants". The highlight of the choir's 1928 season was a joint concert with Salomeia Krushel'nyts'ka,⁴⁴ at the Prosvita Institute. This was an outstanding musical event for all Winnipeg music-lovers as Krushel'nyts'ka was a world famous opera singer who had performed in all the major opera houses of Europe and South America.

The repertoire of the Prosvita Institute Choir included Kraits-er's "Tse torzhestvennyi den'" (This is a Solemn Day), E. Turula's "Mel'nyk" (Miller), a suite of Lemko songs entitled "Ia do lisa ne pidu" (To the Forest I'll Not Go), and F. Kolessa's "Haivky" (Spring Songs). On September 15,

⁴⁴ Salomeia Krushel'nyts'ka (1873-1952), world famous dramatic soprano who finished the music conservatory in Lviv and studied in Milan and Vienna. She made her operatic debut in Lviv in 1893 and from 1895 performed in Europe and South America. Her interpretation of G. Puccini's Madama Butterfly (1904) helped the new opera gain popular acceptance. She was best known for her roles of Salome and Elektra (R. Strauss), Isolda and Brunhilda (R. Wagner), Hal'ka (S. Moniushko), Aida (G. Verdi), and others. She also performed Ukrainian folk songs to her own accompaniment. Between 1945 and 1952 she was a professor of music at the M. Lysenko conservatory of music in Lviv. (V. Kubijovic, ed., Entsyklopediia Ukrainoznavstva [Encyclopaedia of Ukraine] [Paris/New York: Shevchenko Scientific Society, 1971], Vol. 2, part 3, p.1195.)

1928 the choir of the Prosvita Institute came under the direction of P.
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Tundak.

Winnipeg's Ukrainian National Home Choir

The Ukrainian National Home Choir of Winnipeg resulted from the amalgamation of the three dramatic associations — "Boian", M. Zan'kovets'-ka and I. Kotliarevs'kyi — with the Ukrainian National Home in 1922. Each of these amateur associations, especially "Boian", already had long histories of choral work (for further information see Chapter II) and their combined forces created one of the best Ukrainian choirs in Canada. The first conductors of the Ukrainian National Home Choir were alternately Vasyl' Swystun, Maksym Pasichniak and Petro Tundak. It was their responsibility to prepare the choir for participation in various theatrical musical productions undertaken by the dramatic section of the Ukrainian National Home and for presentation of choral concerts of their own. These independent choral performances became very popular among both Ukrainians and non-Ukrainians.

In 1923 when Lloyd George, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, paid an official visit to the city of Winnipeg, the Ukrainian National Home Choir was requested to entertain the distinguished guest in an official reception. Before an audience made up of the guest of honour, various government officials, civic leaders, and heads of municipal, church, political and business organizations, the sixty-voice Ukrainian choir was able to honourably represent the

beauty of its cultural heritage and the rich tradition of its folk song.⁴⁶

July 1, 1927 marked the diamond jubilee of Canadian confederation. In Winnipeg, celebrations were held in the open air on a specially constructed stage at Assiniboia Park and attracted some 150,000 people from the city and surrounding districts. While most of the nationalities involved in the event staged various sporting events, the Ukrainians presented a programme of Ukrainian song and dance by the one hundred twenty voice Ukrainian National Home Choir and the two hundred and twenty member dance troupe and orchestra under the direction of Vasyl' Avramenko. The finale, which brought together the choir, dancers and orchestra, presented a spectacle of Ukrainian song, music, dance and costume that left the huge audience spellbound.⁴⁷

In 1927 the Ukrainian National Home engaged E. Turula, former director of Choir "Canada", to conduct its choir. Here, Turula found a strong choral unit that had been singing together for years and it provided him with a ready vehicle with which to work. He conducted singing practices several times a week, working with each of the voice groups — soprano, alto, tenoré, bass — separately, devoting a good deal of attention to the use of the singers' voices, their stage presentation, vocal harmonization, rhythm and volume control. Under his direction and tutelage, the choir made great progress and was soon singing in eight-part harmony.

One of the first choral performances under his direction took place on January 1, 1928 and consisted entirely of Ukrainian Christmas carols.

⁴⁶ "Zamitnishi vystupy ukraintsiv u Vinnipegugu pered shyrshoiu publykoiu" [More Notable Performances of the Ukrainians Before a Wider Public], Propamiatna knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipegugu, pp.330-331.

⁴⁷ Ibid, pp.334-335.

This was followed by a performance at the Playhouse Theatre on February 19, 1928, where the choir performed in concert with Mykola Karlash, the former soloist of the Kiev Opera. During 1928 Turula introduced several new compositions of his own into the choir's repertoire: "Vesna ide" (Spring Comes) for women's choir; "Haivky" for mixed chorus; and "Hude viter" (The Wind Howls). In addition, O. Koshyts's "Oi hore kalyni" (Oh Woe to the Cranberry) and V. Matiuk's "Pryidy vesno" (Come Spring) were also included in the repertoire.

The highlight of 1929 for the Ukrainian National Home Choir was its performance at the historic Lower Fort Garry for the convention of the British Medical Association. Before an audience made up of delegates from Britain and the Commonwealth countries, the Ukrainian National Home Choir, accompanied by the Princess Patricia's Light Infantry orchestra, presented a selection of Ukrainian and English songs. For its performance the choir was presented with a commemorative silver shield.⁴⁸

During the 1929-1930 winter season the choir presented performances at the Palace Theatre almost every Sunday evening. In addition to this, several major concerts were given in the larger city theatres — Playhouse, Metropolitan, Walker. Throughout the summer months of 1930 the choir staged guest concert appearances at various Ukrainian National Homes in the rural districts surrounding Winnipeg. In 1930 Turula resigned as director of the choir.

The economic crisis of the 1930's which had such a devastating effect on the work of many Ukrainian organizations in Canada, did not leave

the Ukrainian National Home Choir untouched. Many members left the city for various other parts of the country (particularly Toronto) and all cultural work (with a few exceptions) was greatly reduced. During the depression years the choir was directed by P. Iundak (1931), M. Levak (1932) and I. Tsukornyk (1932-1933). The difficult economic situation and the quick succession of conductors made it impossible for the choir to achieve many positive results. In 1934 Turula returned briefly to work with the choir,⁴⁹ but it was not until Dr. Pavlo Macenko arrived from Vienna that the Ukrainian National Home Choir was able to undertake work in earnest again.

Dr. P. Macenko was hired by the Ukrainian National Home in Winnipeg to teach its Native School and to direct its choir. He began to work in November 1936.⁵⁰ Macenko was a very capable conductor and was able to quickly re-organize the choir into a one hundred fifteen voice group (it later grew to one hundred twenty-six men and women). He rehearsed his singers three times weekly -- working once with the women's chorus, once with the men's, and once with the entire group. He paid special attention to the choir's breathing techniques and insisted on daily rehearsals six months before any major performance.⁵¹ It was inevitable that such a demanding work schedule would produce results.

Under Macenko's direction the choir was invited to participate in celebrations marking the coronation of King George VI on May 12, 1937.

⁴⁹ Ibid, p.344.

⁵⁰ Winnipeg Free Press, Winnipeg, November 20, 1936.

⁵¹ P. Macenko in an interview conducted at St. Andrew's College and Macenko's home in Winnipeg, May 5, 1976 by the author.

In Winnipeg the official commemorative ceremonies were held on the steps of the Manitoba Legislature. Various provincial and municipal dignitaries, a two thousand-voice high school student choir, a military orchestra and the Ukrainian National Home Choir gathered to mark the occasion.

Macenko was keenly aware of the need to foster better understanding between his choir and Winnipeg's English Canadian music circles. In 1937 the Ukrainian National Home Choir hosted a reception for Ukrainian community leaders and various local English music association representatives. The English speakers verbalized their feeling on the beauty of Ukrainian song, congratulated the Ukrainians for their efforts at perpetuating their musical traditions and expressed the hope that they would keep in touch with other musical associations in the city.

On May 22, 1937 the Ukrainian National Home Choir under the direction of P. Macenko presented its first full concert in Winnipeg's large Civic Auditorium. The invited guest performer for the concert was a former soloist with the O. Koshyts' Ukrainian National Choir, baritone Petro Ordyns'kyi of New York. It was an important musical event:

The first concert on Saturday evening by the Ukrainian National Choir of about 100 mixed voices under Dr. Paulo Macenko, was an event of musical importance beyond present reckoning.

These singers, who formed so striking looking a group in their handsome national dress as they stood on the Auditorium stage, represent a force that should count very vitally in Winnipeg's artistic life. Ukrainian fellow citizens have been showing a steadily increasing interest in local activities in drama and music. It is matter of glad concern that with their abundance of natural talent they are now entering the central field in friendly association with the other drama and music makers,⁵² and giving the public a better chance to examine their methods.

In September 1938 the Ukrainian National Home Choir was invited to represent the Ukrainian community at week-long celebrations marking the 200th anniversary of the La Vérendrye expedition, which had brought the first white men as far west as the site of Winnipeg and St. Boniface. For the occasion Macenko augmented his choir with singers from the Ukrainian Prosvita Institute Choir and Choir "Boian" of the Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral.

During the 1938 season the choir received several requests from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to present its songs on radio; this was the first such request to be received by a Ukrainian choral group. On November 23 "A Ukrainian Gift to Canada" (a special radio script written by S. Kowbel' and translated into English by J. M. Kenawin) was aired. The programme gave an account of Ukraine's history and included selections of Ukrainian songs. On December 16 the choir presented several Ukrainian Christmas carols on radio. Due to favourable response to their singing, the C.B.C. allotted the Ukrainian National Home Choir a separate time-slot on January 9, 1939 to present an entire programme of Ukrainian Christmas carols with each of the carols accompanied by a brief explanatory text prepared by Macenko. The programme was aired across North America and drew congratulatory letters from musicologists, professors and music lovers from Montreal, Quebec, Toronto and Vancouver.⁵³

The choir was involved in several other important concerts during the 1938-1939 season. On December 11, 1938 the choir performed during Ukrainian

⁵³ P. Macenko, "Khor Ukrain's'koho Narodnoho Domu. Odyn sezon 1938-1939. Otsinka" [Choir of the Ukrainian National Home. One season 1938-1939. An Evaluation], Propamiatna knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipeg, pp.349-350.

celebrations marking the 60th anniversary of the Prosvita Society in Lviv. The Ukrainian National Home Choir sang both alone and as part of a three hundred voice choir composed of various Ukrainian choirs in the city. On February 26, 1939 the choir presented its most important concert, marking the 25th anniversary of the incorporation of the Ukrainian National Home in Winnipeg. Featured guest artist for the occasion was Mykhailo Holyns'kyi. Holyns'kyi was an operatic tenor well known on European concert stages who captivated thousands of Ukrainians with his melodious voice. He arrived in Winnipeg from Western Ukraine in 1938, and after his performance with the Ukrainian National Home Choir toured the United States, returning to Canada in 1940. A second, extended concert tour of the U.S.A. followed, after which time Holyns'kyi settled permanently in Canada, where he carried on some pedagogical work.

The music of Ukrainians was represented at the Manitoba Music Festival for the first time in 1939 (although the festival had been in existence for some twenty-one years). Each of the participating choirs was allowed three songs, one of which (R. Kipling's "Oh Motherland") was compulsory. For its free selections the Ukrainian National Home Choir chose K. Stetsenko's "Sontse na obrii" (Sun on the Horizon) and Stupnyt'kyi's "Oi rano, rano pivni zapily" (Oh Early, Early the Cocks Crowed). For its execution of the songs the choir was awarded the J.J. MacLean Trophy, awarded to "the winners of the Mixed Voice Choirs to the members of which English is not the native tongue."⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Manitoba Musical Competition Festival Concert programme.
April 1, 1939, Winnipeg Auditorium.

The Ukrainian National Home Choir performed twelve times during the span of six months.⁵⁵ The demands of preparing for so many performances and the long and often monotonous rehearsals needed to keep the choir performing as a well-tuned choral instrument took its toll and after the 1938-1939 season the choir ceased to exist. Macenko resigned as choral director and left to work with the Ukrainian National Federation in Winnipeg. The outbreak of World War II prevented any immediate attempts to re-establish the choir.

Under Macenko's direction the Ukrainian National Home Choir, which he referred to as "an extraordinary body of ordinary people who loved singing"⁵⁶ attained a high level of artistic excellence. Macenko strived to search out Ukrainian choral works that would be both interesting and challenging to the singers, he explained the subtleties of each text and he took care that all nuances be properly executed. Under his direction M. Lysenko's short opera "Nocturne" (with libretto by L. Staryts'ka-Cherniakhivs'ka) and instrumentation by S. Liudkevych) and "Lebedyn" were presented. One of the most difficult works in the choir's repertoire was the fugue "Ory, spivai ty Veletniu zakutyi" (Plow, Sing, Thou Fettered Giant), inspired by I. Franko's poem "Naimyt" (The Hireling).

O. Koshetz Memorial Choir of Winnipeg

The O. Koshetz Memorial Choir (Khor Koshytsia), which has been affiliated with Winnipeg's Ukrainian National Federation, was formed

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Macenko, "Khor Ukrain's'koho Narodnoho Domu", p.350.

⁵⁶

From the Macenko interview.

directly as a result of the second Conductors-teachers Courses held in the city in 1941.⁵⁷ The choir grew out of a students choir that was formed by Koshyts' as a practical demonstration to course participants of the methodology of choral work. Koshyts's choir first performed at the end-of-term concert, after which it disbanded as individuals returned home to various locations. A number of the students, however, resided in Winnipeg and it was with this group as a nucleus that the Ukrainian National Federation Choir was established.

Choir members were able to participate in subsequent Educational Summer Courses held in Winnipeg, where intensive training under expert teachers like O. Koshyts', P. Macenko and Y. Kozaruk greatly improved the choir's choral level. During the 1940's the O. Koshetz Memorial Choir was directed by P. Macenko and Tetiana Koshyts', who moved to Winnipeg in 1944 following her husband's death.

In 1952 the O. Koshetz Memorial Choir of Winnipeg came under the direction of Walter Klymkiw, who received his conductor's training at the Educational Summer Courses. Klymkiw has remained as the choir's resident conductor until the present time.

Over the years the O. Koshetz Memorial Choir has remained as one of Winnipeg's most active Ukrainian choirs. It has sung regularly on radio and television and has given numerous performances in Winnipeg. The mixed choir (which in 1966 consisted of sixty voices) has often performed with the Rusalka Dance Ensemble of Winnipeg. The choir has successfully participated in several Manitoba Musical Festivals and has

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See Appendix 3 on Educational Summer Courses.

toured various Ukrainian centres outside of Manitoba (Regina, Yorkton, Saskatoon, Montreal, Fort William, Moncton and Minneapolis, U.S.A.).

The choir's 1967 Canadian concert tour was sponsored by the Centennial Commission of Canada.⁵⁸

Rural Manitoba

In rural Manitoba many choirs functioned within the framework of amateur drama associations. This is especially true of the many "Dramspiv-hurtoks" (dramatic singing groups) organized during the 1920's by pro-communist Ukrainians in the province. Such groups were organized in Vita (ca. 1920), East Kildonan (1920), Winnipeg Beach (1922), Janow (1925), Morwina (1926), Brokenhead (1927), Leban (1927) and The Pas (1928).

Nationalistically oriented Ukrainians sang in choirs which worked with drama groups affiliated with various Ukrainian National Homes in such places as Transcona and Oakburn (where the choir was conducted by Ivan Novosad).

Edmonton

The Ukrainian National Home Choir was the largest Ukrainian choir in Edmonton between 1917 and 1939. It presented annual concerts commemorating T. Shevchenko, I. Franko and M. Shashkevych at the National Home and in addition to this, most of its members actively participated in musical

productions presented by the Ukrainian National Home's drama group.

In 1926 the choir came under the direction of Ia. Bubniuk, who was hired by the Ukrainian National Home as choirmaster, Native School teacher and mandolin instructor. In August 1927 he was replaced by Iu. Tsukornyk, who arrived from Fort William and worked for the Ukrainian National Home until July 1928, when his resignation again left the choir without a conductor.⁵⁹

Between 1929 and 1933 the choir was conducted by Osyp Pryima. This marked a period of relative stability in the Ukrainian National Home Choir's history. Pryima was an extremely energetic individual and organized three separate choral groups within the choir: men's, women's, mixed. In addition, he directed a string orchestra at the National Home and conducted the Catholic church choir at St. Josaphat's parish in Edmonton. Under Pryima's direction the Ukrainian National Home Choir regularly presented concerts at the National Home and also performed before non-Ukrainian audiences on several occasions. In 1930 the choir performed during the "Carnival of Nations" sponsored by the Liberal Women's Club of Alberta.⁶⁰

O. Pryima's departure in February 1934 once again broke the continuity in the choir's work. During the coming years the choir changed directors several times in quick succession: V. Smolyk (1934); Stepan Mal'ovanyi (1935); L. Nakhvostach (1935-1936); V. Smolyk (1937); A. Ostapchuk (1937-1938); and Kost' Kantor (1938-1939). As noted in Chapter II, such a quick turn-over of choirmasters made it impossible to undertake any serious choral work and performances during this period were limited to appearances

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M. Chomiak, ed., Propamiatna knyha Ukrain's'koho Narodnoho Domu v Edmontoni 1906-1965 [Memorial Book of the Ukrainian National Home] (Edmonton: Ukrainian Catholic Church Council - Ukrainian National Home, 1966), p.113.

60

Ibid, p.119.

at the Ukrainian National Home.

In June 1939 O. Pryima returned to Edmonton's Ukrainian National Home. He attempted to re-vitalize the choir, many of whose members had lost interest as a result of the constantly changing leadership. His efforts were hampered by the outbreak of World War II, which further depleted the number of singers. Lack of singers severely limited the group's performing capabilities. The stable leadership of an experienced conductor, however, enabled the choir to present several concerts. On July 28 and December 1, 1940 the Ukrainian National Choir presented benefit concerts at Edmonton's Memorial Hall in aid of the Canadian Red Cross.⁶¹

In Edmonton a choir also existed at the T. Shevchenko Self-Educational Society (Tovarystvo Samoobrazovannia im. T. Sevchenka). Until 1920 the singers were conducted by M. Shatul's'kyi. When the society became a Ukrainian Labour Temple in November 1920 the choir became part of the Temple's "dramspivhurtok" and came under the direction of D. Vykhestov.⁶²

Other Alberta Centres

In Vegreville, the choir of the T. Shevchenko Scientific Society continued its work following World War I. Until 1928 it was conducted by Illia Poraiko, who also conducted Vegreville's Ukrainian Greek Orthodox church choir. In 1928, Poraiko moved to Andrew where he organized two new choirs (one secular, one religious) which he conducted until his death in

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Ibid, pp.130-131.

62

Al'manakh Tovarystva Ukrains'kyi Robitnydro-Farmers'kyi Dim v Kanadi i Bratnikh Orhanizatsii [Almanac of the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association in Canada and Affiliated Organizations] (Winnipeg: Labour-Farmer Publishing Association, 1930), p.190.

1941.⁶³ The choir of the T. Shevchenko Association in Mundare also continued its choral work. In the period between the two wars the choir was conducted by K. Baituzhyi and often worked in close co-operation with the Ukrainian National Home in Edmonton. In 1930 the choir from Mundare and dancers from Edmonton's Ukrainian National Home performed in Calgary at the Great West Canadian Folksong-Folkdance and Handicraft Festival, receiving high praises for their work.⁶⁴

Several new choral groups were formed in Alberta's Ukrainian Labour Temples during the 1920's. In most cases the choirs worked as part of amateur dramatic groups, participating in various plays and presenting concerts of their own. Such groups were organized in Coleman (1919), Lake Eliza (1920), Calgary (ca. 1920), Belleview (1922), Medicine Hat (1922), Lethbridge (1922) and Pakhan (1927).⁶⁵

Toronto

The Ukrainian Choir of the T. Shevchenko Association (Ukrains'kyi Khor Tovarystva im. T. Shevchenka) was organized at Toronto's Taras Shevchenko Prosvita Reading Association (Chytal'nia Prosvita im. Tarasa Shevchenka) in 1922, with Danylo Metel's'kyi as its first conductor.⁶⁶ During

⁶³ "Uryvky zi spomyniv P. Zvarycha z Vegrevyl, Al'ta." [Excerpts from the Memoirs of P. Zvarych of Vegreville, Alta.], Knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipeg, p.652.

⁶⁴ The Edmonton Journal, Edmonton, March 22, 1930.

⁶⁵ Al'manakh TURFDim, pp.193-213.

⁶⁶ "Ukrains'kyi Narodnyi Dim v Toronto" [Ukrainian National Home in Toronto], Knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipeg, p.704.

its first year of work the mixed choir participated in the "Day of Song" at the Canadian National Exhibition (C.N.E.) in Toronto, where its performance drew large crowds.⁶⁷ In 1923 Metel's'kyi was replaced by Mykola Iurechkiv, who was, in turn, replaced by Iurii Hassan in 1924.⁶⁸ Hassan had been a soloist with the O. Koshyts' Ukrainian National Choir and under his able direction the choir developed into one of Toronto's most respected choral units, receiving acclaim from Ukrainians and non-Ukrainians alike. In 1924 the choir again appeared at the C.N.E. and received very favourable reviews from the local press.⁶⁹ Several performances were undertaken in 1925: in January, the choir presented an independent concert at Toronto's Standard Theatre;⁷⁰ in March, it performed the major part in the T. Shevchenko concert at the Forresters Hall;⁷¹ and; in May, it presented a programme of Ukrainian songs over CKCL radio in Toronto.⁷² Between the years 1924 and 1926, the choir performed in Toronto, Hamilton, Guelph, Oshawa and Kitchener, winning praise for its performances from the English language press wherever it sang.⁷³

⁶⁷ Ukrains'kyi Holos, September 20, 1922. Ukrainians first participated in the C.N.E. in 1919 with a display of Ukrainian handicrafts.

⁶⁸

"Ukrains'kyi Narodnyi Dim v Toronto", p.704.

⁶⁹

"Gay Cossack Dances and Songs of the Steppe - Newcomers From the Ukraine Charmed Admiring Fellow-Canadians," The Evening Telegram, Toronto, August 29, 1924.

⁷⁰

Ukrains'kyi Holos, January 21, 1925.

⁷¹

Ibid, April 1, 1925.

⁷²

Ibid, May 20, 1925.

⁷³

Livesay, "Songs and Dances of the Ukrainians", p.20.

When the Taras Shevchenko Prosvita Reading Association was incorporated as the Ukrainian National Home Association in 1926, the choir became the Ukrainian National Home Choir of Toronto. Iu. Hassan remained with the choir until the end of 1927 when he was replaced by Dmytro Burtnyk, a singer he had selected and trained to carry on the work (although Hassan maintained close ties with the choir until his death in 1934). In August 1930 the choir performed at the C.N.E.⁷⁴ under Burtnyk's direction and in December of the same year presented a programme of songs over C.B.C. which was broadcast coast-to-coast.⁷⁵ The radio performance was directed by Iu. Hassan. D. Burtnyk was the choir's resident conductor from 1928 to 1935. Between 1936 and 1941 the Ukrainian National Home Choir was conducted by P. Iundak, who had worked in Winnipeg with the I. Kotliarevs'kyi Dramatic Association, the Ukrainian National Home Choir and the Ukrainian Prosvita Institute Choir prior to coming to Toronto. During 1942-1944 D. Burtnyk again directed the choir.⁷⁶

Two other Ukrainian choirs came into existence in Toronto in 1930. A Women's Choir was organized by members of the Olha Basarab Women's Association (Zhinochi Tovarystvo im. Ol'hy Basarab). This is reputed to be the first Ukrainian women's choir in Canada.⁷⁷ During the same year a mixed choir was organized at the Toronto branch of the Ukrainian War Veterans' Association - U.W.V.A. (Ukrains'ka Strilets'ka Hromada). Both

⁷⁴ Ukrains'kyi Holos, September 10, 1930.

⁷⁵ Ibid, December 24, 1930.

⁷⁶ "Ukrains'kyi Narodnyi Dim v Toronto", p.709.

⁷⁷ S. Sawchuk, "Pochatky diial'nosty viddilu OYK v Toronti" [Beginnings of Activity of the U.W.O. in Toronto]. 35th Anniversary of the Ukrainian Womens' Organization - OYK, Toronto Branch, 1930-1965 (Toronto: Ukrainian Womens' Organization, 1965), p.13.

choirs were directed by Stefan Kuryliw and later by Pavlo Sych.⁷⁸

The Women's Choir existed independently, although many of its members also sang in the mixed choir of the U.W.V.A. In 1931 the mixed choir was awarded a silver trophy for its participation in a concert sponsored by the Toronto Conservatory of Music.⁷⁹ Both choirs also took part in the U.W.C.A.'s amateur theatrical work and presented independent concerts along with the associations's small musical ensemble.

The Women's Choir of the Olha Basarab Association became the Women's Choir of the Ukrainian Women's Organization in 1934, when the organization changed its name. In 1935 the mixed choir became known as the Ukrainian National Federation Choir "Boian" (Khor Ukrain's'koho Natsional'noho Obiednannia "Boian").

Both choirs remained active throughout the late 1930's and continued their activities, albeit on a restrained scale, during World War II. Most members of the women's choir also sang in the "Boian" Choir and both choirs have usually been conducted by the same director. Prior to the end of World War II, conductors have been B. Koval's'ky and H. Mostovyi (1945-⁸⁰1946).

⁷⁸ Ibid, p.13.

⁷⁹

I. Knysh, Na sluzhbi ridnoho narodu: Orhanizatsia Ukrainok Kanady [In Service of Our Homeland: Ukrainian Women's Organization of Canada] (Toronto: Ukrainian Women's Organization of Canada, 1955), p.19.

⁸⁰

15th Jubilee of the Ukrainian National Federation, Toronto. (Toronto: U.N.F., 1947), pp.50-68.

Other Ukrainian Choirs in Ontario

The Ukrainian Choir of the T. Shevchenko Prosvita Reading Association (Ukrains'kyi Khor Chytal'ni Tovarystva "Prosvita" im. T. Shevchenka) in Kenora was organized in August 1923 by Semen Kowbel' of Winnipeg, who had been hired by the association to construct its new hall.⁸¹ The choir first performed on October 5, 1924 at the official opening of the new building.⁸² Following Kowbel''s departure for Winnipeg in 1924, the choir came under the direction of Iuliian Sytnyk, who remained its conductor throughout the late-1920's. Occasionally he was assisted by Danylo Metel's'kyi and Hryts' Mazuryk.

In 1930 Iurii Tsukornyk became the association's choir conductor and under his direction the choir won first prize at the Kenora Music Festival of 1931.⁸³ In 1932 he was replaced by his brother Onufrii, who conducted the choir until July 1935.⁸⁴ Other conductors who worked with the choir during the 1930's were Mykhailo Borysyk, Volodymyr Syrotiuk and V. Sosniak.⁸⁵ During World War II the Prosvita choir was conducted by Ivan Snihura, Iosyp Datsyk, Marko Kis (who also conducted Kenora's Ukrainian Greek Catholic church

⁸¹

O. Woycenko, Ukraina Kenors'ka: Iuvileina knyha Chytal'ni Tovarystva "Prosvita" im. T. Shevchenka 1915-1965 [Ukrainians in Kenora: A Jubilee Book of the Ukrainian Literary Society of T. Shevchenko] (Kenora: Published by the Society, 1965), p.40.

⁸²

Ibid, p.59.

⁸³

Ibid, p.86.

⁸⁴

Ibid, p.70.

⁸⁵

Ibid, p.81.

choir), and M. Martyniw.⁸⁶ Since 1945 the choir was conducted by M. Kis, Ol'ha Mycyk, Ivan Bodnarchuk, Iurii Iahodyns'kyi and V. Myhal'. The choir has been under the direction of Yaroslav Moskva since 1962.⁸⁷

Sudbury's U.N.F. "Dnipro" Choir (Khor Ukrain's'koho Natsional'noho Obiednannia "Dnipro") was founded in August 1931 by a group of Ukrainian miners with Ivan Il'chyshyn as conductor. Within several months the choir gave its first performance for the local Ukrainian community. Although the concert brought meagre financial rewards, it uplifted the singers spiritually and encouraged them to continue working. In 1932 the choir presented a concert in honour of T. Shevchenko at one of the local theatres. When a branch of the Ukrainian National Federation was established in Sudbury in 1933 and a hall was constructed the same year, the choir transferred its activities to the new location. Since that time it has continued to work within the organizational structure of the U.N.F.. In 1935, after two years of intensive work, "Dnipro" was awarded first prize at the Sudbury Music Festival. During the following years the choir, which was directed by various people, performed largely before Ukrainian audiences, only occasionally getting the opportunity to present their songs before non-Ukrainian audiences.⁸⁸

The "Dnipro" choir was directed by a succession of directors until

86

Ibid, pp.96-112.

87

Ibid, pp.107-127.

88

I. Datsyk, "Spomyny odnoho iz osnovopolozhnykiv" [Reminiscences of One of the Founders]. Programme booklet. 30th Anniversary of the U.N.F. Choir "Dnipro", Sudbury, Ontario 1931-1961. (Sudbury: n.p., 1961), p.2.

1957 when Olha Mycyk-Rohatyn took over the choir's leadership. Mycyk-Rohatyn, who received her conductor's training at the Educational Summer Courses in Winnipeg, has remained "Dnipro's" conductor until the present time. Under her direction the choir has travelled extensively throughout Ontario and Quebec and has produced several recordings.⁸⁹

89

Souvenir programme booklet. "Dnipro" Ukrainian Dance Ensemble. July 10 and 11, 1970, National Arts Centre, Ottawa. The programme featured "Dnipro" Ukrainian Dance Ensemble of Ottawa and the U.N.F. "Dnipro" Ukrainian Choir and Veselka Dancers from Sudbury.

Ukrainian Choirs Formed During the Post World War II Period

Among those who arrived in Canada with the third Ukrainian immigration were Nestor Horodovenko, former conductor of the "Dniprosiuz Kapella" and lecturer at the Kiev Musical Institute. Others who came at the same time were Iurii Holovko, former choirmaster with the "Donets' Choral Kapella" and Lev Turkevych, the long-time conductor of the "Boian" and "Banduryst" choirs in Lviv. Conductors Iurii Hnatiuk, Vasyl' Kardash, Roman Soltykevych, Serhii Yaremenko, Stepan Huminilovych and Halyna Holyns'ka also arrived with the third Ukrainian immigration. As a result of this influx of skilled professionals several new Ukrainian choirs were formed in Winnipeg, Edmonton, Toronto and other cities. In addition, many of the older choirs that had been organized during the 1920's and 1930's were strengthened by the talents of the newcomers.

Ukrainian Men's Choir of Winnipeg

The Ukrainian Men's Choir of Winnipeg (Ukrains'kyi Muzhes'kyi Khor) was organized in the fall of 1944 under the direction of Volodymyr Bohonos.⁹⁰ The original choir comprised of sixteen young Ukrainian men and existed as an independent artistic entity owing no allegiance to any Ukrainian church group or organization. The choir quickly grew in size and gained recognition as a strong Ukrainian performing group. In 1945 the Ukrainian Men's Choir

90

S. Saranchuk, *Istoria Ukrains'koho Muzhes'koho Khoru* [History of the Ukrainian Men's Choir], Propamiatna knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipeg, p. 719.

appeared before the Princess Alice and the Earl of Athlone, Governor General of Canada, during their Winnipeg visit.⁹¹ For its outstanding singing the choir received highest marks during the Manitoba Music Festivals of 1946, 1947 and 1948. In 1947 the choir participated in a special Christmas radio-broadcast that was aired in all parts of the British Empire following His Majesty the King George VI's Christmas message.

In 1949 the Ukrainian Men's Choir of Winnipeg received a request from the British Broadcasting Corporation (B.B.C.) in London for a recording of their singing. A record was cut and broadcast to continental Europe. Between 1946 and 1949 the choir made several concert tours of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and the northern United States. In June 1949 it sang at the official concert commemorating the 75th Jubilee of the city of Winnipeg.⁹² In 1950 the choir toured Western Canada and Ontario. During the 1950's, several recordings of the Ukrainian Men's Choir of Winnipeg were cut by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer of Canada⁹³ and the choir sang numerous times on C.B.C. radio and television. In addition Bohonos's choir performed as guest artists with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and appeared before Prime Minister Louis St-Laurent and Prime Minister John Diefenbaker.

91

Ibid, p.720.

92

Ibid, p.721.

93

Ibid, p.721.

Other Ukrainian Choirs in Winnipeg

A male choir was organized at the Winnipeg branch of the Ukrainian Youth Association - SUM (Spilka Ukrains'koi Molodi) in 1948. Its first conductor was Rev. P. Romanyshyn, who was subsequently replaced by Iosyp Hoshuliak. Between 1950 and 1951 the choir was conducted by Iurii Hnatiuk. The SUM Choir of Winnipeg, which soon expanded into three separate choral units (male, female, mixed), came under the direction of Vasyl Kardash in 1952. Kardash conducted the choir until 1960, at which time he moved to Toronto. Since 1960 the choir has been directed by I. Buichok and Iurii Hnatiuk.⁹⁴ The SUM Choir of Winnipeg has performed in Winnipeg, rural Manitoba and several other provinces as well. In addition to this, the choir has also sung on radio.

Another Ukrainian choral group, the "Surma" Male Choir (Cholovichyi Khor "Surma") was organized in Winnipeg in 1952 by Iurii Hnatiuk. The choir was sponsored by the Markkian Shashkevych Native School (Ridna Shkola im. Markkiana Shashkevycha), the Brotherhood of Soldiers of the First Division of the Ukrainian National Army (Bratstvo Voiakiv Pershoi Dyvizii U.N.A.) and the Officers Command of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (Starshyna Voiakiv U.P.A.). The choir was most active between 1953 and 1956.⁹⁵

"Dnipro" Ukrainian Male Chorus of Edmonton

Edmonton's "Dnipro" Ukrainian Male Chorus was organized in November

⁹⁴

Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.675 and 732.

⁹⁵

Ibid, p.675 and 731.

1953 by its conductor, Roman Soltykevych, and a group of devotees, whose primary concern was "the fostering, promotion and perpetuation of the finest elements of Ukrainian choral music".⁹⁶ The choir possessed its own constitution and attracted many of the best Ukrainian singing voices in the city. The original choir was composed of twenty-five members. Although the choir existed independently, all rehearsals were held at Edmonton's Ukrainian National Federation and the choir has retained close ties with this organization to the present day.

The choir's first public appearance, "An Evening of Christmas Songs" (Vechir koliadok i shchedrivok), was presented January 14, 1954 at the Ukrainian National Federation and repeated a few days later at the Ukrainian National Home. Between 1954 and 1956 "Dnipro" performed primarily before Ukrainian audiences. The formation of a male choir at Edmonton's Ukrainian National Home in 1954 greatly diminished "Dnipro's" strength as many singers joined the new group while others moved away. By the late 1950's, however, many former singers returned to "Dnipro" and it resumed its choral activities more fully.⁹⁷

"Dnipro" Ukrainian Male Chorus participated in several Edmonton Music Festivals with remarkable success. Beginning in 1961, each time it

⁹⁶ 20th Anniversary of the Dnipro Choir 1953-1973. (Edmonton: n.p., 1973). It should be noted that on March 17, 1971 the "Dnipro" Ukrainian Male Chorus became the "Dnipro" Ukrainian Choir with the addition of female voices. The choir consists of male, female and mixed branches. In 1976 the choir was further enhanced with the addition of its own orchestra and dance ensemble.

⁹⁷ O. Bohonos, "Cholovichyi Khor "Dnipro" v Edmonton" [The "Dnipro" Ukrainian Male Chorus of Edmonton], Pivnichene siaivo Al'manakh [Northern Lights Almanac] (Edmonton: Slavuta, 1964.), Vol. 1, p.127.

entered the competition for male choruses, the chorus won the Alberta College Shield. In 1962 the chorus was awarded the Bulyea Trophy for the most artistic performance of the Festival. At the Alberta Music Competition held in Lacombe in 1963 "Dnipro" came in second and was awarded a trophy. "Dnipro" Ukrainian Male Chorus has given numerous concerts and guest performances throughout Alberta and has appeared many times on television(e.g., Christmas programme on C.B.C., 1963) and radio(e.g., special programmes of Christmas carols, 1961, 1962, 1963).

In 1966 the choir enjoyed the distinction of being invited by Basil Dean, the president of the Association of all Canadian, French and English Daily Newspaper Publishers and Editors, to entertain the convention of the association held at Jasper Park Lodge in Jasper, Alberta.

Through the dedicated, dynamic, inspired leadership of Roman Soltykevych, the choir has been molded into a cohesive and well-disciplined choral ensemble, which has rapidly gained recognition in Alberta music circles. While the dominant interest of the Chorus lies in Ukrainian choral music, it has included in its extensive repertoire songs in English and French.

Other Ukrainian Choirs in Edmonton

The Men's Choir of the Ukrainian National Home (Cholovichyi Khor Ukrain's'koho Narodnoho Domu) was organized in the fall of 1954 by male members of various Ukrainian organizations which used the facilities of Edmonton's Ukrainian National Home. Rev. B. Sloboda, pastor of St. Josaphat's Ukrainian Cathedral, was invited to conduct the twenty-voice

choir, whose ranks were augmented by singers from "Dnipro" Ukrainian Male Chorus. By 1958 the choir had forty-five singers.⁹⁸ Rev. Sloboda received his conductors training from O. Koshyts' at the Educational Summer Courses in Winnipeg. Under Sloboda's direction the Men's Choir developed a repertoire of fifty-five songs.

Between 1954 and 1962 the choir presented several concerts. In 1955 they performed during the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Province of Alberta. Other notable performances took place on the occasion of the 70th anniversary commemorations of John MacDonald, Archbishop of Edmonton, and at the official opening ceremonies of Edmonton's Northern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium in 1957.⁹⁹

In 1959 Sloboda was transferred out of Edmonton and the choir came under the direction of M. Swystun.¹⁰⁰ In 1961 the choir participated in celebrations marking the 43rd anniversary of the proclamation of Ukraine's independence.¹⁰¹ However, after this the Men's Choir lost much of its former vitality and many members returned to sing with "Dnipro".

In addition to the two Edmonton choirs already mentioned, an excellent mixed voice choir was organized at St. John's Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Cathedral during the 1950's. The choir, conducted by O. Iefymchuk, sang

98

I. Bolekivs'kyi "Cholovichyi Khor UNDomu" [Men's Choir of the Ukrainian National Home], Homin Ukrainy [Echo of Ukraine], Toronto, July 12, 1958.

99

Ibid

100

Chomiak, Propamiatna knyha, p.210.

101

Concert programme, January 22, 1961, Alberta College Auditorium, Edmonton.

during church services and participated in many of the joint concerts presented by Edmonton's Ukrainian community to commemorate Ukraine's independence and Taras Shevchenko's birth. In 1965 the choir came under the direction of R. Soltykevych.¹⁰²

Prometheus Ukrainian Male Choir of Toronto

The Prometheus Ukrainian Male Choir (Ukrains'kyi Muzhes'kyi Khor "Prometei") was organized at Toronto's Ukrainian Youth Association in 1948, with Zenon Gnopko as its first conductor. In 1951 the choir produced its first recording - a collection of Ukrainian insurgent songs - and performed in A. Vakhnianyn's opera "Kateryna" with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra at Massey Hall. Between 1951 and 1953 the choir toured several centres in Ontario with large Ukrainian communities and participated in celebrations marking the 60th anniversary of Ukrainian settlement in Canada at Toronto's Coliseum.

In 1953 Lev Turkevych became conductor of the choir. By 1959 the choir had grown to seventy-five singers and was performing as a well disciplined choral unit.¹⁰³ Under Turkevych's direction Prometheus presented concerts in Toronto, Montreal and Buffalo, New York. In addition to this, it performed in several operas (A. Vakhnianyn's "Kupalo", M. Lysenko's "Kateryna", etc.) and in 1956 produced a record of Ukrainian Christmas carols.

¹⁰² I. Khoma, "Pamiati Romana Soltykevycha v Edmontoni" [In Memory of Roman Soltykevych of Edmonton], Novyi Shliakh [New Pathway], Winnipeg, February 12, 1977.

¹⁰³ Concert programme: April 8, 1959, Massey Hall, Toronto.

After Turkevych's death in 1961 the Prometheus Male Choir was directed by Stepan Huminilovych.¹⁰⁴ In 1964 the choir participated in the centennial commemoration of the Ukrainian national anthem "Sche ne vmerla Ukraina" (Ukraine Has Not Yet Died).¹⁰⁵ From 1965 Prometheus was conducted by Vasyl' Kardash. It travelled extensively, visiting New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Rochester, Edmonton and Winnipeg. In 1967, the Centennial Commission of Canada and the Canadian Folk Arts Council sponsored a cross-Canada concert tour. In addition to this, the Prometheus Male Choir performed at Expo '67 in Montreal.¹⁰⁶

Shevchenko Male Chorus of Toronto

The Shevchenko Male Chorus was organized ca. 1950 in the West Toronto Ukrainian Labour Temple under the auspices of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians (A.U.U.C.). The original twelve-voice chorus was conducted by John Koss and later by Jim Campbell. In 1951 the Group adopted the name Shevchenko Male Chorus and performed at the unveiling of the Taras Shevchenko monument at Palermo, Ontario.¹⁰⁷ Later the same year the group

¹⁰⁴

Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.731.

¹⁰⁵

Concert programme. April 12, 1964, Ukrainian Home, Toronto.

¹⁰⁶

Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.731.

¹⁰⁷

Shevchenko Musical Ensemble concert booklet marking the 24th anniversary of the Shevchenko Male Chorus, June 6, 1976, Massey Hall, Toronto. In 1972 the Shevchenko Male Chorus, the Toronto Mandolin Orchestra and the A.U.U.C. dance group joined to form the Shevchenko Musical Ensemble. The Shevchenko Musical Ensemble received a provincial charter and was registered as the National Shevchenko Musical Ensemble Guild. Although registered as a separate organization, it retains close ties with the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians.

appeared in Verdun, Quebec. During its early years the group performed primarily at weddings and social gatherings held at the Labour Temple.

In 1952 Eugene Dolny, a graduate of the Kiev Conservatory of Music, became the group's artistic director and conductor. Dolny, who has continued to serve in this capacity until the present time, suggested a more formal approach for the group and insisted that it work towards becoming a trained, performing choral ensemble. Throughout the 1950's, the chorus expanded in size and developed a concert repertoire. New members joined the group and growth led to more performances. During this period the Shevchenko Male Chorus occasionally appeared with the Toronto Mandolin Orchestra -- a combination that proved highly effective and successful.

In 1964 the Shevchenko Male Chorus and the Toronto Mandolin Orchestra toured Western Canada, performing in most of the larger centres in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. By 1967 the chorus consisted of sixty-six singers. The highlight of 1967 was the group's performance at Expo 67 in Montreal.

The repertoire of the Shevchenko Male Chorus includes folk songs not only from Ukraine but from many other countries as well.¹⁰⁸ The group has also commissioned original works from such composers as Morris Surdin and Leon Zuckert.¹⁰⁹

108

Ibid.

109

"New Canadian Suite for SME Orchestra", National Shevchenko Musical Ensemble of Canada Bulletin, Toronto, July 1976.

Ukrainian Womens' Choirs in Toronto

Three new Ukrainian womens' choirs were organized in Toronto following World War II: the Ukrainian Women's Choir "Arfa" (Ukrains'kyi Zhinochyi Khor "Arfa"), the Ukrainian Women's Choir "Chaika" (Ukrains'kyi Zhinochyi Khor "Chaika") and the "Dibrova" Women's Choir (Zhinochyi Khor "Dibrova").

The Ukrainian Women's Choir "Arfa" was organized in 1949 under the direction of Olena Hlibovych, who conducted the choir until 1951. The original choir was small and its first two years were marked with difficulty. In 1951 V. Korin' became conductor and under his leadership the choir expanded in size and stature. In 1951 "Arfa", along with several other Ukrainian choirs, performed A. Vakhnianyn's opera "Kupalo" with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in Massey Hall. The opera was staged and directed by Lev Turkevych. In 1956 "Arfa" came under the direction of Rev. V. Zolkevych. Since that time it has sung at the Ukrainian Catholic Church of St. Nicholas and performed at various Ukrainian functions, including the 1959 Ukrainian symphony concert with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra at Massey Hall. This concert was directed by Lev Turkevych and featured three Ukrainian choirs from Toronto -- "Arfa", Prometheus, and "Chaika". The programme consisted of excerpts from various Ukrainian operas.¹¹⁰

The Ukrainian Women's Choir "Chaika" was organized in 1956 at Toronto's League for the Liberation of Ukraine. Lev Turkevych was invited to conduct the choir and under his direction the choir grew to forty singers

110

Concert programme. Ukrainian Symphony Concert. April 8, 1959, Massey Hall, Toronto.

in its first year. Most of "Chaika's" performances took place in the Toronto area. During the late 1950's the choir performed in several Ukrainian musical productions, including M. Lysenko's "Kateryna" and M. Hohol's "Maisy'ka Nich" (May Night). In 1959 "Chaika" participated in the already-mentioned Ukrainian symphony concert in Massey Hall. Upon L. Turkevych's death in 1961, the Ukrainian Women's Choir "Chaika" came under the direction of L. Yablonsky.¹¹¹

The "Dibrova" Women's Choir was organized by Vasyl' Kardash in 1965. It was formed by Toronto's Ukrainian Youth Association (SUM) as a female counterpart to the association's Prometheus Male Choir.¹¹² "Dibrova" has presented concerts of its own and has also appeared with Prometheus as one large, mixed choir.

Other Post World War II Choirs in Canada

Several other Ukrainian choirs were organized in Canada during the years following World War II. The SUM Choir of Vancouver (Khor Spilky Ukrainains'koi Molodi Vankuvera) was organized in 1949 by Vasyl' Kardash. The "Famous Choir of the West Coast", as it was dubbed, brought together singers from Vancouver's Ukrainian Youth Association (SUM), Ukrainian Youth Association "Plast", Association of Ukrainian Youth (SUMK), and local parishes. The choir was active until 1952 when Kardash left for Winnipeg and it lost its

¹¹¹

Ibid.

¹¹²

Marunchak, Ukrainian Canadians, p.731.

former vitality.¹¹³

Nestor Horodovenko, an outstanding choir conductor and pedagogue from Poltava, Ukraine, settled in Montreal following the war. From 1930 he had been professor and head of the conductors department at the Kiev Institute of Music (later conservatory) and had conducted choirs in Ukraine and Germany. In Montreal Horodovenko organized and conducted the "Ukraina" Choir (Khor "Ukraina") for many years.¹¹⁴

113

Ibid, p.731.

114

Ibid, p.675.

Summation

Ukrainian immigrants brought a great legacy and tradition of choral music with them to Canada. Ukrainians sang for the sheer delight of singing and because choral music was an integral part of their cultural heritage, an indispensable part of their birth, marriage and death rites, and an important feature of their religious ceremonies. The choral traditions of Ukraine were well known and for centuries foreign observers had marvelled at the quality and artistic level of Ukraine's choirs.

Church choirs were among the earliest forms of organized Ukrainian choral activity in Canada. These choirs participated during religious services and also performed at various secular, parish functions. For the most part, such choirs did not perform beyond the confines of their own church congregations.

In the period prior to the end of World War I many Ukrainian choral groups existed as part of various amateur dramatic associations across the country. Musical theatre became extremely popular among Ukrainian Canadians between 1917 and 1939 and was an important part of theatrical repertoires. For this reason many of the dramatic groups strived to develop strong choral sections, many of which became known as excellent choirs in their own right.

Choral activity became more widespread among Ukrainians in Canada following World War I. A great deal of the credit for this must be attributed to Oleksander Koshyts', who toured Canada with his Ukrainian National Choir in 1923. The concert tour stimulated a great interest in Ukrainian choral music among Ukrainians and non-Ukrainians alike. By displaying the

possibilities existing in the realm of Ukrainian choral music, O. Koshyts's choir inspired other Ukrainian choral groups to work towards a higher performance standard. Ukrainian choral concerts became extremely popular during the 1920's and 1930's. They were a means by which Ukrainians could share their cultural heritage with other Canadians and this period was marked by a large number of performances before largely non-Ukrainian audiences.

In 1940 the Conductor-teacher's Courses were established in Toronto. These intensive, total immersion summer courses, which in 1942 became the Educational Summer Courses and were moved to Winnipeg, dealt with all theoretical and practical aspects of choral work. Staffed by highly qualified teachers, the courses went a long way towards raising the artistic level of Ukrainian choirs in Canada. Many graduates of the summer courses became choir conductors and were able to put their acquired knowledge to use.

The post World War II immigration brought a large number of skilled musical people to Canada. Many of the new arrivals had extensive professional backgrounds in choral work and had worked with some of Ukraine's most renowned choirs. In Canada, many of them continued to work in the choral field. As a result of their arrival, many older choirs were revitalized, and many new choirs were established throughout Canada, primarily in the larger cities.

Ukrainian choral art has remained consistently popular among Ukrainian Canadians from the arrival of the first settlers until the present day. Although the loss of the Ukrainian language has affected Ukrainian choral activity in Canada to some extent, this has not been felt as severely as it has in the area of theatrical work. Choral singing continues to be a favourite form of expression among Ukrainian Canadians of all generations. The

attraction of singing in a choir was summed up by W. Paluk:

Singing in a choir gives importance to and enriches the average singer who otherwise would not be prominent or perhaps even interested in the art. A choir can be composed of mediocre talent, and yet achieve a high degree of success, for something new, something often great can be gained when a group of unspectacular individual voices blend. Perhaps the consciousness that greatness can be achieved by indifferent abilities, through organization and training, constitutes the attraction that draws many singers to choirs. 115

CHAPTER IV

UKRAINIAN DANCE IN CANADA

The emergence of Ukrainian folk dance in Canada as one of the more popular forms of Ukrainian cultural expression must largely be credited to the work of one individual — Vasyl' Avramenko. Prior to Avramenko's arrival in Canada folk dance played only a minor role in the cultural life of the Ukrainian community. Ukrainian dancing fulfilled a social need and was usually done at weddings and social dances in a spontaneous and generally improvised fashion. In her reminiscences of Ukrainian dance in the early 1920's Mary Ann Herman writes:

The Ukrainian dances would be done mostly to Kolomyika tunes or occasionally to the Hopak tune that we all know. A big circle would form, with no partners and whoever wanted to would go in the middle and improvise in the centre. Sometimes if the middle dancers were extremely good the circle would stop and the dancers would clap in place and call encouragingly to the dancers in the centre of the circle. The center dancers could be a solo dancer, a couple or a three-some.¹

This form of dancing already differed in form from the dancing that had been done back in the villages of Ukraine, but, to some extent, it still fulfilled a similar function. In the Ukrainian village dancing was a natural, spontaneous way in which the villagers expressed their individual personalities and group feelings on special occasions, such as weddings, family celebrations and on certain holidays. The dancing was

¹
M.A. Herman, "Vasyl' Avramenko — As I Knew Him", Ukrainian Folk Dance: A Symposium (Toronto: Ukrainian National Youth Federation, 1961), p.18.

done for the enjoyment of the participants themselves; the whole community took part in the dances, even if their role was just that of sitting or standing on the edge of the dance area, as in the case of the older people who were watching. They, however, refrained from active participation only due to the restrictions of age and could not be considered an "audience" (in the sense of an audience sitting in an auditorium and watching a staged performance).

There was little organized Ukrainian dance activity in Canada prior to Avramenko's arrival, although a Ukrainian dancing group from Toronto's Ukrainian National Home first presented Ukrainian dances at the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto in 1924. The occasion was marked with a favourable review:

And when they danced! Oh such dancing, men and women lined up on opposite sides, then meeting, pairing, separating and massing again; the men dropping to their knees and dancing gnome-fashion before the advancing and retreating damsels, then leaping high and all joining hands and spinning in a circle like a giant plate or dished cart wheel, their heels almost together in the centre of the circle, their heads radiating like spokes. They spun around, leaning so far back that the ladies' ribbons, and even the short cropped hair of the men, swept the floor. Then up and away again, at a furious pace, the riding boots clicking a whirring accompaniment to the cello and the violin and the zither's almost oriental tune.²

For the most part, however, early Ukrainian dancing in Canada fulfilled a recreational need and was limited to social gatherings. In addition,

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"Gay Cossack Dances and Songs of the Steppe — Newcomers From the Ukraine Charmed Admiring Fellow-Canadians", The Evening Telegram, Toronto, August 29, 1924. This is probably the first English-language review for a Ukrainian dance performance in Canada.

it was also occasionally performed on stage by members of dramatic groups as part of theatrical productions that called for ethnographic re-creations of village scenes. No organized effort had been made to teach the traditional village dances to the Ukrainian youth in Canada. Few had considered that Ukrainian folk dancing was worthy of preserving and propagating as a distinct aspect of Ukrainian culture, until Vasyl' Avramenko spearheaded the popularization of Ukrainian dance as a distinct art form.

Vasyl' Avramenko in Canada

Vasyl' Avramenko arrived in Canada on December 12, 1925³ and immediately set about organizing schools of "Ukrainian National Dances", much as he had recently done in Poland, Western Ukraine and Czechoslovakia. He conducted his first school of dancing in Toronto and on February 24 and 25, 1926 was able to stage two highly successful performances at Toronto's Standard Theatre with his students.⁴ Augustus Bridle, theatre critic for the Toronto Daily Star, reviewed the performances:

Simple music and complex dances. At times a maze of rhythmic figures, in full company, groups of 24, twelve, eight, four, two — and solos. A sort of pantomime folk opera in scenes, folk dances, festival presentations, hopaks, character dances, historicals and pageants, all done with the peculiar intimate ensemble for which people of that class of ballet and opera are so famous [...] the magic of the Ukrainian ballet is in the group more than in the individuals [...] the pattern of the dances was always beautiful.⁵

The Toronto performances were the start of some one hundred and twenty such concerts that Avramenko or his assistant instructors staged with students of their various dancing schools throughout Canada between 1926 and 1927.⁶

Avramenko's Toronto dance students presented several other concerts

³ "Avramenko v Kanadi" [Avramenko in Canada]. Iliustrovanyi kaliendar "Kanadiis'koho ukraintsia" [Illustrated calendar of the "Canadian Ukrainian"], Winnipeg, 1928, p.109.

⁴ Ukrains'kyi Holos [Ukrainian Voice], Winnipeg, January 6, 1929.

⁵ A. Bridle, "Ukrainian Ballet Brilliant Ensemble", The Toronto Daily Star, Toronto, February 26, 1926.

⁶ See Appendix 4 for a detailed listing of these performances.

in 1926.⁷ Such performances were held in Oshawa (February 27 and March 13), Hamilton (March 18) and Toronto (March 6 and 20).⁸ The most important performances by this group took place at the Canadian National Exhibition (August 28 to September 11) in Toronto, where eighty performers (dancers and orchestra) appeared nightly before some 25,000 people as the "Ukrainian Ballet".

Clad in the gorgeous costumes of holidaying Ukrainians, these children whirled in the wild dances of Cossacks, and did the stately steps of the wedding dance with an abandon and dignity that brought rounds of applause from the immense crowds which packed the all too small space.⁹

After completing his work in the Toronto area Avramenko headed for Fort William, Ontario where he conducted a similar dance school in 1926.¹⁰ During July 1926 his Fort William students took part in four concerts (two in Fort William, one in West Fort William and one in Port Arthur).

From Fort William Avramenko moved to Kenora where he formed a dancing school in November 1926.¹¹ His students performed twice in Kenora

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A group of twelve dancers from Avramenko's Toronto school staged several performances under the direction of T. Romankiw in the United States in 1927: New York, Newark, Philadelphia, New Jersey, Scranton, Binghamton, Wilksbury, Simpson and Oliphant. This was the first tour by a Ukrainian performing company undertaken in the United States. (I. Knysh, Zhyva dusha narodu (Do iuvileiu ukrains'koho tanku) [The Nation's Living Soul (On the Jubilee of Ukrainian Folk Dance)] [Winnipeg: Published by the Author, 1966], p.110.)

⁸
"Avramenko v Kanadi", p.110.

⁹
"Ukrainian Dancers Give Touch of Colour", The Toronto Daily Star, September 7, 1926.

¹⁰
Ukrains'kyi Holos, December 22, 1926.

¹¹
O. Woycenko, Ukraina Kenors'ka: Iuvileina knyha Chyital'nia Tovarystva "Prosvita" im. T. Shevchenka 1915-1965 [Ukrainians in Kenora: A Jubilee Book of the Ukrainian Literary Society of T. Shevchenko] (Kenora: Published by the Society, 1965), p.41.

(January 12 and 20, 1927).

Receiving an invitation to perform in Winnipeg, Avramenko selected a group from among his best Ontario students and headed west. This occasion marks the first time an organized Ukrainian cultural group from Eastern Canada visited the West. On January 22, 1927 Avramenko presented "An Evening of Ukrainian Dance", as the performance was labelled, at Winnipeg's Ukrainian Prosvita Institute and received tremendous ovations.¹² The same group also performed in Port Arthur on February 25 after which it disbanded, with the dancers returning to Ontario and Avramenko moving to Winnipeg where he had access to the larger settlements of Ukrainians in Western Canada.¹³

In Winnipeg Avramenko conducted his school at the Steinman Hall. His teaching was met with great enthusiasm and by April 30, 1927 his students were ready to perform in Winnipeg's Amphitheatre.¹⁴ Two hundred and seventy dancers captivated the huge and appreciative crowd with both the Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian press noting the event favourably. This was the largest and most successful single performance staged by Avramenko in Canada.

During May 1927 Avramenko's students performed two more concerts in Winnipeg (May 11 and 12) and one in Brookland, a Winnipeg suburb (May 14). On June 3 and 4 of the same year Avramenko, in conjunction with the Ukrainian National Home Choir, staged concerts at Winnipeg's Playhouse Theatre.¹⁵

¹²

I. Knysh, Zhyva dusha narodu (Do iuvileiu ukrains'koho tanku) [The Nation's Living Soul (On the Jubilee of Ukrainian Folk Dance)] (Winnipeg: Published by the Author, 1966), p.62.

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"Avramenko v Kanadi", p.110.

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Ukrains'kyi Holos, May 4, 1927.

¹⁵

Kanadiis'kyi Farmer [Canadian Farmer], Winnipeg, June 29, 1927.

While Avramenko was personally involved with teaching in Winnipeg, similar dance schools were being conducted in Saskatoon and Edmonton by his appointed assistants. In May 1927 at the request of the Petro Mohyla Institute in Saskatoon, Avramenko, along with two instructors — Ivan Pihuliak and Viktor Moshuk — came to organize a school at the Institute. I. Pihuliak was left to teach this school while Avramenko and Moshuk continued on to Edmonton where another school was set up.¹⁶ Separate performances by the students of these schools were given in Saskatoon (June 4 and 28) and Edmonton (June 25).

July 1, 1927 marked the sixtieth anniversary of Canadian Confederation. Celebrations were held throughout the Dominion and students of the three Ukrainian dancing schools in Western Canada were among those who staged special performances to mark the occasion. In Saskatoon the performance was held at the Exhibition Grounds under the direction of I. Pihuliak, in Edmonton the performance took place at Victoria Park and was under the direction of V. Moshuk, while in Winnipeg's Assiniboia Park Avramenko himself directed the performance.¹⁷ In each of these cases the performance was presented in the open air so that the largest possible number of people could attend.

Throughout July 1927 students of the three schools continued performing. The Edmonton school presented concerts in Vegreville (July 4) and Edmonton (July 5). The Winnipeg school staged two performances in Winnipeg

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N. Kohus'ka, Iuvileina Kryzhka Soiuzu Ukrains'koi Molodi Kanady 1931-1956 [Jubilee Book of the Canadian Ukrainian Youth Association] (Winnipeg: S.U.M.K., 1956), pp.72-73.

17

"Avramenko v Kanadi", p.111.

(July 26 and 28), while the Saskatoon school performed seven times (July 25 to 30).

Avramenko's Touring Companies

Spurred on by the enthusiastic response to Ukrainian folk dancing performances in Winnipeg, not only from Ukrainian audiences but also from non-Ukrainian audiences and press, as well as by the response to student performances in Alberta and Saskatchewan, Vasyl' Avramenko organized a touring company of twenty members, including twelve senior dancers from the Winnipeg school and the small children Pavlo Trach and Halia Tykhovets'ka. The company was able to round out its programme with musical and vocal entertainment as several of the dancers also played musical instruments — Semen Kist' the bandura, Volodymyr Pylypchuk the guitar, Halia Tykhovets'ka the piano, Ivan Pasichniak the mandolin. A quartet of women under the direction of E. Pavliukevych provided songs.¹⁸

Throughout August 1927 the company toured Manitoba and Saskatchewan, presenting eleven concerts. In Manitoba the company performed in Brandon, Dauphin and Oakburn while in Saskatchewan performances were given in Regina (three times), Melville, Yorkton, Shiho, Canora and Arran.¹⁹ Upon their return to Winnipeg the touring company also staged four concerts in their home city (August 31, September 1, 2 and 4).

¹⁸

S. Kowbel' & D. Doroshenko, eds., Propamiatna knyha Ukrain's'koho Narodnoho Domu v Vyynypegu [Memorial Book of the Ukrainian National Home in Winnipeg] (Winnipeg: Ukrainian National Home, 1949), p.722.

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See Appendix 4 for complete details.

After a brief rest period Avramenko again gathered his troupe of dancers, musicians and singers and set out for a second tour of Western Canada. Avramenko's second tour lasted for almost three months and was far more ambitious and strenuous than the first tour had been; the troupe performed in almost every large Ukrainian settlement in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

The first stage of the tour took the troupe through various Ukrainian communities in Manitoba, opening September 28, 1927 in Portage la Prairie and continuing to Shoal Lake, Russell, Rossburn and Dunville. From there the group travelled to Saskatchewan where they performed in Calder and Kam-sack before once again crossing back into Manitoba to perform in Roblin, Sifton, Ethelbert and Pine River.

Having completed this leg of their journey, the troupe again headed into Saskatchewan, travelling to Ituna, Theodore, Foam Lake, Saskatoon, Vonda, Mitchum, Wakaw, Tarnopil, Cudworth, Prince Albert, Krydor, Hafford, Radison, Whitkow and Lloydminster.

From Lloydminster the company moved west into Alberta. As in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, the troupe attempted to visit every community with a sizeable Ukrainian population. The first Alberta performance took place in Vermillion and others followed in Innisfree, Vegreville, Mundare, Lamont, Zavallia, Bruderheim, Edmonton, Redwater, Egremont, Bellis, Redway, Smoky Lake, Leduc, again in Edmonton and Calgary.

The company then started back east for Winnipeg, giving several performances in Saskatchewan, partly because the group needed resting stops but also because of the interest expressed in seeing the concerts by communities

not visited before. In Saskatchewan performances were given in Moose Jaw (twice), Melville, Yorkton and Canora. On December 6, 1927 the weary troupe finally returned to Winnipeg, having given forty-seven performances in forty-five different Ukrainian communities during a seventy day tour.²⁰

These guest performances by Avramenko's troupe, particularly in the smaller Ukrainian settlements, were well attended by the Ukrainians from miles around and caused somewhat of a sensation. The majority of the Ukrainians living in small rural communities had never seen their folk dances performed on the stage and Avramenko's colourful concerts, presented by enthusiastic and lively young people, brought rounds of applause and material reward for the troupe wherever it went.

Departure For the United States

In the beginning of 1928 Vasyl' Avramenko received a request for his services from Ukrainians living in the United States and, feeling satisfied that he had given Ukrainian folk dance in Canada a firm enough foundation on which to build future activities, he accepted the invitation. Avramenko's departure for the United States brought an end to his first — and most fruitful — period of work in Canada. It would not be until the 1950's that he would attempt to make a come-back in the field of Ukrainian dance in Canada.

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See Appendix 4 for tour details.

Upon his arrival in Chicago, Avramenko quickly organized a performing group which participated in the World Women's Fair on May 25, 1928.²¹ In the United States Avramenko carried on a similar programme of dance instruction from his New York base and soon established schools of Ukrainian dance in many Ukrainian communities in the north-eastern states. Among his most notable achievements in the United States were the historic performance of the "Ukrainian Ballet" at New York's Metropolitan Opera on May 25, 1931, the 1932 concert tour throughout the United States with the O. Koshyts'Ukrainian choir to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the birth of George Washington, performances at the Chicago World's Fair in 1933, and a special performance at the White House in Washington in 1935.²² With these performances Avramenko's productive period in the field of dance came to an end. During the late 1930's he established himself in Hollywood, where he produced several films (Zaporozhets' za Dunaiem, Natalka Poltavka), occasionally coming to Canada to raise funds.

Avramenko's Approach to Ukrainian Dance

A great deal of credit for the quick and successful spread of Ukrainian folk dance in Canada must directly be attributed to the charismatic personality of Avramenko, to his seemingly boundless energy and to his fanatical approach to Ukrainian dance. Vasyl' Avramenko approached his work with missionary zeal. He was fanatical in his belief that to him "befell

²¹Ukrains'kyi Holos, May 30, 1928.

²²Knysh, Zhyva dusha narodu, pp. 72-76

the task of bringing Ukrainian dance out into the world, as a separate, completed and independent branch of Ukrainian art".²³ Dance was a form of language, "the language through which we express our soul",²⁴ and it was precisely through this language that Avramenko felt that he would be able to reach the youth.

Vasyl' Avramenko called rally upon rally, speaking about patriotism and the necessity of imparting Ukrainian dance to the children. In these speeches he always stressed the value of dance in the upbringing of children, stating that "dance has a great educative meaning in the raising of national consciousness among our people".²⁵

Український національний танок, як одна з кращих і моральних галузей нашого народного мистецтва, вповні заслуговує підтримки й пошани, особливо в наш вік, коли поширюється хвороба нездорових і неморальних танків, як "шімі", "фокс трот", "чарлстон" та інші їм подібні. Наш же танок може служити добрим ліkarством проти тих чужинецьких хвороб, бо він виховує нашу молодь в українським національним дусі, робить її здоровою, бадьорою, повною енергії й надії на світле майбутнє наше, а з ним і цілого Українського Народу!²⁶

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V. Avramenko, Ukrains'ki Natsional'ni Tanky, Muzyka i Strii [Ukrainian National Dances, Music and Costumes] (Hollywood/New York/ Winnipeg/Lviv/ Kiev: Published by the Author, 1947) 2nd edition, p.8.

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V. Avramenko, "Ukrains'kyi Natsional'nyi Tanok" [Ukrainian National Dance], Klenovyi lyst. Kanadiis'kyi Al'manakh [Maple Leaf. Canadian Almanac], Winnipeg, 1929, p.16.

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V. Avramenko, "Ukrains'kyi tanets'" [Ukrainian Dance], Iluistrovaniy kaliendar "Kanadiis'koho ukraintsia" [Illustrated calendar of the "Canadian Ukrainian"], Winnipeg, 1927, p.41.

26

Ukrainian folk dance, as one of the better and moral branches of our folk art, fully deserves support and respect, especially in our age, when the disease of unhealthy and immoral dances like the "shimmy", "fox-tro", "charleston", etc. is spreading. Our dance can serve

Avramenko felt it was the patriotic duty of all parents to make their children participate in Ukrainian dance as a means of getting them to care about Ukraine, and his appeal was so powerful that "people would sit for hours, hypnotized, enthralled and fascinated".²⁷

Avramenko's impassioned speeches caused parents to register their children en masse for dance classes while his dynamic method of teaching captivated and held the interest of students. Avramenko would arrive at dance classes dressed in the manner of a Ukrainian kozak (boots, sorochka, sharavary and black svyta) — a fashion he adopted for all public appearances, even when not teaching. He would begin the class by relating how the kozaks used to improvise the hopak²⁸ at the Zaporozhian Sich. He would fill the heads of his youthful students with tales of brave kozak deeds and kozak dances and when he could see he had captured their imaginations, he would himself go down into a prysiadka.²⁹ Such a manner of teaching greatly inspired the youth; dancing the dances of the kozaks, students felt that they too were part of the land of their forefathers and of the mighty tradition of zaporozhian freedom.

as good medicine against the foreign diseases because it raises our youth in the Ukrainian national spirit, making it hearty, hale, full of energy and hope in our bright future, and with it the future of the entire Ukrainian nation. (Avramenko, Tanky, Muzyka i Strii, p.10.)

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M.A. Herman, "Vasyl' Avramenko — As I Knew Him", Ukrainian Folk Dance: A Symposium (Ukrainian National Youth Federation, 1961), p.19.

²⁸

hopak — the most beloved dance of Ukraine. The origins of the dance date back to the seventeenth century.

²⁹

prysiadka — a type of dance movement characteristic of Ukrainian dance, performed only by male dancers and executed from a full or demi-plié position.

Method of Work

Avramenko's plan of action usually followed a set pattern in each place he came to teach. Prior to his arrival in a community, advertisements would be placed in the Ukrainian press informing prospective students that a dance course would be offered. A set fee, made payable to Avramenko, would be charged for each participant who would have to sign up for the entire duration of the course (which lasted approximately two months). Classes would be conducted in the evenings and week-ends.

Avramenko was a good organizer and always succeeded in getting the support of the community behind him, not only in providing him with the facilities in which to work, but also in generously contributing funds for his more ambitious, large-scale performances in rented halls. For the duration of his stay in a community, Avramenko would be provided with food and lodging at the community's expense, as there was always someone eager to have the "maestro" stay with them.

Dance classes were held in locally provided halls affiliated with various Ukrainian reading associations, National Homes and church parishes. Everyone, regardless of age or ability, would be taught the same dance at the same time in one large area. In his teaching, Avramenko preferred quantity rather than quality; it was in numbers that he measured his success. It was never his intention to turn out trained dancers, but to teach as many people as possible how to dance. A public performance at the end of the course would demonstrate to the students that their time and energy had not been wasted, and would reassure the parents that their money had been well

spent.

The public performances would take place as soon as the students had mastered the basic steps and learned the required dance routines. These public demonstrations of their attainments by Ukrainian youth in full national dress brought Avramenko much public acclaim and laudible press reviews and had a tremendous effect in popularizing the dance movement. Realising the advertising potential of such dance concerts for interesting other students, Avramenko made a point of staging several dance performances in the locale where the course was being offered, and also in the surrounding settlements or neighbouring towns and cities where future courses might be conducted. It was as much for interesting other Ukrainian centres in requesting his services as for propagandizing Ukrainian dance as an art form among Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian audiences, that Avramenko formed his touring companies and conducted the two tours of Western Canada.

As a result of Avramenko's abilities as a promoter, his classes were always well attended and the demand for his services grew. He began to appoint assistants to help him conduct his many classes. These assistants usually came from the ranks of senior dancers that he himself had trained. Avramenko's most capable assistant was Ivan Pihuliak, who conducted dance courses in Saskatchewan and also acted as business manager for the touring companies.³⁰ Upon Vasyl' Avramenko's departure for the United States Pihuliak took charge of the dance movement, working out of Windsor.³¹ Another

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Propamiatna knyha U.N.D. v Vinnipeg, p.723.

31

O. Vasylyshyn, "Avramenko v Kanadi" [Avramenko in Canada], Klenovyi lyst. Kanadiis'kyi Al'manakh [Maple Leaf. Canadian Almanac], Winnipeg, 1929, p.106.

former Avramenko student, Ivan Grekul, was active in conducting Ukrainian dance courses at various Ukrainian Labour Temples across Canada.³² Other dance instructors, who were either appointed by Avramenko himself or took it upon themselves to organize classes after his departure, included Viktor Moshuk, Nykola Arsenii, Vasyl' Sawchuk, V. Pohorets'kyi, I. Ivanchuk, A. Darkovych and Mykhailo Dudar. There soon arose a Ukrainian dance group in almost every community where a Ukrainian population existed. Some of the teachers were good, others not; but all closely followed Avramenko's teaching methods and taught only the dances that he had included in his dance repertoire.

Avramenko's Dance Repertoire

In each of his schools Avramenko taught a series of set dances; they became the standard dance repertoire for all Ukrainian dance performances in Canada for many years. There came a time when the Ukrainians could dance the same dance no matter where they went in Canada.

Avramenko's basic dance curriculum consisted of some eighteen Ukrainian dances (although he did not teach all of them in every centre). Some of the dances became more popular than others and were therefore retained longer by various groups after Avramenko's departure. Most popular among Avramenko's

³²Al'manakh Tovarystva Ukrains'kyi Robitnycho-Farmers'kyi Dim v Kanadi i Bratnikh Orhanizatsii 1918-1929 [Almanac of the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association in Canada and Affiliated Organizations] (Winnipeg: Labour-Farmer Publishing Association, 1930), p. 68.

dances were: "Hopak Kolom", a ten figure³³ circle dance for one or more couples which allowed for an improvised solo by each of the participating couples in the tenth figure and ended with all couples finishing together or continuing the dance again from the beginning; "Kolomyika", a ten figure Hutsul dance generally performed by two couples, although the number of couples could be increased or danced by female pairs; "Kolomyika Siianka" (occasionally called "Kolomyika vpered"), a twelve figure dance performed by four, six or eight couples or female pairs; "Kozachok Podil's'kyi", a ten figure dance for one to four pairs; "Hrechanyky" (Wheat Cakes), a ten figure dance for four or more couples; "Arkan Kolomyis'kyi", an all-male Hutsul dance for eight or more dancers, one of whom acts as the otaman (leader) and calls the order of the steps; and "Zaporozhs'kyi Herts'" (Zaporogian Joust), a four-man sword dance. Other dances which completed the Avramenko repertoire: "Velykodnia Haivka" (Easter Dance), a ritualistic dance done by four or more couples or female pairs; "Kolomyika v odnu paru", a ten figure, one couple Hutzul dance; "Zhenychok", an eight figure dance for one or two little girls, which was based on a song about a little bird; "Kozachok Sol'o", a ten figure dance for one or more girls based on the movements of "Kozachok Podil's'kyi" but modified for women; "Honyviter", a twelve figure girls dance inspired by the movements of wind and storm; "Vil'nyi Hutsul" (Free Hutsul), an eight figure solo dance for one male dancer; "Chumachok" (Little

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dance figure — a distinct dance movement or combination of dance movements which form part of the choreographic picture. In Avramenko's case the dance figures usually consisted of one step which would be repeated for eight to sixteen bars of music. He referred to this as taking one or two "melodies" of music.

Salt Trader), a fifteen figure dance for one or more boys; "Metelytsia Viucha" (Whirling Snowstorm), a seven figure mass dance danced with as many people as possible; and "Tanok Marshovyi" (Marching Dance), a four figure dance combination used as an ending to a dance programme as a form of révérence or dance bow.

The material for all of these dances was collected in Ukraine by Avramenko during 1920 and 1921.³⁴ He admitted to "arranging" the dance material for teaching and in some cases to "creating" new dances based on what he had seen.³⁵ Today it is impossible to distinguish which of his dances were authentic, adapted or original.

Besides the dances that Avramenko utilized in his dance curriculum he was also responsible for creating several striking solo dance numbers based on Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian historical themes: among these should be mentioned "Chumak", "Honta" and "Plach Izrailia". These dances which went beyond the boundaries of folk dance into the realm of character dance and mime, were performed by Avramenko himself at the larger and more important dance concerts. In his writings³⁶ Avramenko mentions having created the ballets "Za Ukrainu" (For Ukraine), "Kryms'ki Chumaky" (Crimean Salt Traders), "Sich Ivana Sirka" (Sich of Ivan Sirko, inspired by I. Repin's painting Zaporozhian Kozaks Writing a Letter to the Turkish Sultan, 1880-1891), the Jewish ballet "Plach Izrailia" (Woe of Israel) plus several others that he does

³⁴ Avramenko, "Ukrains'kyi tanets'", p.41.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

not mention by name. It is difficult to determine whether Avramenko was referring to the solo dances that he created for himself or if he was actually speaking about dance "tableaus" (which he referred to as ballets) that he created for his dancers.

Vasyl' Avramenko "froze" Ukrainian dance into set patterns and stage arrangements. The dances, as taught by Avramenko, no longer served their original purpose; but fulfilled certain patriotic functions. These were, as Richard Crum notes, threefold:

to act as an instrument in renewing second generation Ukrainians with an art-form of their parents homeland;

to act as a stage-spectacle dance form, useful in demonstrating to non-Ukrainians what "Ukrainian" dance looked like;

to act as proof, in a patriotic way, that Ukrainians possessed something of beauty which could compete with the cultural products of other nations.³⁷

By assigning set patterns to his dances Avramenko saved the Ukrainian dance in Canada from neglect by the second generation Ukrainian youth and parents. By standardizing the dances and the method of instruction Avramenko provided neat, specific dance routines that could be easily learned and performed. By his sheer energy, personal magnetism and talent Avramenko managed to teach enough dancers to ensure that Ukrainian dance would be passed on to future generations.

Ukrainian Dance During the Post Avramenko Period

Ukrainian Dance in Canada 1928-1939

Although Avramenko spent a relatively brief period of time in Canada — just over two years — he managed to awaken such an intense interest in Ukrainian dance that it was to continue for many years after his departure. Avramenko often expressed a desire to see Ukrainian dance become a vital and inseparable part of the cultural life of his people. In his speeches he stressed the desirability of having folk dances performed at every Ukrainian concert or celebration.³⁸ He also felt that dance instruction should be provided to all children as part of their training at the native schools (ridni shkoly).

These ideas were further disseminated by Avramenko's students who spread out across the country as requests for their services grew. In a very short period of time Ukrainian dance had become an important aspect of the cultural life of every Ukrainian settlement and was taught in every school associated with a Ukrainian National Home, reading association, Labour Temple or church. Such importance was placed on dance that in advertising for native school teachers the ability to teach dancing was considered an important pre-requisite in hiring.

Students of the native schools provided dance numbers for all concerts and Ukrainian functions, and, in addition, they were often called

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Avramenko, "Ukrains'kyi tanets'", p.41.

upon to represent the Ukrainian community before non-Ukrainian audiences. Occasionally, groups from one centre travelled to another to perform. One such example was the highly successful performance given by dance students (taught by O. Pryima) from the Ukrainian National Home in Edmonton at the "Great West Canadian Folksong-Folkdance and Handicraft Festival" in Calgary in March 1930.³⁹ Performances of this sort helped generate the kind of public acclaim and interest in Ukrainian dance that kept it constantly growing.

By the early-1930's Ukrainian dance was so popular that some of the newly-emerging Ukrainian youth organizations offered dance instruction (and the opportunity to continue dancing beyond the childhood years) as a means of enticing prospective members to join. Folk dancing occupied a significant role in the cultural programme of the Canadian Youth Association - SUMK (Soiuz Ukrain's'koi Molodi Kanady). Hryhorii Tyzhuk, an early SUMK organizer, and himself an accomplished dancer, placed such emphasis on folk dancing as a cultural activity that other, more politically oriented youth organizations became very critical of the dance aspect of SUMK. Occasionally this criticism was carried to the press where it was argued that folk dancing was not preparing the SUMK youth for the struggle against communism.⁴⁰

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The Edmonton Journal, Edmonton, March 22, 1930.

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For more details see P. Migus, "Ukrainian Canadian Youth: A History of Organizational Life in Canada (1907-1953)" (M.A. Thesis, University of Ottawa, 1975), p.137.

The Educational Summer Courses

The outbreak of war in 1939 brought an inevitable decline in Ukrainian dance activity in Canada. As dance teachers and more mature dancers from the youth organizations went off to war, dance activity, like all other forms of cultural expression, was greatly curtailed, or was halted altogether. Some work in the dance area did continue at the Native School level, and dance was first introduced into the curriculum of the Educational Summer Courses (Vyshchi Osvitni Kursy) in 1941.⁴¹

The Educational Summer Courses played a distinct role in Ukrainian dance education in Canada during the post-Avramenko period. Ukrainian dance proved to be such a popular subject that it was included in the programme of nearly every one of the sixteen summer courses held. Peter Hladun of Winnipeg provided most of the dance instruction at the courses. Other dance teachers who taught at the courses were Olenka Gerdan-Zaklyns'ka (1949), Daria Nyzhankivska-Snihurowycz (1952 and 1953) and Jaroslav Klun (1962).⁴²

Dance instruction at these courses has, for the most part, consisted of instruction in Ukrainian folk dance — in the early years, Avramenko's dances; later, dances that were choreographed by Hladun or Klun. A new type of Ukrainian dance was introduced by the balletically-trained O. Gerdan-Zaklyns'ka and D. Nyzhanivska-Snihurowycz; both taught a stylized form of Ukrainian dance which combined elements of classical ballet with

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See Appendix 3 for more information on the Educational Summer Courses.

⁴²

Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre, Winnipeg. Archives of the Educational Summer Courses.

traditional folk movements.

The Educational Summer Courses provided dance instruction for the many dance teachers and students who congregated annually in Winnipeg to either learn the basics or to refine and upgrade already-acquired skills. In looking through the registration records of the school, one finds the names of persons who were later connected with the Ukrainian dance movement in Canada during the 1950's and 1960's. Among them must be mentioned Chester Kuc of Edmonton, Nadia Pavlychenko of Saskatoon and Toronto, Halia Cham of Hamilton, Sammy Dzugan of Toronto and Peter Marunczak of Montreal.⁴³

Ukrainian Dance 1945-1950

Ukrainian dance regained much of its former popularity following the war and again became a means of involving Ukrainian youth in organized community activity. Even youth organizations like the Ukrainian National Youth Federation - MUN (Molodi Ukrains'ki Natsionalisty), who had previously frowned upon excessive dance activity in organizational life, now turned to it for their own purposes. Between 1945 and 1947 MUN's Dominion Executive staged some twenty variety concerts across Canada as a means of promoting cultural and educational activity among young people of Ukrainian descent. The highly popular series of performances, presented under the title "Ukrainian Cavalcade", incorporated dance into a large portion of each concert.⁴⁴

⁴³
Ibid.

⁴⁴
See Appendix 5 for additional information on "Ukrainian Cavalcade".

The majority of these dances were the Avramenko perennial favourites such as "Kolomyika Siianka", "Kateryna Khersonka", "Arkan"; but new dances — "Nozhytsi" (Scissors), "Zhen'tsi" (The Harvesters), "Zalytsiannia" (Flirtation) and "Vinok" (Wreath) — were also presented.⁴⁵

The Ukrainian National Youth Federation soon became the leading force in the promotion and popularization of Ukrainian dance in Canada. By 1948 almost every branch of the organization had its own dancing group. Six MUN dance groups performed at the first Western Canada convention of the Ukrainian National Federation and affiliated organizations held in Edmonton in July 1948. These groups were from Vancouver (Lesia Trach, instructor), Edmonton (Walter Hladun, instructor), Calgary (Audrey Chodylo, instructor), Saskatoon (Lillian Boychuk, instructor), Regina (Nadia Corpus, instructor) and Winnipeg (Peter Hladun, instructor).⁴⁶ Similar dance groups existed in many of the branches in Eastern Canada as well: Toronto (Walter Zvarych, Petro Fedun, Sam Dzugan, Halia Cham, instructors), Hamilton (Halia Cham, instructor) and Montreal (Peter Marunczak, instructor).

Dance Repertoire

In the first few years following Avramenko's departure, any Ukrainian dance programme was considered good if it contained a well-paced selection of Avramenko's choreographies. As all of the choreographies were

⁴⁵

Various "Ukrainian Cavalcade" concert programmes.

⁴⁶

Concert programme. July 4, 1948, Strand Theatre, Edmonton.

ready-made there was no call for the instructor's own creativity to come into play — the quality of the performances was measured by the instructor's ability to transmit the dance as carefully and authentically as possible. Before long, however, many of the teachers who had learned and studied directly under Avramenko withdrew from active involvement in dance through marriage, war, age, or moving away to another community.

The new breed of dance instructor came up from the ranks of the dancers themselves. The younger dance leaders grew impatient with constantly performing the same dance routines in the same manner and began trying to create new choreographies of their own. Almost any good dancer could become an instructor if he or she had a natural born aggressiveness or leadership qualities; but these qualities in no way guaranteed that the instructor was equipped to be a choreographer. Many of these people lacked adequate knowledge of Ukrainian culture, and most did not fully appreciate the material that they were dealing with.

There arose many leaders who could dance exceptionally well, but whose sense of what was beautiful or in keeping with the Ukrainian tradition left much to be desired. Under the guise of "creativity", many such leaders began to say, "Tradition, nonsense! I'm creative — I'll fix up these dances so that they have some spark — put a few prysiadky in "Kateryna Kher-sonka" — otherwise the public won't like it. By the way, have you seen my new Sunflower Dance? Made it up last week..."⁴⁷

This lack of sensitivity to the medium of Ukrainian folk dance produced some very bad dances. Not only were many of them re-workings and re-hashings of Avramenko's works, but often they were just agglomerations

of various steps and formations that lacked any semblance of authenticity. In 1948, the MUN dancing group of Edmonton (under the direction of Walter Hladun) performed "Arkan" as a women's dance,⁴⁸ and in 1949 the same group (under the direction of Gloria and Walter Hladun) performed "Arkan" as a mixed dance.⁴⁹ In both these cases, as well as in such dances as "Nozhytsi",⁵⁰ female dancers performed dance figures and steps traditionally done by male dancers only. This type of "creative license" violated the basic aesthetic of Ukrainian folk dance — great differences exist in the style and character of the dancing of men and women.

⁴⁸

Concert programme. July 4, 1948, Strand Theatre, Edmonton.

⁴⁹

Concert programme of the 15th anniversary concert of MUN in Edmonton. December 11, 1949, Memorial Hall, Edmonton.

⁵⁰

Herman, "Vasyl' Avramenko — As I Knew Him", p.21.

Ukrainian Dance in Canada During the 1950's and 1960's

Avramenko's Attempt at a Comeback

Vasyl' Avramenko was keenly aware of what was happening within the Ukrainian dance movement that he had worked so hard to establish. He saw it degenerating and in the early 1950's he returned to Canada with the intention of conducting courses of Ukrainian dancing in person. A course was held in Edmonton in the summer of 1953,⁵¹ but Avramenko discovered he no longer attracted the kind of following that he had enjoyed in the 1920's. He still kept trying to offer his services, moving from centre to centre in the hope of finding new people with whom to work, but by the mid-1950's he had completely lost control of the Ukrainian dance movement and his name no longer held any magic in it.

Part of the reason for this lay in his inability to change with the times and to acknowledge that Ukrainian dance was undergoing an evolution. He resented changes being made to his dances and insisted on limiting his teaching to the same dance numbers that he had brought with him in 1925. As individual instructors took charge of dancing groups, Avramenko found that his services were no longer required and his attempts at assistance were looked upon as undesired interference. Many of the younger dance instructors were not awed by the Avramenko name -- and most of the young

⁵¹

Handbill announcing Avramenko's dance courses in Edmonton, July 1953.

dancers had never heard of him.

The Ukrainian community of Toronto did commemorate his services by holding a special performance in Massey Hall (December 22 and 23, 1951)⁵² on the occasion of the "Jubilee Celebrations Marking the 25th Anniversary of Avramenko's Artistic and Educational Work". A similar concert in Winnipeg, the "Grand Jubilee Festival of Ukrainian Folk Dances in honour of Vasyl' Avramenko", was given in the Playhouse Theatre on January 30, 1966.⁵³ The Winnipeg performance commemorated the 40th anniversary of the formation of the first "School of Ukrainian National Dances" in Toronto and its triumphal performances at the Canadian National Exhibition of 1926.

The Changing Dance Movement

The 1950's and 1960's saw distinct changes in the Ukrainian dance movement in Canada. Foremost among them was the emergence of strong Ukrainian dance groups whose main function was the propagation and popularization of Ukrainian dance among Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian audiences alike. The second noticeable change involved the very character of the Ukrainian dances: during this period they became more spectacular and varied with each of the dance groups striving to develop a distinctive style and repertoire.

Although small dance groups continued to exist as part of various

⁵²
No. 4. Ukrains'kyi tantsiuryst/Ukrainian Dancer, Toronto, December 22, 1951, Special edition bulletin published by the Jubilee Committee.

⁵³
Concert programme booklet. January 30, 1966, Playhouse Theatre, Winnipeg.

youth and church organizations, there emerged several Ukrainian dance ensembles with strong and individual identities. These new dance ensembles differed from dance groups of earlier years in that they existed primarily as performing companies who carried on their work for the basic purpose of presenting it on stage, whereas stage presentations were usually of secondary importance to the cultural, educational and social objectives of the earlier dancing groups. Most of the new ensembles were affiliated with existing youth organizations (all dancers also maintaining membership in the sponsoring organization). Two strong dance groups emerged as independent dance clubs, owing no allegiance to any existing organizations. These groups were the Ukrainian Shumka Dancers of Edmonton and the Yevshan Ukrainian Folk Ballet Ensemble of Saskatoon.

Ukrainian Shumka Dancers of Edmonton

Edmonton's Ukrainian Shumka Dancers were formed in the latter months of 1958 under the direction of Chester Kuc. Shumka staged its first performance, "The Ukrainian Autumn Festival of Songs and Dances", at the Jubilee Auditorium in Edmonton on October 29, 1960.⁵⁴ Since that time the group has appeared before an audience of 10,000 at the Shevchenko Youth Festival in the Winnipeg Arena on July 8, 1961;⁵⁵ staged "Ukrainian Rhapsody" in 1962;⁵⁶ and

⁵⁴

Souvenir programme booklet of Shumka's 5th anniversary concert. June 4, 1964, Jubilee Auditorium, Edmonton.

⁵⁵

Ibid.

⁵⁶

Concert programme. March 2, 1962, Jubilee Auditorium, Edmonton.

presented a series of concerts under the name "Songs and Dances of the Ukraine" in Vancouver,⁵⁷ Edmonton⁵⁸ and Calgary.⁵⁹ In addition to this, large festive concerts were staged in Edmonton commemorating the fifth and seventh anniversaries of the group's existence in 1964⁶⁰ and 1966.⁶¹ In 1967 the Ukrainian Shumka Dancers raised enough money through various performances to be able to appear in Montreal at Expo 67, performing twice daily from August 1 to 4 inclusive.

The membership of the Ukrainian Shumka Dancers was open to "all persons, male or female, of Ukrainian descent who uphold the principles of the club, except those with communist affiliations".⁶² The existence of the ensemble as an independent dance club (with an elected governing body composed of dancers) has given more talented members of the group an opportunity to explore the medium of Ukrainian dance and to develop their own creative skills. Although Chester Kuc, who served as director of the group, provided all dance instruction and choreography in the early years, he has encouraged several dancers to stage their own works. As a result of this, many of the more notable works in the company's repertoire have been created by dancers: "Oi pid

⁵⁷
Concert programme. September 6, 1964, Queen Elizabeth Theatre, Vancouver.

⁵⁸
Concert programme. June 4, 1965, Jubilee Auditorium, Edmonton.

⁵⁹
Concert programme. June 5, 1965, Jubilee Auditorium, Calgary.

⁶⁰
Souvenir programme booklet of the 5th anniversary concert.

⁶¹
Souvenir programme booklet of Shumka's 7th anniversary concert. September 23, 1966, Jubilee Auditorium, Edmonton.

⁶²
Constitution of the Ukrainian Shumka Dancers.

vyshneiu" (Under the Cherry Tree, 1964), "Nich pid Ivana Kupala" (St. John's Eve, 1965), "Khustochka" (Bukovinian Kerchief Dance, 1966), "Lastivka" (The Swallow, 1966) and "Hopak" (1966) were choreographed by Natalka Dobrolidge; "Hutsul" (1965) and "Zaporozhets'" (1965), "Trembita" (1966) and "Dombra" (1966) created by Orest Semchuk; "Vohnyshche" (Fire Dance, 1965) by Lecia Polujan; the two-part "Ikhav Kozak na viion'ku" (A Kozak Goes to War, 1966) by Orest Semchuk and Eugene Zwozdetsky.⁶³

Yevshan Ukrainian Folk Ballet Ensemble of Saskatoon

The Yevshan Ukrainian Dance Ensemble, as the group was originally called, was organized in Saskatoon in the latter months of 1960. The idea of forming a dance group in Saskatoon "which would offer young people the opportunity of learning Ukrainian folk dancing in its most aesthetic form"⁶⁴ was conceived by Nadia Pavlychenko. The original group consisted of some thirty dancers, most of who were already involved in various Ukrainian youth organizations in that city.

The group made its stage debut with the production "The Life of a Poet", at Saskatoon's Capitol Theatre on April 30, 1961 to mark the 100th anniversary of the death of T. Shevchenko.⁶⁵ In 1962 N. Pavlychenko left for Toronto and her sister, Lusia Pavlychenko-Sotnikow, assumed the

⁶³

Various concert programmes mentioned.

⁶⁴

Souvenir programme booklet of Yevshan's 10th anniversary concert. April 30, 1971, Saskatoon.

⁶⁵

Ibid.

responsibilities as Director. The period 1962-1965 saw a decline in Yevshan's activities as many of the original dancers were leaving — some to get married, others to take up studies away from Saskatoon. A much-needed reorganization in 1965 sparked an outburst of activity: the group participated in the documentary film Saskatchewan Jubilee, which was commissioned by the Saskatchewan Diamond Jubilee and Canada Centennial Corporation;⁶⁶ in June 1966 Yevshan performed N. Pavlychenko-Buchan's "The Ukrainian Pioneer: A Choreographic Offering" at the commemorative ceremonies for the 75th anniversary of Ukrainian settlement in Canada at the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto;⁶⁷ in October 1966 it participated in similar anniversary celebrations in Winnipeg at the Winnipeg Arena; and in November 1966 staged their "Ukrainian Dance" recital in Saskatoon, Yorkton and Canora.

Canada's centennial year proved to be the busiest in the group's history. In June of that year Yevshan presented its "Scent of Ukraine" and participated in the "Centennial Youth Festival", both in Saskatoon. On July 1 the group performed in the Dominion Day telecast from Parliament Hill in Ottawa in the presence of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. As winners of the "Provincial Gala Night" competition Yevshan received a \$500 prize and the honour of representing the province of Saskatchewan during Saskatchewan Day (July 8) at Expo 67 in Montreal. On August 18 the group participated in "Nationbuilders 67", a gala concert which opened the Canadian National

⁶⁶

The film was produced by Crawley Films Limited and received its film premiere in Regina on December 9, 1965. (Ibid.)

⁶⁷

Souvenir programme booklet of the concert commemorating the 75th anniversary of Ukrainian settlement in Canada. June 9, 1966, Canadian National Exhibition, Toronto.

Exhibition in Toronto. Between August 21 and 23 Yevshan performed in Montreal.⁶⁸ On September 3 it returned to Toronto to repeat "The Ukrainian Pioneer: A Choreographic Offering".⁶⁹ Two other important events occurred in 1967: on August 10 the group was officially registered as The Yevshan Ukrainian Folk Ballet Ensemble with the Registrar of the Societies Act of the Province of Saskatchewan; and towards the end of the year L. Pavlychenko-Sotnikow resigned as Director.

Affiliated Dance Groups

Although both the Ukrainian Shumka Dancers and the Yevshan Ukrainian Folk Ballet Ensemble functioned independently as dance clubs, the majority of the larger dance ensembles formed in Canada during the 1950's and 1960's worked within the framework of existing youth organizations. For the most part, the new groups were affiliated with various local branches of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation, and evolved out of smaller dancing groups that had existed during the 1940's.

The new dance ensembles performed at various organizational functions such as conventions, socials and concerts but, in addition to this, carried on their own dance activities, presented their own concerts, and generally existed as separate entities within the larger groups. In many instances branches of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation had large memberships

⁶⁸

Souvenir programme booklet of Yevshan's 10th anniversary concert.

⁶⁹

Souvenir programme booklet of the 34th annual convention of the Ukrainian Youth League of North America. September 3, 1967, Toronto.

only because organizational membership was obligatory to becoming a dancer in one of the ensembles.

Affiliation with the youth organization gave the new dance ensembles access to a ready-made audience, a location in which to rehearse and the opportunity to remain in contact with affiliated dance groups in other cities. Participation at various annual conventions (which usually included gala concerts) offered dancers a chance to see what other dance groups were doing, to compare, and to exchange ideas. During the 1950's and 1960's dance ensembles, affiliated with the Ukrainian National Youth Federation, were organized in Hamilton, Toronto, Montreal, Winnipeg, Regina and St. Catherines.

All of the dance groups affiliated with the Ukrainian National Youth Federation restricted their membership to young people of Ukrainian descent who had no pro-communist affiliations. Ukrainian youth adhering to a pro-communist ideology grouped itself around the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians and in the mid-1950's also began organizing dance ensembles of their own. The largest such group was formed in Regina.

Chaika, The Ukrainian Dance Ensemble of Hamilton

Chaika, The Ukrainian Dance Ensemble was organized at the Hamilton branch of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation in 1957 by Jaroslav Klun. In September of the same year the group, which originally only had twelve dancers, performed under the name Ukrainian Hopaks of Hamilton at the Ford Auditorium in Detroit on the occasion of the 24th annual convention of the Ukrainian Youth League of North America. As a result of this performance,

interest in Ukrainian folk dance increased and membership of the group quickly grew; dancers not only from Hamilton, but from Toronto and St. Catharines joined the group. Towards the end of 1957 the group officially adopted the name Chaika, The Ukrainian Dance Ensemble.

The first public appearance under the new name took place in Toronto in October 1958 — when the group participated in the United Appeal Show at the Canadian National Exhibition Grandstand.⁷⁰ A highlight of 1960 was the performance at the Shriners "Variety Show" at Hamilton's Palace Theatre. In January 1962 the ensemble again performed in the Palace Theatre during the commemorative concert marking the 44th anniversary of the proclamation of Ukraine's independence,⁷¹ and also participated in the "First Freedom Festival" in Massey Hall in Toronto, staged by the Canadian Folk Dancing Association.⁷² In May of the same year Chaika celebrated its 5th anniversary with a gala concert in Hamilton.⁷³ In May 1963 the company appeared in the production "European Holiday" at Toronto's O'Keefe Centre⁷⁴ and in October 1964 it travelled to Detroit to participate in the "Festival of Ukrainian Songs, Music and Folk Dances" at the Ford Auditorium.⁷⁵

⁷⁰
Souvenir programme booklet of Chaika's 5th anniversary concert.
May 20, 1962, Delta Theatre, Hamilton.

⁷¹
Concert programme. January 21, 1962, Palace Theatre, Hamilton.

⁷²
Souvenir programme booklet. January 12-14, Massey Hall, Toronto.

⁷³
Souvenir programme booklet of Chaika's 5th anniversary concert.

⁷⁴
Ibid.

⁷⁵
Souvenir programme booklet. October 18, 1964, Ford Auditorium,
Detroit, Michigan.

Jaroslav Klun has served as dance instructor and sole choreographer to Chaika, The Ukrainian Dance Ensemble since its formation in 1957. Among dances in the repertoire of this group should be mentioned "Divchynon'-ka pohryby khodyla" (A Girl Went Mushroom Picking), "Oi pid vyshneiu" (Under the Cherry Tree), "Vesnianka" (Spring Dance), "Hutsulka", "Uvyvanets'" (Weaving Dance) and "Triasunets'" (Shaking Dance).

The U.N.Y.F. Kalyna Dance Ensemble of Toronto

In 1956 the dancing group which existed at the Toronto branch of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation came under the direction of Semen Dzugan and his name has remained inseparable from it since that time. In 1960 the group officially became known as the U.N.Y.F. Kalyna Dance Ensemble.⁷⁶ Semen Dzugan, who performed with the group between 1960 and 1962, has acted in the capacity of choreographer, dance instructor, and manager of the group. Throughout the years Kalyna has given dozens of performances including annual concerts presented by the Toronto Ukrainian National Federation and the Ukrainian National Youth Federation. In 1964 Kalyna participated in "The Life of a Poet" at the O'Keefe Centre on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the birth of T. Shevchenko and the 30th anniversary of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation of Canada.⁷⁷ In addition to these live performances, the U.N.Y.F. Kalyna Dance Ensemble has performed in a number of

76

Souvenir programme booklet of the 10th anniversary banquet and ball in honour of Mr. Semen Dzugan. February 7, 1970, Ukrainian National Federation Auditorium, Toronto.

77

Programme booklet. October 11, 1964, O'Keefe Centre, Toronto.

television shows and films: Dominion Day Celebrations (1966) telecast from Parliament Hill in Ottawa; They Came to Build (1967-1968), a 16mm 30-minute colour film about Ontario; and Canadians Can Dance (1967), a 16mm 45-minute colour film produced by the Canadian Folk Arts Council.⁷⁸

All of the dances in the Kalyna repertoire have been choreographed (or adapted from existing dances) by S. Dzugan. The better known are entitled "Hutsulka", "Kolomyika", "Hopak", "Kadryl'", "Zaporozhets'" and "Steppes of the Ukraine".⁷⁹

Marunczak Ukrainian Dance Ensemble of Montreal

During the 1950's the dancing group of the Montreal branch of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation was called the Ukrainian National Folk Ballet of the U.N.Y.F. and was directed by Peter Marunczak. In 1956 the fourteen member group appeared in the film Pink Carousel⁸⁰ and performed in the concert "Blue Carousel" at Montreal's Plateau Auditorium.⁸¹ In 1957, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation in Canada, the Montreal group participated in the concert held at the Canadian National Exhibition Coliseum in Toronto. Sometime ca. 1961

78

Information supplied by the U.N.Y.F. Kalyna Dance Ensemble to the Ukrainian Canadian Arts Catalogue, Toronto, 1975.

79

Ibid.

80

Programme booklet of the concert commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation in Montreal. October 7, 1956, Plateau Hall, Montreal.

81

Concert programme. May 12, 1956, Plateau Auditorium, Montreal.

the name of the ensemble was changed to the Marunczak Ukrainian Dance Ensemble and the number of dancers grew to eighteen. In November of the same year the group performed at the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation in Montreal.⁸² In 1964 and 1965 the Marunczak Ukrainian Dance Ensemble performed at the New York State Fair,⁸³ and in 1967 the dancers staged several performances at the International Bandshell and Place des Nations, as part of the Expo 67 celebrations.⁸⁴

The repertoire of the Marunczak Ukrainian Dance Ensemble has been entirely choreographed by Peter Marunczak. Among the dances performed by his group have been "Hul'visy" (The Gay Cavaliers), "Hamova" (Persisting), "Holubchyk", "Kosari" (The Harvesters), "Zalytsiannia" (Flirtation Dance), "Lastivka" (Swallow) and "Hopak".⁸⁵

The Rusalka Ukrainian Folk Dance Ensemble of Winnipeg

The Rusalka Ukrainian Folk Dance Ensemble evolved directly out of a dancing group organized by Peter Hladun in 1962 at the Winnipeg branch of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation. Hladun has directed and

⁸²

Programme booklet of the Silver Jubilee concert. November 12, 1961, Ukrainian National Federation Auditorium, Montreal.

⁸³

Information supplied by the Marunczak Ukrainian Dance Ensemble to the Ukrainian Canadian Arts Catalogue, Toronto, 1975.

⁸⁴

Ibid.

⁸⁵

Various concert programmes mentioned.

administered the group since its formation. Between 1963 and 1966 Joanne Sinkevych fulfilled the duties of dance instructor and choreographer.⁸⁶ Early in 1965 the group officially took the name Rusalka Ukrainian Folk Dance Ensemble.⁸⁷

During its early years Rusalka performed in Winnipeg, primarily before Ukrainian audiences at various conventions and Ukrainian National Federation functions: it also appeared on television. In 1966 the ensemble performed in the 25th anniversary concert of the O. Koshetz Memorial Choir of Winnipeg. During the same year Rusalka, then numbering thirty-five dancers, travelled to Fort William to perform in a concert marking the 25th anniversary of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation in that city.⁸⁸ In 1966 Donald Bryk joined the group as dance instructor and assumed co-directorship responsibilities with Peter Hladun.⁸⁹ This arrangement proved to be unworkable, and in 1967 Bohdan Stebnicki and Eugene Wawryn became dance instructors.⁹⁰ The highlight of 1967 was the invitation to headline the "Folkways" concerts which were presented by the Manitoba Folk Arts Council in Winnipeg.

The Rusalka Ukrainian Folk Dance Ensemble has a varied dance repertoire that represents dances from the Central, Western and Transcarpathian

86

Programme booklet commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation in Fort William, 1966.

87

Souvenir booklet of the Rusalka Ukrainian Dance Ensemble, ca. 1974.

88

Programme booklet commemorating the 25th anniversary.

89

Ibid.

90

Programme booklet of the 30th anniversary of the Hamilton branch of the U.N.Y.F. and the 24th national convention of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation of Canada. June 28 to July 1, 1968, Hamilton.

regions of Ukraine. These dances have been choreographed by the resident instructors and by invited guest choreographers such as Jaroslav Klun of Hamilton and Lusya Pavlychenko-Sotnikow of Saskatoon. Among the most popular dances in the repertoire are "Hutsul", "Arkan", "Triasunets", "Vesnianka" and "Zhentsi".

The Verchovyna Dance Group of Regina

A dancing group was organized at the Regina branch of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation in 1963 by Anita Drebot.⁹¹ Drebot received her dance training in eastern Canada from Halia Cham and Peter Marunczak. During its first year of existence, the group performed at a Ukrainian National Youth Federation conference in Winnipeg. In September 1964 the group became officially known as the Verchovyna Dance Group. In 1964 Verchovyna represented the province of Saskatchewan in the Dominion Day celebrations telecast over the C.B.C. television network. The group has performed mainly in Regina at conferences, conventions, holidays (such as Buffalo Days), and at various Ukrainian concerts and festivities. In 1967 Verchovyna performed at the second annual "National Ukrainian Festival" in Dauphin.⁹²

91

Information supplied by the Verchovyna Dance Group to the Ukrainian Canadian Arts Catalogue, Toronto, 1975.

92

Ibid.

Dunai, Ukrainian Folk Ensemble of St. Catherines

The Dunai Ukrainian Folk Ensemble was a relative latecomer to the Ukrainian dance scene — it was formed in the fall of 1966. Like so many other dance ensembles in other cities, it was formed under the auspices of the local branch of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation. The group was organized in St. Catherines by Orest Samitz, who has remained as dance instructor of the group. Samitz received his dance training under Jaroslav Klun, and, for a short period of time, had acted as assistant dance instructor for Chaika, The Ukrainian Folk Dance Ensemble of Hamilton.⁹³ The first major appearance for Dunai occurred at the 30th anniversary concert of the St. Catherines branch of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation in 1967.⁹⁴

All of the dances in the group's repertoire have been choreographed by Orest Samitz and Jaroslav Klun. They include "Hopak", "Triasunets", "Arkan" and "Hutsulka".⁹⁵

Poltava Dance Ensemble of Regina

The Poltava Dance Ensemble, which is affiliated with the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians, was founded in 1955.⁹⁶ Dance instructors to

⁹³

Souvenir programme booklet of Chaika's 5th anniversary concert.

⁹⁴

Programme booklet of the 30th anniversary celebrations of the 30th anniversary of the Hamilton branch of the U.N.Y.F. June 28 to July 1, 1968.

⁹⁵

Ibid.

⁹⁶

Information supplied by the Poltava Dance Ensemble to the Ukrainian Canadian Arts Catalogue, Toronto, 1975.

Poltava have been Tommy Luchenko (1955-1956), Ginger Sawchyn-Kautto (1956-1959), Karen Brudy-Steinberg and Alex Lapchuk (1959-1964), Norman Sawchyn (1964-1966) and Zoya Lapchuk-Shmyr, who became the instructor in 1967.⁹⁷

In 1955 Poltava performed at Regina's Grand Theatre during a provincial "Ukrainian Festival" sponsored by the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians to mark Saskatchewan's Golden Jubilee. To commemorate the centennary of T. Shevchenko in 1961, the group performed at two provincial "Ukrainian Festivals" (sponsored by the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians) in Regina and Saskatoon; it presented "Excerpts from the Ballet Lileya" in a half-hour television programme; and it participated in the Association of United Ukrainian Canadian's "National Ukrainian Festival" at Toronto's Varsity Arena. In 1966 the Poltava Dance Ensemble performed in the "Ukrainian Festival of Song, Music and Dance" at Winnipeg's Playhouse Theatre in tribute to the 75th anniversary of Ukrainian immigration to Canada. Seven performances were given by the ensemble at Expo 67 in Montreal.⁹⁸

Because of its contacts with the Soviet Union, the choreographic repertoire of the Poltava Dance Ensemble comes directly from the Soviet Ukraine. The dance company does not limit itself to Ukrainian folk dances but includes in its repertoire many Russian and contemporary Soviet Ukrainian dances as well.

97

Information supplied by the Poltava Dance Ensemble to the Ukrainian Canadian Arts Catalogue, Toronto, 1975.

98

Ibid.

Other Ukrainian Dance Companies

The trend towards the formation of independent and affiliated Ukrainian dance groups, which manifested itself in the 1950's and 1960's continued in the years to come. The cross-Canada exposure given Ukrainian dance companies from their participation in Centennial celebrations and the numerous rave reviews of performances of Ukrainian dance (largely from non-Ukrainian audiences) intensified the interest in this medium of Ukrainian cultural expression. Suddenly, Ukrainian young people, who could neither speak nor understand the Ukrainian language, who felt no particular sense of ethnic identity, became aware of their cultural heritage and their ancestral roots. In dance they found a form of Ukrainian culture that was accessible to them and one which many Canadians of other cultural backgrounds looked upon with envy. Spectacular Ukrainian dance performances stole many a Centennial show, making Ukrainians proud of their heritage and cultural traditions.

In 1968 Mykola Baldeckyj formed the Vesnianka Dance Ensemble in Toronto. The group exists under the auspices of the Ukrainian Democratic Youth Association. In 1969 two new Ukrainian dance companies were formed — the Ukrainian Dance Ensemble Cheremosh was organized as the Edmonton branch of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation by Chester Kuc (who had resigned as Director of the Ukrainian Shumka Dancers), and the Dnipro Ukrainian Dance Ensemble was formed independently in Ottawa by Myroslaw Pritz and the author (both former members of the Ukrainian Shumka Dancers). The Ukrainian Chermshyna Folk Dance Ensemble of Vancouver was organized by Ihor Kaminsky in

1970. In 1971 the Dance Group of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians was formed in Saskatoon under the direction of A. Fosty and the Veselka Ensemble of Victoria was formed by Joyce Kruk-Carr. The Ilarion Dance Ensemble, or the Odessa Dancers as they are popularly called, was organized at St. Vladimir's Institute in Toronto in 1972. The same year the Sydney Ukrainian Folk Dancers of Sydney, Nova Scotia, came into existence under the direction of John Huk. The Kobzar Dance Ensemble in Vancouver was organized under the direction of Beatrice Yakimchuk in 1974. The last group is affiliated with the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians.⁹⁹

In addition to these larger Ukrainian dance companies, many small, local dance groups exist at various church parishes and youth organizations.

The Changing Dance Repertoire

With the formation of strong Ukrainian dance groups across Canada in the late-1950's and early 1960's, it was inevitable that many changes would take place in the dance repertoire. It became clear that the groups would have to offer a programme that would appeal not only to those who had never been exposed to their type of dancing before but also to those who were well acquainted with Ukrainian dance and who would not remain content to see the same performances repeated over and over. This demand for "new" entertainment literally forced the dance instructors and choreographers to introduce new works, and this resulted in making each dance company distinctive in style and repertoire.

The appearance of Igor Moiseyev and The State Academic Ensemble of Popular Dance of the Soviet Union ¹⁰⁰ in Canada in 1961 and 1965, and The State Dance Ensemble of the Ukrainian S.S.R. ¹⁰¹ under the direction of Pavel Virsky in 1962 and again in 1966 made a tremendous impact on Ukrainian dance groups across Canada. The spectacular performances by these two Soviet dance companies opened up entire new vistas for audiences and local groups alike. Here was a highly polished and theatrical form of Ukrainian dance, performed by trained professional dancers, that made all previous dance performances seem amateur and uninteresting by comparison.

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Souvenir programme booklet of The State Academic Ensemble of Popular Dances of the Soviet Union: Moiseyev. March to July 1965.

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Souvenir programme booklets of The Ukrainian State Dance Ensemble of the Ukrainian S.S.R. 1962 and 1966.

Along with the guest tours by these professional dance companies, books on Ukrainian dance published in the Soviet Ukraine began appearing in Ukrainian book stores in Canada. Andrii Ivanovych Humeniuk's Ukrains'ki narodni tantsi (Ukrainian Folk Dances, 1962)¹⁰² provided background information, notes for music and costume sketches for eighty Ukrainian dances from various regions of Ukraine. This major work was soon followed by A. I. Humeniuk's Narodne khoreorafichne mystetstvo Ukrainy (Choreographic Folk Art of Ukraine, 1963), which discussed the theory and history of Ukrainian folk dance with all of its regional stylistic variations. Other works which provide choreography and music for new dances are Liudmyla Anatolieva Bondarenko's U barvystomu vinochku (In a Bright Wreath, 1964), a collection of children's dances; and Iraida Mykolaievna Antypova's Siuzhetni tantsi (Character Dances, 1966). Of great help to amateur groups was I. M. Antypova's Tantsiuval'nyi hurtok v klubi (The Club Dancing Group, 1964), which gives detailed instructions and suggestions for the training of dancers for performances, with special emphasis on classical and character warm-up exercises useful in Ukrainian dance training.

Almost every Ukrainian dance group in Canada has been affected to some extent by these performances and published materials. Some choreographers have managed to introduce new elements into their work successfully. Many have adopted the custom of opening concerts with the traditional greeting of bread and salt — an idea taken from Virsky's "My z Ukrainy" (We're From Ukraine); others have staged some of the published choreography directly;

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See Selected Bibliography for complete details.

still others have attempted to incorporate the more spectacular dance sequences into their own choreography. It should, however, be noted that in many cases the resulting dances have been transformed into meaningless agglomerations of dance steps borrowed from dances differing in character from one another, or into inane assortments of acrobatic stunts. Such choreographers have overlooked the essential principles governing the works of Virsky and Moiseyev and have only concentrated on their pyrotechnics.

As Moiseyev writes:

On stage, technique is necessary in order to express all the characteristic traits of the folk dance, to reveal and develop those movements of the dance which help to expose its essence. But technique should not be an end in itself. This is often the case with directors who include "turns" and other "effective" tricks without any connection to the dance, to enrich the form of the dance. This kind of "technique for the sake of technique" contradicts the essence of the folk dance and spoils it.

When a dance is performed on stage by a professional dance group or by the participants of an amateur art group, it is very important to make sure that no elements are included which contradict its nature, emotions and folk character; it is necessary to maintain the national manner of moving and wearing costumes. In a word, it is necessary to take care that no artificially dreamed up style is added to the folk dance. In order to present a folk dance well and correctly on the stage, it is necessary to learn not only the dance, but the music, the costumes and the way of life and history of the people.¹⁰³

Ukrainian choreographers in Canada lack direct access to the vast folk dance treasury of Ukraine and have no means by which to collect and study ethnographic material firsthand. They must, of necessity, depend

¹⁰³ I. Moiseyev, "Folk Dances of the Soviet Union", Folk Dances of the U.S.S.R. (Toronto: National Executive of the Russian Canadian Youth Organization, 1956), p.3.

on secondhand sources for their choreographic material and inspiration. In spite of this, some interesting work has been produced by various Ukrainian choreographers in Canada who have created their own, original, works. Their attitude was summed up by Jaroslav Klun: "We do not attempt to present exact copies of established traditional dances, but to develop them and to create new ones by maintaining the basic elements of the original."¹⁰⁴

Among the older generation of Ukrainian dance choreographers, J. Klun himself, has been one of the more proficient creators and interpreters of Ukrainian dance. Most notable among his dances have been "Divchy-non'ka po hryby khodyla" (A Girl Went Mushroom Picking) and "Oi pid vysh-neiu" (Under the Cherry Tree), both inspired by folk songs; "Vesnianka", a dance of spring inspired by the rich tradition of spring song and dance-games which have existed in Ukraine since pre-Christian times; and several dances that are typical of Western Ukraine — "Hutsulka", "Uvyvanets'" and "Triasunets'" (a dance that is included in the dance repertoires of Chaika of Hamilton, Dunai of St. Catherines and Rusalka of Winnipeg).

Several of the younger choreographers with extensive ballet and modern dance training have attempted to take Ukrainian dance even further. In 1964 Natalka Dobrolidge of Edmonton staged the first Ukrainian folk ballet in Canada with the Ukrainian Shumka Dancers. Her work "Oi pid vyshneiu" (Under the Cherry Tree) was inspired by an old Ukrainian folk song and combined

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Souvenir programme booklet of the 5th anniversary concert of Chaika, the Ukrainian Folk Dance Ensemble of Hamilton. May 20, 1962, Delta Theatre, Hamilton.

elements of Ukrainian folk dance with character ballet and mime to tell the story of a young maiden who wanted to go out dancing and an old man who refused to let her go. In 1965 N. Dobrolidge created an even more ambitious work, "Nich pid Ivana Kupala" (St. John's Eve), which was inspired by the traditional festivities that accompany the celebration of the Eve of Kupalo. In a somewhat different vein was Nadia Pavlychenko-Buchan's "The Ukrainian Pioneer: A Choreographic Offering", created in 1966: this work was set to the Ukrainian Suite by Quincey Porter and consisted of six movements; The Voyage, The New Land, Thanksgiving and Rosemarie, Fun, Love, and Our Home.¹⁰⁵ Whereas N. Dobrolidge introduced elements of character ballet and mime into works that were essentially in the folk dance idiom, N. Pavlychenko-Buchan introduced elements of Ukrainian folk dance into the modern dance medium.

Several other women have made individual contributions in the field of Ukrainian dance in Canada since 1945. Among them should be mentioned Anna Zavarichine, a famous ballet dancer of the 1930's and 1940's, who opened the Apollon Ukrainian Ballet Studio in Toronto in 1953 (the school operated until the mid 1960's) and, in addition to teaching classical, exotic and character dance, included plastic movement and Ukrainian folk dance in her curriculum.¹⁰⁶ Another dancer and dance teacher, Olenka Gerdan-Zaklyns's'ka, operated a dancing school first in Winnipeg in the late 1940's and in Toronto during the 1950's.¹⁰⁷ She was an exceptionally gifted dancer and

¹⁰⁵

The sets for the original production presented were designed by William Kurelek.

¹⁰⁶

Various ballet recital programmes of Apollon Ukrainian Ballet Studio.

¹⁰⁷

"Nashi suchasnytsi — Olenka Gerdan-Zaklyns'ka" [Our Contemporaries — Olenka Gerdan-Zaklyns'ka], Zhinochyi svit [Woman's World], Toronto, July 1950, No. 7, pp.9 and 15.

choreographer, who often appeared as guest soloist with various groups, or gave dance recitals of her own.¹⁰⁸ She was trained in the modern dance traditions of Mary Wigman¹⁰⁹ and Wigman's influence can be seen in much of Zaklyns'ka's choreographic work. Most of her choreographic output consisted of female solo dances, which were primarily intended for her own performances: among the most outstanding were "Plach Iaroslavny" (The Cry of Iaroslavna), inspired by themes from Ukrainian history and set to a song for dramatic soprano by M. Lysenko; "Slava Ukraini" (Glory to Ukraine), which through choreographic sequences traced the Ukrainian historical past; "Kolysskova" (Lullaby), set to the music of V. Barvins'kyi; "Zoloty son" (Golden Dream), with music by M. Lysenko; and "Osin'" (Autumn), with music by P. Tchaikovsky.¹¹⁰ Daria Nyzhankivska-Snihurowycz conducted a ballet school in Winnipeg from 1950 to 1957. Her teaching combined the technique of

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Among her personal recitals in Canada should be mentioned the "Vechir mystets'koho tantsiu" [Evening of Artistic Dance], presented by O. Gerdan-Zaklyns'ka and her pupils on February 8, 1953 in Toronto and the "Vechir mystets'koho tanku Olenky Gerdan" [Evening of Olenka Gerdan's Artistic Dance], presented on March 25, 1955 at the Ukrainian National Federation Hall in Toronto. (Concert programmes for the recitals.)

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Mary Wigman (b. 1886), pupil of Emile-Jacques Dalcroze and Rudolf Laban, and a pioneer of the modern dance movement, active during the 1920's and 1930's in Germany. In her work, a dancer related his person to a surrounding space that was either hostile or amiable so that space became a character and a dramatic relationship was established. Wigman's dance was an objectified telling of universal, deep-rooted experiences. Her ideas became widespread and were received favourably, particularly in Germany, Switzerland and the United States. (F. Reyna, Histoire du ballet [Paris: Editions Aimery Somogy, 1964], p.182 and S.J.C., "Modern Dance", Encyclopaedia Britannica [Chicago/London/Toronto: Encyclopaedia Britannica Inc., 1943-1973], Vol. 12, p.292.)

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M. Pasternakova, Ukrains'ka zhinka v khoreohrafi [Ukrainian Woman in Choreography] (Winnipeg/Edmonton: Ukrainian Women's Ass'n. of Canada, Natalia Kobrynska Foundation, 1963), pp.169-173.

classical ballet with the character of stylized Ukrainian folk dances. Among her choreographic works should be mentioned the Ukrainian dances for M. Arkas's opera Kateryna; the ballet for the opera Nocturne, with music by M. Lysenko; "Probudzhennia mavky" (The Nymph's Awakening), music by S. Rachmaninoff; "Hutsul's'ka fantaziia" (Hutsul Fantasy), music based on various folk motifs; and "Spomyny z hir" (Reminiscences From the Hills), music by Ia. Iaroslavenko-Bezkorovainyi. She has also been choreographer to the Ukrainian Children's Theatre of Winnipeg.¹¹¹

¹¹¹

Ibid, pp.173-178.

Summation

Among the Ukrainian cultural traditions in Canada, dance occupies a prominent place. From the time of its general introduction into Canada by Vasyl' Avramenko in the 1920's it has attracted countless participants and a large following, drawn from among Ukrainians and non-Ukrainians alike. Ukrainian dancing has always been popular because everyone likes youth, vigour and imagination — qualities it possesses in abundance. It is valued by Ukrainians as one of the most expressive elements of their cultural heritage, and a aspect of their cultural traditions that can easily be shared with their fellow Canadian citizens.

It was due largely to Avramenko's personal efforts that Ukrainian dance gained such quick acceptance and enjoyed such popularity. During the 1930's, no Ukrainian concert or celebration was complete without a few of Avramenko's dances included in the programme. Every Ukrainian community desired to have a dancing group of its own, and there were hundreds of small Ukrainian dancing groups connected with the Ukrainian reading associations, National Homes, church groups and Labour Temples scattered across the country. At this time, Ukrainian dance in Canada was identifiable by its uniformity, as all dances were standardized by Avramenko, and those who continued to lead the dance movement after his departure for the United States did not stray from his dance principles.

In time, however, Ukrainian folk dance in Canada underwent a period of transition. As the older, Avramenko-trained dance instructors discontinued their dance activities their places were taken

over by new dance instructors who usually came up from the ranks of the dancers themselves. The new dance leaders soon tired of limiting themselves to Avramenko's dances and started modifying them and "creating" new dances of their own. Many of the resulting dances were random combinations of dance steps arranged into various geometric dance patterns with a few "spectacular" elements added to make the dances more "interesting". Due to a lack of sensitivity to the folk dance idiom and the lack of adequate knowledge of the sources and traditions of Ukrainian folk dance on the part of many Ukrainian dance instructors of the 1940's and early 1950's, Ukrainian dance of this period was characterized by its confusion and lack of direction.

The mid 1950's and 1960's brought distinct changes into the Ukrainian dance movement in Canada. Foremost among them was the trend towards the establishment of Ukrainian dance "ensembles", a trend that has continued into the 1970's. The desire to exist as performing companies has resulted in a different work approach being adopted by the more successful dancing groups. In earlier times little attention was paid to the dance technique of individual members; today, dance companies devote a good deal of care to the training of their members as dancers — in the 1970's this has come to include the classical ballet and character dance barre and centre-room training methods employed by professional dancers. Several Ukrainian dance groups either invite local ballet teachers to assist them in the dance training or delegate this responsibility to members who have extensive ballet backgrounds. Many of the dance ensembles now audition prospective members

for their dance ability before accepting them into the group.

As a result of this change in direction, the Ukrainian dance repertoire in Canada has also undergone distinct modifications within the last two decades. With stage performances as the ultimate goal, each of the more popular dance ensembles has attempted to develop its own dance style and individual performance programme. Much of the inspiration has come from the spectacular example set by the professional dance companies of Pavel Virsky and Igor Moiseyev. They presented a form of Ukrainian folk dance that had been raised to the level of high performing art by means of outstanding choreography, superb staging and virtuoso execution. In addition to these performances, a large body of published material on Ukrainian dance became available in Canada from the Soviet Ukraine during the 1960's and 1970's. These publications provide a wealth of theoretical and practical information on Ukrainian folk dance, music, costuming and dance training. Unfortunately, many of the dance directors, especially the younger ones, lack an adequate knowledge of the Ukrainian language and general dance terminology to be able to utilize the published material fully. As a result, many choreographers in Canada have tried to mimic the more spectacular elements of the choreography of Virsky and Moiseyev without understanding and accepting the underlying principles of the work of these two masters.

Ukrainian dance in Canada during the 1960's and into the 1970's is more spectacular, and in many cases more proficiently presented, than at any previous time. It is regrettable that, by introducing the more showy dance steps and acrobatic stunts into much of their work for the sake of easy audience appeal, many contemporary choreographers have lost the subtleties

and regional stylistic peculiarities of Ukrainian folk dance.

It would be unfair to include all contemporary Ukrainian dance choreographers in Canada into this group. There have been many who have created fine new dances, or re-interpreted favourite old ones, on the basis of carefully researched material; others have presented various aspects of the Ukrainian people and their culture by means of original, stylized, character dances; others have attempted to create Ukrainian dance suites and even folk ballets. This latter dance trend, which first surfaced during the mid-1960's, has continued into the 1970's with more dance ensembles endeavouring to present integrated, continuous, dance programmes rather than isolated dance numbers.

CONCLUSION

The first Ukrainian immigrants arrived in Canada as "men in sheep-skin coats". Their outlandish apparel, abject poverty, appalling illiteracy, unfamiliar customs, and foreign language made them, at first appearance, a strange and alien group. Unable to communicate with the newcomers, resident Canadians regarded them with hostility and mistrust, forgetting that the sheepskin coats were not a permanent feature of the new settlers, and vocally raising the issue of the Ukrainians' "desirability" as future Canadian citizens.

The Ukrainians believed that they should immediately acquaint themselves with the new land, adapting to its way of life, learning its language, and becoming responsible citizens. Possession of their own homesteads gave the Ukrainian settlers a stake in Canada and they strived to integrate into their surroundings. From the beginning, however, a trend could be discerned among them: towards general integration, on the one hand, and on the other, the struggle to retain a distinctive cultural identity within the Canadian mosaic. Through their hard work and industry, the Ukrainians earned the trust and respect of their fellow-Canadian citizens. Through their maintenance and propagation of cultural traditions, the Ukrainians gained their admiration as well.

If there is one sphere in which the Ukrainians excel, it is in their genius for self-expression in all forms of art. Institutions for the expression of this gift are to be found everywhere Ukrainians are settled in any number, in both

rural and urban areas.¹

The Ukrainians in Canada developed their life in the knowledge of their ethnic identity and their culture. They valued their cultural traditions, as their heritage, and actively strived to perpetuate them in their adopted homeland. Organized Ukrainian cultural activities, especially in the areas of theatre, choral music and dance, have been more widespread and have enjoyed a greater degree of popularity throughout Ukrainian Canadian history than most Ukrainians today realize. Countless thousands of people of Ukrainian descent have devoted their effort and energy to continuing Ukrainian theatrical, choral and dance traditions in Canada, viewing this cultural work, not only as their sole means of consolation in the struggle for existence, but also as a bulwark against assimilation.

Today, Ukrainian theatre is faced with a dilemma. On one hand, there are people who know the language perfectly but who lack developed theatrical skills, on the other, those professionals who have been trained in the ways of the stage, but who do not possess an adequate knowledge of the Ukrainian language to be able to perform in it. Several theatrical professionals, who have subsequently contributed to the Canadian theatrical scene, received their early experience in the post-war Ukrainian theatre. It is with them, and with the Canadian theatre, that the fate of the Ukrainian dramatic art in Canada must lie.

It is extremely doubtful that a permanent, professional Ukrainian

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C.H. Young, The Ukrainian Canadians: A Study in Assimilation (Toronto: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1931), p.167.

theatre can ever exist in Canada. Through quality translations, however, some of the better works by Ukrainian dramatists might take their rightful place beside the theatrical masterpieces of other nationalities that have become an accepted part of the theatrical repertoires of professional Canadian theatre companies. In this way Ukrainian theatre, though no longer in its pure form, can again become part of the Ukrainian cultural experience not only for people of Ukrainian descent but for all Canadians as well.

There is little doubt that in the years following World War II Ukrainian dance in Canada has increasingly gained in popularity and is today the most widely practised form of Ukrainian cultural expression. It is also the cultural manifestation that seems to be most generally appreciated by other Canadians. Since the first Ukrainian dance performances before large, predominantly non-Ukrainian audiences at the Canadian National Exhibition of 1924, presentations of Ukrainian folk dance have been avidly attended and have consistently attracted favourable reviews. The 1967 Centennial celebrations and the subsequent announcement of the Multiculturalism Policy in 1971 have resulted in increasingly large numbers of requested Ukrainian dance performances from various municipal, provincial and federal agencies who have invited Ukrainian dance ensembles to represent them on special occasions. Grants from public and private sectors have, in recent years, enabled many Ukrainian dance ensembles in Canada to undertake more ambitious projects, to travel, and to enjoy a degree of exposure they have never had in the past.

The great popularity of Ukrainian dance in Canada today is due to its universal appeal. Whereas other forms of Ukrainian cultural expression, such as singing, can convey the mood of the performers, the words enable only those

who know the language to enjoy it fully, while for others, appreciation is limited to the music and, perhaps, to sound patterns. Folk dancing, on the other hand, can be equally understood by all: it appeals to the sense of rhythm, hearing and sight through the mediums of dance movement, musical accompaniment and costuming. In a multicultural country that is Canada, folk dance is one of the most understandable means of communication between people of differing ethnic backgrounds -- Ukrainian dance may well serve as the cultural language by which the Ukrainian Canadians can continue to communicate something of their cultural traditions to others in Canada.

Appendix 1

Table of Transliteration

In the text and bibliographies the Library of Congress system of transliteration is followed but without diacritical marks and ligatures.¹

а	a	і	i	т	t
б	b	ї	i	у	u
в	v	й	i	ф	f
г	h	к	k	х	kh
г	g	л	l	ц	ts
д	d	м	m	ч	ch
е	e	н	n	ш	sh
е	ie	о	o	щ	shch
ж	zh	п	p	ю	iu
з	z	р	r	я	ia
и	y	с	s	ь	'

¹

C. Bettie, ed., A.L.A. Cataloging Rules for Author and Title Entries (Chicago: American Library Association, 1949), p.246.

Appendix 2

List of Plays Written by Ukrainian Canadian Playwrights²

Babienko, V.V.

Mizh burlyvymy fyliamy (Among the Stormy Waves) - published 1918

Bodrug, Ivan

Ubiynyky (Killers) - published 1909 in Winnipeg

Borysyk, Mykhailo

Na Rizdvo Khrystove (On Christmas) - published 1927 in Winnipeg

Diak uchytelem (The Cantor As Teacher) - published 1927 in Winnipeg

Chaikovs'kyi, Petro

Horniatko kavy (A Cup of Coffee)

Ewach, Honore (Onufrii Ivakh)

Vidlet zhuravlia (The Crane's Departure) - published in Kanadiis'kyi

Farmer [The Canadian Farmer] 1923

Holhofa Ukrainy (Ukraine's Golgotha, 1917) - published in Kanadiis'-

kyi Farmer 1924

Havrychenko, Iosyp

Hostyna Sviatoho Mykolai (The Visit of St. Nicholas) - published 1933
in Winnipeg

Hospodyn, Andrii

Neporozuminnia (A Misunderstanding)

Shchaslyvyi den' (Lucky Day)

Cholovik, shcho zhinku peremih (A Man Who Defeated A Woman)

Hun'kevych, Dmytro

V halyts'kii nevoli (In Galician Bondage) - published 1921 by "Uk-
rains'ka Knyharnia", Winnipeg

Zhertvy temnoty (Victims of Ignorance) - published 1924 by "Rusalka"
publishers, Lviv

Klub sufrazhistok (Suffragette Club) - published 1925 by "Teatral'na Biblioteka", Lviv, 2nd ed. 1931, 3rd ed. 1936
Krovavi perly (Bloody Pearls) - published 1926 by "Teatral'na Biblioteka", Lviv
Rozhdestvens'ka Nich (Christmas Night) - published 1924 by "Mars" Publishers, Winnipeg
Manivstiamy (By Devious Paths) - published 1931 by "Teatral'na Biblioteka", Lviv
Na khvyliakh liubovy (On the Waves of Love) - published in Kanadiis'kyi Farmer 1928
Pans'ki prymkhy (A Lord's Eccentricities) - published 1928 by "Rusalka" publishers, Lviv
Liga Natsii (League of Nations)
Rai i peklo na zemli (Paradise and Hell on Earth) - manuscript form
Potomky heroiv (Descendants of Heroes) - published by "Promin'", Winnipeg
Slavko v tarapatakh (Slavko in Mischief) - published by "Promin'", Winnipeg
Vytai vesno (Welcome, Spring!) - published by "Promin'", Winnipeg
Ne zabuly (Not Forgotten) - published by "Promin'", Winnipeg
Navchyt' bida vorozhyt', iak nema shcho v rot vlozhyt' (Adversity Teaches Fortune Telling When There's Nothing to Eat) - published in the calendar of Ukrains'kyi Holos [Ukrainian Voice] 1926

Irchan, Myroslav (Andrii Babiuk)

Dvanadtsiat' (The Twelve) - published 1923 by "Ukrains'ki Robitnychi Visti", Winnipeg
Rodyna shchitkariv (The Family of Brushmakers) - published by "Ukrains'ki Robitnychi Visti", Winnipeg
Bezrobitni (The Unemployed, 1923) - published 1926 by "Ukrains'ki Robitnychi Visti", Winnipeg
Buntar (Mutineer)
Pidzemel'na Halychyna (Underground Galicia) - published 1926 by "Ukrains'ki Robitnychi Visti", Winnipeg
Tragediia pershoho travnia (The Tragedy of May 1st)
Ikh bil' (Their Pain) - published 1923 by "Ukrains'ki Robitnychi Visti", Winnipeg

Kazaniivs'kyi, Vasyl'

Pimsta za kryvdu (The Revenge) - published 1930 in Winnipeg
P'iana korova (The Drunk Cow)
Chort, ne zhinka (The Devil, Not A Woman)
Adamovi sl'ozy (Adam's Tears)
V nediliu rano zillia kopala (On Sunday Morning She Dug the Herbs) - published 1916 in Winnipeg and in Lviv by the "Rusalka" publishers

Kowbel', Semen

Divochi mrii (A Maiden's Dreams, 1919) - published 1920 by Ukrains'kyi Holos, Winnipeg and in Ternopil, Western Ukraine
Liakho-Tatary (Konfidenty) (Confidantes, 1920) - manuscript form

Skarb v zhebrachii torbi (Gems in a Beggar's Bag) - manuscript form
Na tsars'komu sudi (In the Tsarist Court-House) - manuscript form
Nedospivana pisnia (Unfinished Song, 1934) - manuscript form
Baturyn (The Kozak Stronghold) - manuscript form
Na ruinakh Baturyna (On the Ruins of Baturyn) - manuscript form
Na zhertvennyk slavy (For Glory's Altar) - manuscript form
Virna sestra to zoloto (A True Sister is Gold) - published 1938 in
Winnipeg by author
Ukrainizatsiia (Ukrainization) - published 1938 in Winnipeg by author
Delegatsiia do raiu (A Delegation to Paradise) - published 1938 in
Winnipeg by author
Povisyvsia (He Hung Himself) - published 1938 in Winnipeg by author
Sviatyi Nykolai v Kanadi (St. Nicholas in Canada) - published 1938
in Winnipeg by author
Novyi Vertep (The New Manger, 1918) - manuscript form
Tam, de chervoni maky tsvyly (Where the Red Poppies Bloomed, 1940) -
manuscript form
Parubochi mrii (A Young Man's Fancies) - published 1942 in Winnipeg
by author

Kremin', Semen

Bat'kova pomylka (A Father's Mistake, 1940) - published
Pomichnyky (The Assistants, 1941) - published

Krypiakevych, Mykhailo

Na vakatsiiakh (On Vacation) - published in Winnipeg
Charodiina sopilka (The Enchanted Flute) - published
Heroi v mishku (Hero in a Sack) - published
Iak kum kuma lichyv (A Godfather's Remedy) - published 1938
Kozats'ki dity (Kozak Children) - published 1935

Kyrstiuk, Rev. D.

Do viry bat'kiv (To Parents' Faith) - published 1937 by Ukrains'kyi
Holos

Luhovyi, Oleksander (Oleksander V. Ovruts'kyi-Shvabe)

Vira Babenko - published 1936
V lystopadovu nich (On a November Night) - published 1938
V dniakh slavy (In the Days of Glory) - published 1938
Ol'ha Basarabova - published 1936
Dala divchyna khustynu (A Girl Gave Her Scarf) - published 1933
Brat na brata (Brother Against Brother) - published 1934
Za narid svi (For Your Nation) - published 1932
Syrits'ki sl'ozy (An Orphan's Tears) - published 1934
Pany i raby (Masters and Slaves) - published 1936
Bez vyny karani (Punished Without Cause) - published 1938
(all of Luhovyi's plays were published in Winnipeg by
Ukrains'kyi Holos, Novyi Shliakh [The New Pathway] or by
the author himself)

Maidanyk, Iakiv

Manigrula (The Immigrant) - published 1915, 2nd ed. 1926

Makulovych, Dmytro

Ditiam na Rizdvo (For the Children at Christmas) - published 1928
in Winnipeg

Manyliv, N.M.

Halia - published 1934 in Winnipeg

Pid odnu bulavu (Under One Mace) - published 1934 in Winnipeg

Petrivs'kyi, Mykhailo

Katy biloho orla (Executioners of the White Eagle) - published 1922

Kanadiis'kyi zhenykh (A Canadian Bridegroom) - published 1918

Milion (Million) - published

Diakouchytel' v shkoli (The Teacher in School) - published

Pylypenko, Pylyp (Pylyp Ostapchuk)

V pazurakh Cheka (In the Claws of the Cheka) - published 1931 in
Winnipeg

Chudovyi ziat' abo Holod na Ukraini (A Wonderful Son-in-Law or
Famine in Ukraine) - published 1931

Smert' komisara Skrypnyka (The Death of Commissar Skrypnyk) - published

Soviets'kyi rozvid (Soviet Divorce) - published 1932 in Winnipeg

Slovo iak horobets' (A Word is Like A Sparrow) - published

Bahrianyi khrest (Purple Cross) - published

Sribnyi cherep (Silver Skull) - published

Svyshchemo na krizu (We're Whistling At the Crisis) - published

Halychyna v ohni (Galicia in Flames) - published

Savchuk, Semen

Kimnata do vynaimu (Room for Rent)

Tulevitriiv, Vasyl' (Viktor Lysenko)

Taka ii dolia (Such Is Her Destiny) - published 1940 in Hamilton by
author

Vesele i shchaslyve zhyttia (Happy and Lucky Life) - published 1944

Zakhariichuk, Andrii

Cherha (The Lineup)

Appendix 3

Educational Summer Courses

The first Conductors' and Teachers' Courses (Dyrygents'ko-uchytel's'ki Kursy) were held in Toronto in 1940. The courses were organized under the auspices of the Ukrainian National Federation, largely through the efforts of Dr. Pavlo Macenko, who at the time was responsible for developing a cultural and educational programme for the Federation. The first courses proved so successful that it was decided to repeat them the following year.

In 1941 the second Conductors' and Teachers' Courses were moved to Winnipeg, and although their curriculum was expanded to include other aspects of Ukrainian culture their main emphasis remained on music. Through personal friendship, Macenko was able to persuade O. Koshyts' (who was then residing in New York) to direct the music department of the courses. During the 1941 courses P. Macenko and Ia. Kozaruk assisted Koshyts' in the music department. Other instructors included P. Hladun, M. Kozminchuk and B. Tokaryk.³

In 1942 the courses officially became known as the Educational Summer Courses (Vyshchi Osvitni Kursy - VOK). Forty pupils registered for the courses, which offered a broad range of subjects embracing all branches of Ukrainian culture. The lecturers included O. Koshyts', P. Macenko, Ia. Kozaruk, Rev. I. Shpytkovs'kyi, I. Gulay, W. Swystun and W. Topolnicki.⁴

During the 1943 Educational Summer Courses O. Koshyts' headed the

3

Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre, Winnipeg. Educational Summer Course Archives.

4

Ibid.

Choral Division, P. Macenko lectured on the "Theory and Practice of Conducting", and Roman Prydatkevych headed the Instrumental Department. Other lecturers were Honore Ewach, Rev. V. Kushnir, V. Kostiuik, Rev. S. Semchuk, W. Kossar, Rev. I. Shpytkowsky, I. Gulay, O. Tarnovetsky and T. K. Pavlychenko.⁵

O. Koshyts' taught at the Educational Summer Courses in Winnipeg during four consecutive summers until his death on September 21, 1944. Upon Koshyts's death his wife Tetiana, herself well-versed in music, and an expert in the field of Ukrainian ethnography, moved to Winnipeg where she became closely involved with the Educational Summer Courses and the Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre (Oseredok Ukrains'koi Kul'tury i Osvity). The Centre (complete with Archives, Museum, Library and Reading Room) was established in 1944.⁶ It was to this institution that T. Koshyts' entrusted her husband's personal archives. The Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre soon took on the responsibility of conducting the Educational Summer Courses.

The Educational Summer Courses were conducted throughout sixteen summers (although not consecutively) in Winnipeg (the exception being the 1940 courses held in Toronto and the 1949 and 1950 courses held concurrently in Toronto and Winnipeg). Course directors have been T. Koshyts', P. Macenko and B. Bociurkiw. Beginning with the 13th Educational Summer Courses (1952) they were conducted in conjunction with the University of Manitoba Summer School on the university campus. The last courses were held in 1962.

5

Concert programme booklet. 10th Anniversary Concert of the Ukrainian of the Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre. November 28, 1954, Ukrainian National Federation Hall, Winnipeg.

Appendix 4

List of Avramenko Dance Performances in Canada 1926-1927 ⁶

1.	February 24, 1926	Toronto	Standard Theatre
2.	February 25, 1926	Toronto	Standard Theatre
3.	February 27, 1926	Oshawa	M. Hrushevs'kyi Association
4.	March 6, 1926	Toronto	St. Mary's Hall
5.	March 13, 1926	Oshawa	Ukrainian Labour Temple
6.	March 18, 1926	Hamilton	Odd Fellows Hall
7.	March 20, 1926	Toronto	Alhambra Hall
8-25.	August 30 to September 15, 1926	Toronto	Canadian National Exhibition
26.	December, 1926	Fort William	Orpheum Theatre
27.	December 11, 1926	West Fort William	Prosvita Reading Association
28.	December 13, 1926	Port Arthur	Prosvita Reading Association
29.	December 15, 1926	Fort William	Prosvita Reading Association
30.	January 12, 1927	Kenora	Dairy Palace Theatre
31.	January 20, 1927	Kenora	Prosvita Reading Association
32.	January 22, 1927	Winnipeg	Ukrainian Prosvita Institute
33.	February 25, 1927	Port Arthur	Lyceum Theatre
34.	April 30, 1927	Winnipeg	Amphitheatre
35.	May 11, 1927	Winnipeg	Steinman Hall
36.	May 12, 1927	Winnipeg	Steinman Hall
37.	May 14, 1927	Brookland	Shevchenko Institute
38.	June 3, 1927	Winnipeg	Playhouse Theatre
39.	June 4, 1927	Winnipeg	Playhouse Theatre
40.	June 4, 1927	Saskatoon	Ukrainian National Home
41.	June 25, 1927	Edmonton	Pontifence Theatre
42.	June 28, 1927	Saskatoon	Prosvita Association
43.	July 1, 1927	Saskatoon	Exhibition Grounds
44.	July 1, 1927	Edmonton	Victoria Park
45.	July 1, 1927	Winnipeg	Assiniboia Park
46.	July 4, 1927	Vegreville	Ukrainian National Home
47.	July 5, 1927	Edmonton	Ukrainian National Home
48.	July 7, 1927	Mundare	Ukrainian National Home
49.	July 9, 1927	Edmonton	M. Hrushevs'kyi Association
50.	July 26, 1927	Winnipeg	Steinman Hall

Compiled from: "Avramenko v Kanadi" [Avramenko in Canada], Ilustrovanyi kaliendar "Kanadiis'koho ukraintsia" [Illustrated Calendar of the "Canadian Ukrainian"], Winnipeg, 1928, pp.109-112; "Avramenko v Kanadi" [Avramenko in Canada], Klenovyi lyst. Kanadiis'kyi Al'manakh [Maple Leaf. Canadian Almanac], Winnipeg, 1929, p.106; and I. Knysh, Zhyva dusha narodu (Do iuvileiu ukrains'koho tanku) [The Nation's Living Soul (On the Jubilee of Ukrainian Folk Dance)] (Winnipeg: Published by the Author, 1966).

51.	July 28, 1927	Winnipeg	Steinman Hall
52-58.	July 25-30, 1927	Saskatoon	Exhibition Grounds

Avramenko's First Touring Dance Company

59.	August 1, 1927	Brandon	City Hall
60.	August 2, 1927	Regina	Theatre Regina
61.	August 3, 1927	Regina	Theatre Regina
62.	August 4, 1927	Regina	Theatre Regina
63.	August 5, 1927	Melville	Town Hall
64.	August 6, 1927	Yorkton	Town Hall
65.	August 8, 1927	Shiho	Ukrainian National Home
66.	August 9, 1927	Canora	Dag Avt Hall
67.	August 10, 1927	Arran	Ukrainian National Home
68.	August 12, 1927	Dauphin	Ukrainian National Home
69.	August 13, 1927	Oakburn	Ukrainian National Home
70.	August 31, 1927	Winnipeg	Ukrainian Prosvita Institute
71.	September 1, 1927	Winnipeg	Ukrainian Autocephalus Sobor
72.	September 2, 1927	Winnipeg	Queen's Theatre
73.	September 4, 1927	Winnipeg	Queen's Theatre

Avramenko's Second Touring Dance Company

74.	September 28, 1927	Portage la Prairie	Playhouse Theatre
75.	September 29, 1927	Shoal Lake	Masonic Hall
76.	September 30, 1927	Russell	McRostie Hall
77.	October 1, 1927	Rosburn	Rosburn Hall
78.	October 4, 1927	Dunville	Ukrainian National Home
79.	October 5, 1927	Calder	Calder Hall
80.	October 6, 1927	Kamsack	Elite Theatre
81.	October 7, 1927	Roblin	Odd Fellows Hall
82.	October 8, 1927	Sifton	Ukrainian National Home
83.	October 10, 1927	Ethelbert	Ukrainian National Home
84.	October 11, 1927	Pine River	Ukrainian National Home
85.	October 15, 1927	Ituna	Sichovyi Dim
86.	October 17, 1927	Theodore	English hall
87.	October 18, 1927	Foam Lake	Ukrainian hall
88.	October 24, 1927	Saskatoon	Prosvita Institute
89.	October 25, 1927	Vonda	English hall
90.	October 26, 1927	Mitchum	Ukrainian National Home
91.	October 27, 1927	Wakaw	English hall
92.	October 28, 1927	Tarnopil	Ukrainian National Home
93.	October 29, 1927	Cudworth	Ukrainian National Home
94.	November 1, 1927	Prince Albert	English hall
95.	November 2, 1927	Krydor	Ukrainian National Home
96.	November 3, 1927	Hafford	English hall
97.	November 4, 1927	Radison	
98.	November 6, 1927	Whitkow	Ukrainian National Home
99.	November 7, 1927	Lloydminster	City Hall

100.	November 8, 1927	Vermillion	
101.	November 9, 1927	Innisfree	Myroslavna Ukrainian National Home
102.	November 10, 1927	Vegreville	Vimy Theatre
103.	November 11, 1927	Mundare	Ukrainian National Home
104.	November 12, 1927	Lamont	English hall
105.	November 13, 1927	Zavallia	Ukrainian National Home
106.	November 14, 1927	Bruderheim	German hall
107.	November 15, 1927	Edmonton	Ukrainian National Home
108.	November 19, 1927	Redwater	Ukrainian National Home
109.	November 20, 1927	Egremont	Ukrainian National Home
110.	November 21, 1927	Bellis	Ukrainian National Home
111.	November 22, 1927	Redwater	Ukrainian National Home
112.	November 23, 1927	Smoky Lake	Ukrainian National Home
113.	November 24, 1927	Leduc	English hall
114.	November 26, 1927	Edmonton	Pantages Theatre
115.	November 29, 1927	Calgary	English hall
116.	November 30, 1927	Moose Jaw	Ukrainian National Home
117.	December 1, 1927	Moose Jaw	English hall
118.	December 2, 1927	Melville	City Hall
119.	December 3, 1927	Yorkton	English hall
120.	December 5, 1927	Canora	English hall

Appendix 5

The Ukrainian National Youth Federation's "Ukrainian Cavalcade"

"Ukrainian Cavalcade" was the name given to a series of Ukrainian variety shows presented across Canada by the Ukrainian National Youth Federation following World War II. The performances were staged by the organization's Dominion Executive in an effort to promote organized cultural and educational activity among young people of Ukrainian descent in Canada. In the programme booklets which accompanied the concerts an appeal was made:

The Ukrainian Canadian Youth must take up the torch and carry on. In order to contribute to the Canadian culture and Canada's welfare, the youth must be organized and united to work for a common cause.⁷

The "Ukrainian Cavalcade" concerts were held throughout Canada between 1946 and 1949, during which time some twenty such performances were presented. They were held in most of the larger Ukrainian centres, having branches of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation, from Vancouver and Lulu Island, British Columbia in the west, to Kirkland Lake, in Northern Ontario, and Montreal, in the east.⁸

The idea of staging the "Ukrainian Cavalcade" was put forth by Michael Orychiwsky of Montreal and he was appointed to the organization's Dominion Executive in 1946, for the purpose of directing the travelling shows. Orychiwsky had received diplomas in choral conducting and dance instruction from the Educational Summer Courses in Winnipeg (which he attended in 1944

⁷
Programme booklet. Ukrainian Cavalcade. December 12, 1946, Ukrainian National Federation Auditorium, Edmonton.

⁸
From various "Ukrainian Cavalcade" programmes. (Public Archives of Canada. Ukrainian National Youth Federation Archives. Manuscript Group 28 V 8.)

and 1945⁹) and had successfully staged many Ukrainian variety shows in the Montreal area. The most spectacular of these had been the "Ukrainian Concert Hour" presented in Montreal's Monument National Theatre on November 18, 1945.¹⁰

Each of the "Ukrainian Cavalcade" concerts combined youth choirs, folk dancing, instrumental music and operatic fragments. Although all of the concerts followed a similar format, individual programme numbers varied from city to city. Orychiwsky would arrive at a given branch and put together a show composed largely of local talent, tailoring the programme format to fit their specific capabilities. Occasionally, talent from several local Ukrainian youth organizations would pool their resources to provide the required calibre of entertainment.¹¹ Sometimes the same show would be presented in several surrounding locations.

The programme for each concert was divided into two parts — the first consisted of music, songs and dances from the Hutsul region of Ukraine and often included some Ukrainian classical music, while the second presented the music and dances of Central Ukraine, with a few excerpts from S. Hulak-Artemovs'kyi's opera Zaporozhets'za Dunaiem (Kozak Beyond the Danube) completing the performance. A typical production might combine a mixed choir, a small orchestra, a dance ensemble and several solo vocal and instrumental performances.

⁹ Programme booklet. Ukrainian Cavalcade. May 2, 1947, Lyric Theatre, Vancouver.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ukrainian Cavalcade. December 12, 1946, Edmonton.

These variety shows were well received and won acclaim from Ukrainian, Francophone and English-speaking audiences in every centre they were presented:

A three hour programme in which they interpreted the history and habits of the country from which thousands have come [...] Choosing the most popular Ukrainian love songs and skillful native dances, the young director demonstrated the great possibilities existing among the youthful Ukrainian Canadians.¹²

¹²

The Albertan, Calgary, January 13, 1947.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

C.N.E.	Canadian National Exhibition
KUK	Komitet Ukraintsiv Kanady Ukrainian Canadian Committee
MUN	Molodi Ukrains'ki Natsionalisty Ukrainian National Youth Federation
ODUM	Obiednannia Demokratychnoi Ukrains'koi Molodi Ukrainian Democratic Youth Association
SUM	Spilka Ukrains'koi Molodi Ukrainian Youth Association
SUMK	Soiuz Ukrains'koi Molodi Kanady Canadian Ukrainian Youth Association
SURD	Stovaryshennia Ukrains'kyi Robitnychy Dim Ukrainian Labour Temple Association
TURFDim	Stovaryshennia Ukrains'kyi Robitnycho-Farmers'kyi Dim Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association
U.N.F.	Ukrainian National Federation Ukrains'ke Natsional'ne Obiednannia
UNO	Ukrains'ke Natsional'ne Obiednannia Ukrainian National Federation
U.N.Y.F.	Ukrainian National Youth Federation Molod' Ukrains'koho Natsional'noho Obiednannia
UVAN	Ukrains'ka Vil'na Akademiia Nauk Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences
U.W.V.A.	Ukrainian War Veteran's Association Ukrains'ka Strilets'ka Hromada
VOK	Vyshchi Osvitni Kursy Educational Summer Courses

ABSTRACT

Ukrainian Cultural Traditions in Canada:
Theatre, Choral Music and Dance, 1891-1967

by Alexandra Pritz
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The Ukrainians in Canada have, as a group, endeavoured to preserve and propagate their cultural traditions in their adopted homeland from the arrival of the first settlers in 1891 to the present day. They have attempted to mold themselves by means of their own cultural traditions, as a separate ethnic entity, possessing their own innate values and distinct cultural characteristics. These efforts have been particularly notable in the areas of theatre, choral music and dance.

Numerous factors necessitated Ukrainian emigration from Ukraine and each of the three waves of Ukrainian immigration to Canada differed from each other in terms of the economic position, educational level and political-national orientation of its members. These differences reflected themselves in organized community life and affected all Ukrainian theatrical, choral and dance activity in this country.

Ukrainian theatre was extremely popular among Ukrainian Canadians, particularly during the 1920's and 1930's, at which time hundreds of amateur groups flourished across the country. Theatrical performances were seen as a means of creative expression for the participants, as a pedagogical tool useful in awakening cultural awareness among the audience, and as an acceptable way of raising funds for further community work. For the most part, the

theatrical repertoire staged in Canada was written by authors in Ukraine with ethnographic plays being most popular with Canadian audiences. Ukrainian Canadian dramatists also wrote many plays which often dealt with recent events in Ukraine or in Canada that were of topical interest.

Choral singing has remained consistently popular among Ukrainian Canadians and has been widely used during their religious services, as part of Ukrainian musical theatre and as an artistic tradition in its own right. Since choral music was a popular means of familiarising non-Ukrainians with the Ukrainian cultural heritage, many choral performances were presented by various Ukrainian choirs before their fellow Canadian citizens. A tremendous role in the development of Ukrainian choral music in Canada can be accredited to Oleksander Koshyts', first through the tour of his Ukrainian National Choir and later, through his involvement with the Educational Summer Courses.

Although dance was a relative newcomer to the cultural scene in comparison to the two other fields of cultural activity discussed, it quickly gained acceptance and has remained the favourite form of cultural expression, especially among the younger generation. Vasyl' Avramenko's name is synonymous with Ukrainian dance in Canada and his influence extended far beyond his brief two year stay in this country. Great changes occurred in the Ukrainian dance movement following World War II with the formation of strong, performing dance ensembles. As a result of performances by visiting professional dance companies from the Soviet Union and the availability of published material on Ukrainian dance from the Soviet Ukraine, the Ukrainian dance repertoire in Canada has undergone distinct changes.

The first Ukrainian immigrants arrived in Canada as "men in sheep-skin coats" whose "desirability" as future Canadian citizens was questioned. Through their hard work and industry, the Ukrainians earned the trust and respect of their fellow Canadian citizens. Through their maintenance and propagation of cultural traditions, the Ukrainians gained their admiration as well.