



fig.1 Exterior view of St. Anne's Anglican Church, Toronto. (Photo: Tom Moore)

ST. ANNE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, TORONTO

Byzantium versus Modernity

In 1907 the Reverend Lawrence Skey (1867-1948) and other members of the Building Committee of St. Anne's Anglican Church in Toronto voted to replace their overcrowded Gothic Revival building with a neo-Byzantine structure.¹ The design, by local architect William Ford Howland (1874-1948), included a centralized plan in the shape of a Greek cross, a plain brick exterior, a central dome sixty feet high resting on pendentives, and a raised chancel set in a semi-domed apse in the west arm of the cross (figs.1 and 2). Thus the first church in Canada to adopt salient features of Byzantine architecture was erected in Toronto in 1908.²

In the spring of 1923 when funds for refurbishing the interior of St. Anne's became available³ J.E.H. MacDonald (1873-1932), then an instructor in design at the Ontario College of Art, was commissioned with a team of artists to decorate the interior with Byzantine-style mural paintings dedicated to the theme of the divinity of Christ.⁴ The curved vault of the apse was covered with an elaborate blue and gold vine scroll symbolizing the *Eucharist* (fig.3) and is reminiscent of the apse vault of the Church of San Vitale in Ravenna. Within the scroll are seven medallions with symbols that were frequently employed in Early Christian/Byzantine art. Below the medallions are seven icon-like panels with narrative scenes that commonly formed the core of Byzantine church decoration.⁵ The central panel represents the Transfiguration, and so suggests that MacDonald based his work on the two Byzantine mosaics of the same subject similarly located in apses: Sant'Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna and St. Catherine's Church on Mount Sinai.⁶

The most important events in Christ's life, the *Nativity* (fig.4), the *Crucifixion*, the *Resurrection* and the *Ascension* (fig.5) are depicted on the pendentives, and set apart as they are in traditional Byzantine decoration. The dome, now gold with white stenciled stars, was originally painted red and decorated with Christian motifs. At its base are four painted medallions with heads of the Old Testament prophets — Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Daniel — which alternate with sculpted heads of the Four Evangelists. The use of medallion busts for biblical figures was commonplace in Byzantine church decoration, as were portraits of the Evangelists in front of the apse and typological arrangements of Old and New Testament figures. For the entire programme MacDonald employed "the flat treatment and strong simple colouring of the Byzantine style."⁷ Decorative

details, such as the style and colours of the vine scroll and of the floral borders on the pendentives, are clearly derived from wallpaper and textile patterns associated with the Arts and Crafts Movement of which MacDonald must be counted a member.⁸ Many of these patterns were, of course, based on medieval designs.

With the completion of the murals in December of 1923 St. Anne's became the only Protestant church in Canada with monumental narrative wall paintings.⁹ Yet, both the avant-garde architectural design and the correspondingly unique interior decoration had been commissioned by a congregation of "mostly Orangemen" who were known to hold strikingly conservative views on the appearance of ecclesiastical structures.¹⁰ Moreover, the parish which St. Anne's served was working-class and the city of Toronto itself might well be described as provincial in 1907. A fearful Anglican bishop even suggested that the Byzantine design might cause passers-by to mistake it for a synagogue or mosque.¹¹ Art critic Augustus Bridle stated that St. Anne's had "the most unconventional Anglican interior."¹² One newspaper account referred to the structure as "Lawrence Skey's Byzantine [*sic*] Defiance."¹³ Given the context and these reactions, the selection of the Byzantine design requires an explanation.

Details of the design competition held by the Church, or records of the negotiations between the architect and the Building Committee might account for the choice, but unfortunately they are not extant. Furthermore, publications on St. Anne's have always focused on the paintings, rather than on the complex as a whole, undoubtedly because three of the muralists — Frank Carmichael, J.E.H. MacDonald, and Frederick Varley — were members of the Group of Seven. Even so, until the late 1980's the murals were discussed only in brief newspaper and magazine articles, where critics like John Bentley Mays had no more to say than that the paintings were "fabulously beautiful."¹⁴ Such statements, fail to acknowledge that the paintings were simply the final stage of the construction.

In 1988 the first scholarly investigation of the architecture of St. Anne's was undertaken by Catherine Mastin, who concluded that the Byzantine style was the personal choice of the Reverend Skey.¹⁵ As Mastin carefully demonstrates, Skey strongly supported union with other Protestant churches, including the Eastern Orthodox. Since the Byzantine style was developed between the fourth and sixth centuries, that is, before the Church had divided into sects, it would have occurred to Skey that Byzantine architecture could suitably symbolize union. Mastin suggests that Skey would have been particularly sensitive to this potential for symbolism, since, according to family history, he may have traveled to Constantinople not long before St. Anne's Byzantine design was selected. To support her position Mastin argues that Skey could not have selected the Byzantine style through a desire to imitate other recently constructed neo-Byzantine churches, for there were too few to have come to his attention. Similarly, Skey could not have been influenced by contemporary publications on Byzantine architecture because



fig.2 Interior of St. Anne's Anglican Church, Toronto.
(Photo: Tom Moore)

strong interest in this field appeared only after 1907. Finally Mastin doubts that William Ford Howland could have suggested a Byzantine design, since she regards his professional experience as limited at the time of the St. Anne's commission.

However, Mastin's position may be contested on various grounds. First, church records indicate that Skey was never absent from St. Anne's for more than a month during the period in question, and so probably did not go to Constantinople.¹⁶ In addition, Skey's support of union with the Eastern Orthodox Church was not unique. Throughout the nineteenth century similar pleas had been voiced by Christians everywhere, including Anglicans, often as a means of providing a united front against modernity's skepticism about Christian teachings.¹⁷ Also, as a former prizewinning theological student at Wycliffe College in Toronto, Skey would have known that the Christian Church had broken up into many sects well before the establishment of a distinct Byzantine architecture. Thus, he would not have seen a Byzantine design as a clear symbol of unity.¹⁸ Finally, and most importantly, it is unreasonable to assume that by the time Howland submitted his design for St. Anne's, there was no professional (as well as lay) interest in Byzantium. In fact, the design of St. Anne's was part of a modest, but nevertheless widespread, Revival of Byzantine church architecture that began in Europe in the 1820's. Unfortunately for scholars interested in this Revival, and St. Anne's place within it, no comprehensive history has been written.¹⁹

Until the 1820's Byzantine architecture was regarded by Europeans as static and unworthy of study. Then developments in historiography led scholars to provide a more objective understanding of the medieval period in general. Concomitantly, the cessation of the Greek War of Independence resulted in increased colonialism and trade offering more Europeans the opportunity to travel to the Middle East. "Orientalism" provided exotically compelling views of Byzantium for those who stayed at home. Furthermore, the Romantic search for a modern architectural style led to an examination of the transitional and flexible aspects of Byzantine architecture that were inherent in its synthesis of the Greek, the Eastern and the Christian.²⁰ From the 1820's until the time of St-Anne's construction, German and French scholars in particular opened institutes devoted to Byzantine studies and published many accounts of Byzantine architecture.²¹ The Germans were most interested in its Greek features which might endow the architecture of the Middle Ages with a classical base, while the French explored their historic link to Byzantium through the many domed medieval churches of the Périgord region.²² In the 1850's, by which time Byzantine architecture had been placed in a much more positive light, architects, especially in France, began to design churches with Byzantine features.²³ These works, however, unlike those produced by the Gothic Revival, avoided scholarly imitations of historic struc-



fig.3 Chancel of St. Anne's Anglican Church,
Toronto. (Photo: Tom Moore)

tures. Perhaps this was because immediate models were not available for comparative purposes, but more likely because Western architects assumed that their publics required a tempering of Eastern exoticism.

Given the English Canadian and Protestant affiliation of St. Anne's, however, it is within the Revival of Byzantine church architecture in England and in the United States that the commission ought to be examined more closely. The English phase, which began in the 1840's, naturally took earlier continental research into account but did not share its interests in structural rationalism. Rather, it focused on the visual features of Byzantine art and architecture and their supposed intense spirituality. For example, in 1847 the Scottish art historian and connoisseur Lord Lindsay published *Sketches in the History of Christian Art* in which he argued that Byzantine art and architecture provided a purer and more direct expression of Christianity.²⁴ Most important in terms of popularizing Byzantine art and architecture for the English-speaking public were John Ruskin's impassioned descriptions in *Stones of Venice*, which appeared between 1851 and 1853. They were based on what he regarded as the beauty, harmony and inherent morality



fig.4 E.H. Varley, *The Nativity*, 1923, St. Anne's Anglican Church, Toronto. (Photo: Tom Moore)

of the hand-crafted work of the Byzantines. As he stated, "Foolish modern critics have seen nothing in the Eleusinian divinity of Byzantine tradition."²⁵ Over the next half-century and well into the twentieth Ruskin's views were supported and published by William Morris and many others involved in the Arts and Crafts Movement. Such views were, of course, available in North America, where they were widely read and highly regarded.²⁶

Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century many scholarly articles on Byzantine church architecture were published in England. By the end of the century lavishly illustrated books appeared, such as Lethaby's and Swainson's well-known *The Church of Sancta Sophia, Constantinople* of 1894. Texts written for architects laid out the practical features of Byzantine church plans. For example, James Cubitt declared that both the sounds and the view of church ritual were better in Byzantine architecture than in Gothic, while Joseph Gwilt wrote, "No style is so well adapted for the wants of the present day as the Byzantine."²⁷ In 1877 John Oldrid Scott designed the Anglican Church of St. Sophia, Moscow Road, London (now the Orthodox Cathedral of London) with a Greek cross plan,



fig. 5 H.S. Stansfield, *The Ascension of Christ*, 1923,
St. Anne's Anglican Church, Toronto. (Photo: Tom Moore)

a red brick exterior, and interior banding of brick and stone. Several churches of this type appeared over the next few years.²⁸ Then in 1895 construction of London's neo-Byzantine, Catholic, Westminster Cathedral began. It was designed by Arts and Crafts architect J.F. Bentley. Although it has a basilican plan, its domes, the striking use of banded stonework on the exterior and other prominent Byzantine features assert its stylistic origins. Its monumental size and prominent central London location close to Westminster Abbey brought the Byzantine Revival to the attention of the general population just before the turn of the century.²⁹ Moreover, it spawned other British examples, such as, the Anglican Christ Church, Brixton Road, Oval, erected between 1897 and 1903 and designed by Beresford Pite.³⁰

As Westminster Cathedral was being constructed in London, the Byzantine Revival appeared in the United States. For example, in the late 1890's American clerics hired the English artist and Arts and Crafts exponent Edward Burne-Jones to decorate the American Episcopalian Church in Rome with mosaics based on the Byzantine art of Ravenna.³¹ From 1893 until 1913 Heins and La Farge constructed St. Matthew's Catholic Cathedral, Washington, D.C. in the Byzantine

style.³² St. Paul's non-denominational neo-Byzantine chapel by Howells and Stokes was built on the campus of Columbia University in New York between 1905 and 1906.³³ Naturally a related body of American literature appeared concurrently.

Canadians did not write books, produce journals or open institutes devoted to Byzantine studies in the nineteenth century or even in the early twentieth. Moreover, Canadian architects did not employ Byzantine models with any seriousness before the construction of St. Anne's. It is possible to point to some Byzantine elements used, for example, by Napoléon Bourassa for Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes in Montréal (1876-80), and by F.W. Cumberland for Toronto's University College (1856-59, destroyed by fire), and to the Chandler family mausoleum of 1900 in Toronto's Mount Pleasant cemetery. The buildings by Bourassa and Cumberland, although described as having Byzantine features, clearly represent revivals of Romanesque architecture. Until the middle of the nineteenth century, and later in some cases, historians often merged the two styles under the term Byzantine.³⁴ The Chandler mausoleum was probably inspired by a Byzantine-style tomb designed several years earlier by Louis Sullivan in the United States. However, without Sullivan's rich decorative detail, the building appears as a dull domed cube.³⁵ It is not surprising that when J.E.H. MacDonald observed the low borrowing rate of Byzantine texts at the University of Toronto — where he went to obtain models for St. Anne's murals — he concluded that "people don't bother very much about the Byzantine Empire."³⁶ He would have been correct if he had said "Canadian people."

Nevertheless, English and American books and popular journals that provided information on Byzantium were widely available in Canada, and articles on the subject, which put Byzantine architecture in a positive light, were occasionally published in Canadian popular magazines. For example, a 1906 article on Venice in the *Canadian Magazine* stated in Ruskinian tones: "Not here do we find the dim religious light, the solemn shadows of Gothic cathedrals, but in the Byzantine architecture, in the wondrous blending of colour, in the flow of gold and gems, St. Mark's stands alone."³⁷ More importantly, for this study, Canadian architects usually studied in France, England or the United States, and on their return to Canada made extensive use of foreign architectural publications, since almost no Canadian counterparts existed. St. Anne's architect, William Ford Howland, was a member of the Toronto Architectural Sketch Club which was founded in 1889 "to broaden horizons" of local architects and was affiliated with the Architectural League of America.³⁸ He was also a resident of New York City for two years before 1907. He must, therefore, have been familiar with the recent literature on and with the key monuments of the Byzantine Revival. It is also likely that he saw St. Paul's Chapel at Columbia University and possibly St. Matthew's Cathedral in Washington while they were under construction. He

would certainly have known about them. It is reasonable, therefore, to conclude that William Ford Howland introduced the Byzantine plan to St. Anne's Building Committee based on his professional knowledge of the Byzantine Revival.

Howland's recommendation of a Byzantine design would not completely account for its reception by St. Anne's Building Committee. Such a plan must still have seemed eccentric to provincial, working-class Orangemen. However, it is important to remember that during this period that any selection of an architectural style represented a conscious selection of meaning. Nineteenth-century church architecture adopted first the Gothic and then the Romanesque, with their perceived intense levels of spirituality, as means of countering the dramatic weakening of Christian authority in the modern age. The Byzantine was selected for the same reason, but was often described as having greater potential to assert the authority of the Church since it had a closer link to the earliest Christian period. In Canada at this time, and of course throughout Western culture, scientific studies had led both to the Industrial Revolution and to the questioning of Christian dogma. In turn the Industrial Revolution had brought about rising living standards and levels of comfort that decreased the need for spiritual solace, while other avenues of the metaphysical offered attractive alternatives to Christianity. In the face of modernity's undermining its authority the Church made counterattacks. Church union, which offered strength in numbers, was one of them. The use of Medieval architecture was another. It was undoubtedly within this context that a Byzantine design found favour with St. Anne's Orangemen.

Christians who lamented the loss of Church authority reacted differently in different nations. For example, in England the upper and middle classes expressed marked concern for the diminution of the faith of the working classes, who had supposedly left the inherently strong morality of rural lifestyles to move to the immoral conditions of the cities.³⁹ In the United States alarm was frequently declared over each individual's loss of "intense experience."⁴⁰ Naturally Canadians were aware of English and American viewpoints, but in Canada committed Christians frequently came forth with bleak forecasts of a society in which the public good would be destroyed as a result of the withdrawal of institutionalized moral standards. The Church regularly defamed positivism from the pulpit on Sunday mornings, as did the popular press and weekly denominational newspapers designed for family reading, such as the Anglican *Canadian Churchman*. In the *Canadian Magazine*, a journal of general cultural interests, social critic Arnold Haultain lamented: "Materialism does not explain everything. The nineteenth century seems to have brought us to the edge of a precipice, and to have left us there gazing wistfully into outer space."⁴¹ Goldwin Smith, a British historian and social and political commentator working in Toronto from the 1870's until 1910, was obsessed with the deinstitutionalization of moral authority and published

prolifically on the subject. On Darwin's *Descent of Man*, Smith wrote: "It is difficult to see what can restrain the selfishness of the ordinary man, and induce him, in the absence of actual coercion, to sacrifice his personal desire to the public good."⁴² Similar views were provided by university professors. For example, Sir William Dawson, Principal of McGill University and a scientist with an international reputation, reviewed and vehemently rejected Darwin's separation of science and religion as it appeared in *On the Origin of Species*.⁴³ John Watson, a Queen's University philosophy professor, wrote, "The tide of skepticism threatens to tear all that we most highly value from [our] grasp."⁴⁴

In this climate it is not surprising that St. Anne's Building Committee was susceptible to a church design characterized as being the one most capable of combating the secularization of modern life. Indeed, in 1912, just five years after the completion of the building a St. Anne's publications stated: "In the construction ... we chose the Byzantine, the most primitive form of church architecture."⁴⁵ Still, one is left to wonder what encouraged the conservative Building Committee to consider the spirituality of the Gothic Revival as so inadequate that they were willing to adopt a design that would be unique in Canada. In so doing Committee members relinquished the strong association between the Anglican Church and the Gothic style that had been forged by the Cambridge Camden Society in England from the 1830's, and which had existed in Canada since the 1840's.⁴⁶ Moreover, they rejected the original building style of St. Anne's, and in which an addition was added as late as 1889. The Gothic style was the expected choice at that time; this is clearly indicated by the remarks made by Reverend Skey as he reflected on the decision years later: "We [were] severely criticized for following the Byzantine or Greek instead of the popular Gothic style of architecture."⁴⁷ It is reasonable, therefore, to consider the presence of other support for the choice.

Additional motivation for the rejection of the Gothic Revival style may well have been provided by the keen sense of competition that existed between Anglican and evangelical churches in Toronto at the turn of the century. In 1850 most of Toronto's church-going population was Anglican but fifty years later it was surpassed by the evangelical population.⁴⁸ Naturally new church buildings had to be built and architectural styles had to be chosen. In Great Britain and the United States evangelical churches were built in either a neo-classical or vernacular style throughout the nineteenth century.⁴⁹ Presumably these choices were made in part to avoid the strong association between the Gothic and the Anglican Church. However, in Toronto from mid-century the exteriors of evangelical churches were commonly built in the Gothic style which was also often employed for interior decorative details. Such churches rejected the typical Gothic interior floor plan, that is, a basilica with a centre aisle leading to the chancel or sanctuary. Rather, they employed a variety of preaching halls or auditory churches, that would facilitate the delivery of sermons to large crowds, bring the parishioners

closer to the preacher, and demystify the sacrament.⁵⁰ For example, at Toronto's Wesleyan Methodist Church (now Metropolitan United), built between 1870 and 1872, architect Henry Langley designed a box-like interior. For Jarvis Street Baptist Church, built two years later, Langley treated the ground floor as an amphitheatre and added a horseshoe-shaped gallery.⁵¹

This issue of ecclesiastical style in turn-of-the-century Toronto is further complicated by the fact that Anglicans had been pursuing the Evangelist's goals of visibility and audibility within the basilican plan since the last third of the nineteenth century.⁵² Obviously the centralized plan of a Byzantine design solved this problem. As St. Anne's Church officials declared, the Byzantine was appealing because it would provide a church "in which all could see and hear."⁵³ The selection of Byzantine over Gothic also permitted St. Anne's parish to accomplish what the evangelicals had done in this regard without imitating them. Thus in a sense St. Anne's new structure devalued the evangelicals' use of the Gothic. Finally, an additional attraction of the Byzantine style must have been its low construction costs compared to the Gothic.⁵⁴

The commission for the mural paintings at St. Anne's raises another question related to those concerning the commissioning of the architectural design. Why was J.E.H. MacDonald chosen as chief decorator of a church controlled by, in MacDonald's own words, "mostly Orangemen" who had "a restricted idea of colour or display?"⁵⁵ By 1923 MacDonald was well-known and at times condemned by local critics for his wildly colourful, expressionistic renderings of Ontario's northern wilderness. Obviously MacDonald's faculty position at the Ontario College of Art provided him with important professional status, as did his thriving private commercial design practice. He had also gained some experience in mural decoration when he and other members of the Group of Seven decorated the summer home of Dr. J.M. MacCallum in Georgian Bay in 1916.⁵⁶ At the time of the St. Anne's commission MacDonald was promoting mural decoration; he took part in the Royal Canadian Academy's mural competition of 1923, praised George Agnew Reid's Toronto City Hall murals, and lamented the lack of mural art in Canada.⁵⁷ Clearly, then, MacDonald was given the commission because he was, in the words of Lawrence Skey, "one of the foremost members of the profession."⁵⁸

However, the decision to hire MacDonald may also have had something to do with his familiarity with neo-Byzantine architecture. Skey stated that MacDonald was the artist "whose artistic ability would be most likely to produce a color scheme which would be reverent, harmonious and in keeping with the traditions of the [Byzantine] architecture of the church."⁵⁹ Moreover, Skey recounted that he and MacDonald had met at Toronto's Arts and Letters Club on a number of occasions, even before the War, to discuss "the mysteries of Byzantine architecture."⁶⁰ MacDonald had lived in London, England between 1903 and 1907,

where he had worked as a designer for Carlton Cards. During this time he almost certainly visited the recently opened neo-Byzantine Cathedral of Westminster, centrally located between Westminster Abbey and Victoria Station, and may have visited John Oldrid Scott's St. Sophia.⁶¹ He probably also saw Haywood Sumner's Byzantine interior decoration of 1898 in All Saints Anglican Church in Ennismore Gardens, Knightsbridge, as well as its Byzantine renovations carried out by C. Harrison Townsend in 1892.⁶² Sumner covered the church's triumphal arch with framed images within a vine scroll, the overall effect of which is remarkably like that of MacDonald's decoration of St. Anne's apse.⁶³ MacDonald must, therefore, have been as good a source of information on the neo-Byzantine as the Reverend Skey was likely to find in Toronto. Skey himself had visited England only in 1892, before the construction of Westminster, and his knowledge of the style would have been restricted to what he had read.⁶⁴

Furthermore, it would appear that MacDonald was chosen to decorate St. Anne's in part because of the artist's strong spiritual nature, albeit a spiritual nature without any attachment to a specific church. As Alison Garwood-Jones has argued, MacDonald was eager to accept the commission because he regarded it as an opportunity to provide art for the public good.⁶⁵ Indeed, MacDonald claimed that his work would provide "religious vitality" and connect "our busy mechanical period with the far-off poetic days when the church was the soul of the town and its beautifying the ideal of the rich, and the devotion of the artist."⁶⁶ MacDonald made similarly spiritual expressions in his many published poems.⁶⁷ Presumably, then, MacDonald was given the commission because he understood and was in sympathy with the choice of the Byzantine architectural style and he aimed to enhance the desired effect through interior decoration.

MacDonald's views on the potential for mural decoration to provide art for Toronto's public good were also unwittingly expressed by his seemingly curious comparison of the religious murals at St. Anne's with murals depicting the history of local trade and commerce by Ford Madox Brown in Manchester's Town Hall and murals by various artists in London's Royal Exchange which were being installed during MacDonald's years in London.⁶⁸ These paintings were products of the Mural Movement, which began in Northern Europe and Great Britain in the 1830's, spread to the United States in the 1870's and to Canada in the 1880's. Its goal was to promote material progress through the raising of nationalistic sentiment. To this end historical images were employed in civic and commercial buildings. MacDonald had attempted to raise nationalist sentiment through landscape painting and through his recent historical mural, *A Friendly Meeting in Early Canada* which was entered in the Royal Academy's competition. Thus when he compared the murals at St. Anne's and the English historical murals, it would appear that MacDonald also regarded his work at St. Anne's as in some way nationalist.⁶⁹ In fact, he originally planned for the decoration to include

"Canadian motifs, the trillium and other flowers and leaves, and not necessarily the peacock ... of the Byzantines, but a little zoo of our own, hawks, blue jays, robins, wild ducks, orioles, deer, moose, beaver, and squirrels."⁷⁰ In the end such images did not appear; however, the *Ascension of Christ* (fig.5) does take place in front of the Rocky Mountains, while the interior of the dome was painted red to appear as a sunset.⁷¹

An attempt to raise nationalist sentiment through the Old and New Testament mural decorations in a Protestant church may at first appear questionable. However, it is important to remember that, apart from historical paintings in civic and commercial buildings, the Mural Movement had two other important concerns; murals with classicizing subject matter were installed in private sites as a means of documenting the transference of classical culture, from the middle classes, thus acknowledging their material progress. As well elaborate figurative murals were applied to Protestant churches in a manner previously considered suitable only for Catholic churches. These paintings also sanctioned material progress because they were intended as an antidote to the negative features of modern life, without denigrating its material comforts. Ironically they were supported by patrons, like St. Anne's Samuel Stewart, whose fortunes had been secured by the Industrial Revolution. MacDonald certainly never articulated his discussion in just this way. Nevertheless, he clearly referred to society's complex reaction to modernity when he favourably compared his church murals to historical decoration in civic structures. He made further reference to this when he wrote: "It is perhaps typical of our time, that the [chocolate] factory [that faces St. Anne's] should overshadow the church."⁷² In so doing he firmly located his work within the modern Mural Movement rather than within age-old traditions of Christian church decoration.

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Notes

1 St. Anne's Vestry Meeting Minutes, 17 Apr. 1906, Acc. No. 89-6, Box 1, Anglican Archives of Toronto, 76.

2 Catholic Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes, Montréal, designed by Napoléon Bourassa between 1876 and 1880, has some Byzantine features, but has a basilican plan and is largely dependent on Romanesque architecture and probably on Romanesque Catholic churches in France's Périgord region, which were influenced by Byzantine architecture. Until as late as the 1860's the Byzantine style and the Romanesque style were often conflated by historians because they both employed the round arch. See Robert VÉZINA, *Napoléon Bourassa (1827-1916). Introduction à l'étude de son art* (Montréal: Éditions élysée, 1976), 110.

- 3 Half of the funds, \$5000, were provided by Samuel Stewart, a parishioner. That amount was matched by the congregation. See *St. Anne's Church 1862-1987* (Toronto: priv. publ., 1987), 9.
- 4 J.E.H. MACDONALD, "Interior Decorations of St. Anne's Church," *The Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada* 2 (May/June 1925): 89.
- 5 MacDonald's notes and sketches which indicate his choice of models are in the National Archives of Canada, Acc. No. 1973-14. MacDonald did small scale designs for all of the work and full-scale panels of the *Crucifixion*, the *Transfiguration* and the *Storm at Sea*. Frederick Varley (1881-1969) painted the *Nativity* (with a self-portrait as a shepherd) and the prophets, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Daniel at the base of the dome; Frank Carmichael (1890-1945), the *Adoration of the Magi* and the *Entry into Jerusalem*; Herbert S. Palmer (1881-1970), the *Resurrection*; Herbert S. Stansfield (1881-1937), the *Ascension*; Arthur Martin (1888-1961), *Christ Teaching in the Temple*; Neil McKechnie (1873-1970), the *Healing of the Lame Man*; and Thoreau MacDonald (1901-1989), the *Raising of Lazarus*, *St. Anne* (in the south arm) and *St. George* (in the north arm). Francis Loring (1887-1968) and Florence Wyle (1881-1968) sculpted the four symbols of the Evangelists.
- 6 It is possible that the Reverend Skey suggested the central position for the *Transfiguration*, since he wrote on the significance of this biblical event. See his papers, now in the possession of his grandson, Dr. C.E. Rodgers, Brantford, undated and unpaginated.
- 7 MACDONALD, "Interior Decorations of St. Anne's Church," 86.
- 8 For MacDonald's designs and their relationship to the work of the Arts and Crafts Movement see, Robert STACEY, *J.E.H. MacDonald: Designer* (Ottawa: Archives of Canadian Art, 1996). St. Anne's vine scroll may be compared with a William Morris textile pattern. See Katherine A. LOCHNAN, et. al., eds., *The Earthly Paradise. Arts and Crafts by William Morris and His Circle from Canadian Collections* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1993), 131, No. E:10.
- 9 The ceiling of St. Paul's Anglican Church in Toronto (destroyed 1994) was painted in an Art Nouveau style with angels in 1890 by Gustav Hahn. See Eric ARTHUR, *Toronto, No Mean City* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1964), 219-21.
- 10 J.E.H. MACDONALD, "The Choir Invisible," *Canadian Forum* III (January 1923): 111.
- 11 Arthur SWEATMAN, "St. Anne's Church," *Canadian Churchmen* (8 Oct. 1908): 649. The relationship between Jewish synagogue architecture and Byzantine architecture has often been explored. For a nineteenth-century discussion, see VIOLETT-LE-DUC, *Entretiens sur l'architecture* (Paris: Morel, 1863-1872), Vol.1, 215-26. For a recent example see, Geoffrey WIGODER, *The Story of the Synagogue* (Jerusalem: The Domino Press, 1986).
- 12 Augustus BRIDLE, *Toronto Daily Star*, 17 Dec. 1923, 23.
- 13 C. Roy GREENAWAY, "Lawrence Skey's Byzantine Defiance. A Triumph of Toronto Artists," *Toronto Star Weekly*, 19 Jan. 1924, 22.
- 14 John Bentley MAYS, "Group of Seven Treasure Trove Saved," *Globe and Mail*, 5 Apr. 1980.
- 15 Catherine MASTIN, "James Edward Hervey MacDonald and the St. Anne's Anglican Church Mural Decoration Program," (unpublished MA thesis, York Univ., 1988), Sections I and II, and especially p.12-5 and 21-9. I would like to thank Catherine Mastin for discussing St. Anne's with me and for generously providing me with photocopies of *St. Anne's Parish Magazine*.
- 16 Vestry Book (Service Register) 1897-1908, Acc. 89-6, Box 1, Anglican Archives of Toronto. Mastin's reference is a personal communication with Skey's grandson, C.E. Rodgers who, when I spoke with him in 1992, referred to his grandfather's trip to Constantinople as "family gossip."
- 17 MASTIN, "James Edward Hervey MacDonald," 23, acknowledges wide-scale Anglican pleas for union. See also Roger COLEMAN ed., *Resolutions of the Twelve Lambeth Conferences 1876-1988*

(Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1992), 15 and 22; and Rev. J.A. DOUGLAS, *The Relations of the Anglican Churches with the Eastern-orthodox Especially in Regard to Anglican Orders* (London: Faith Press, 1921), esp. 189-93. Canadians also wrote frequently on the subject of union. See, for example, John PORTER, *The Christian's Wedding Ring* (Montréal: Lovell, 1874); Rev. W.W. SMITH, "Church Divisions and Church Union," *Canadian Methodist Magazine* 25 (May 1887): 87; and Francis A. CAR-MAN, "The Outlook for Church Union," *Canadian Magazine* XXIX (August 1907): 458-64.

18 The 1889 Calendar of Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, 28, states that Lawrence Skey won prizes for Ecclesiastical History and Homiletics.

19 Mark Crinson provides a brief history of the nineteenth-century European interest in Byzantine architecture as part of his study of Victorian colonial architecture. See Mark CRINSON, *Empire Building. Orientalism and Victorian Architecture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 1-12 and 72-92.

20 *Ibid.*, 73-74.

21 A great deal of literature by German and French scholars on Byzantine art and architecture appeared between 1830 and the time of the construction of Toronto's St. Anne's. See, for example, the extensive bibliography in Thomas F. MATHEWS, *The Early Churches of Constantinople. Architecture and Liturgy* (University Park and London: Penn. State Univ. Press, 1971). David T. Rice provides bibliography and a history of the interest in the subject in David T. RICE, *The Appreciation of Byzantine Art* (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1972).

22 CRINSON, *Empire Building*, 74-75.

23 For example, Léon Vaudoyer's Marseille Cathedral, begun in 1853, and Paul Badie's Sacré Coeur Church in Paris, begun in 1873. For Byzantine influence on mural decoration in French Catholic churches from the 1840's until the early twentieth century see, Michael DRISKEL, *Representing Belief. Religion, Art and Society in Nineteenth Century France* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Penn. State Univ. Press, 1992).

24 For a discussion of Lindsay's work see John STEEGMAN, "Lord Lindsay's History of Christian Art," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institute* X (1947): 123-31.

25 John RUSKIN, *Val d'Arno*, Lecture III, Section 87, cited in Kenneth CLARK, ed., *Ruskin Today* (London: John Murray, 1964), 197.

26 See Roger B. STEIN, *John Ruskin and Aesthetic Thought in America 1840-1900* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1967). See LOCHNAN, *The Earthly Paradise*, for a discussion of late nineteenth-century interest in William Morris in Canada.

27 James CUBBITT, *Church Designs for Congregations. Its Development and Possibilities* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1870), 5-6; Joseph GWILT, *An Encyclopedia of Architecture, Historical, Theoretical and Practical* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1872), 4th ed., 1007.

28 Alistair SERVICE, *Edwardian Architecture. A Handbook to Building Design in Britain 1890-1914* (New York and Toronto: Oxford Univ. Press, 1977), 81. John Oldrid Scott's father, George Scott, submitted a plan for the Foreign Office in London in a style he called "Byzantinesque;" see Ian TOPLIS, *The Foreign Office. An Architectural History* (London and New York: Mansell Publishing Limited, 1987), 112. For other neo-Byzantine architecture in England see: Alistair SERVICE, "Charles Harrison Townsend," in *Edwardian Architecture and its Origins*, ed., Alistair Service et. al., (London: The Architectural Press, Ltd., 1975), 162-82; Nicholas TAYLOR, "Byzantium in Brighton," *Edwardian Architecture*, 280-8; Alistair SERVICE, *London 1900* (London: Granada Publishing, 1979), 168-169; and David OTTEWILL, "Robert Weir Schultz (1860-1951). An Arts and Crafts Architect," *Architectural History* XXII (1979): 88-115.

29 Winefride DE L'HOPITAL, *Westminster Cathedral and Its Architect* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1915).

- 30 SERVICE, *London* 1900, 169.
- 31 Frederic G. STEPHENS, "Mr. E. Burne-Jones' Mosaics at Rome," *Portfolio* XXI (1890): 101-8.
- 32 Helene PHILIBERT et al., *St. Matthew's of Washington 1840-1940* (Baltimore: A. Hoen and Co., 1940).
- 33 Harmon H. GOLDSTONE and Martha DALRYMPLE, *History Preserved: A Guide to New York City Landmarks and Historic Districts* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1974), 311. In 1919 St. Bartholomew's Church by Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue was built in a Byzantine style on Park Avenue in New York City.
- 34 For Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes see VEZINA, *Napoléon Bourassa*. For University College see Douglas RICHARDSON, *A Not Unsightly Building: University College and Its History* (Oakville: Mosaic Press for University College, 1990). When University College was in the planning stages, its Governor stated a preference for the Byzantine (but probably meant what is currently termed Romanesque). The architect, F.W. Cumberland, preferred Gothic. In the end the building became a mixture of Gothic and Romanesque with "faint traces" of the Byzantine. See ARTHUR, *Toronto, No Mean City*, 137. For neo-Byzantine architecture built in Ontario after 1908 see the Foster Mausoleum, Uxbridge, designed by H.H. Madill in 1936 and illustrated in Alan GOWANS, *Building Canada. An Architectural History of Canadian Life* (Toronto: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966), fig. 200; and the rotunda of the Royal Ontario Museum, built in 1932, decorated with Byzantine-style mosaics, illustrated by SINAITICUS (pseud.), "ROM Toronto," *Construction* 25 (November 1932): 249-52.
- 35 The Chandler mausoleum is mentioned by William DENDY and William KILBOURN, *Toronto Observed. Its Architecture, Patrons and History* (Toronto: Oxford Univ. Press, 1986), 142. For a comparison with Sullivan's two neo-Byzantine mausoleums see Wim DE WIT, ed., *Louis Sullivan. The Function of Ornament* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Co., 1986), 88-89.
- 36 GREENAWAY, "Lawrence Skey's Bysantine Defiance," 22.
- 37 Elsie WATERS, "The Home of the Gondolier," *Canadian Magazine* XXVII (September 1906): 388.
- 38 Angela CARR, *Toronto Architect Edmund Burke. Redefining Canadian Architecture* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's Univ. Press, 1995), 17.
- 39 This reaction was expressed in the writings of Thomas Carlyle, John Ruskin, Matthew Arnold and many others. Ruskin, for example, promoted mural decoration as a means of improving the morality of the working classes, but also wrote: "The office of the upper classes ... as a body is to keep order among their inferiors and raise them always to the nearest level with themselves of which those inferiors are capable." See *Time and Tides*, paras. 138, 139.
- 40 T.J. Jackson LEARS, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), especially 20-39.
- 41 Arnold HAULTAIN, "A Search for an Ideal," *Canadian Magazine* XXII (March 1904): 427.
- 42 Cited in Ramsay COOK, *The Regenerators. Social Criticism in late Victorian English Canada* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1985), 27.
- 43 Dawson's views are summarized in COOK, *ibid.*, 9-12 and 16-17.
- 44 John WATSON, "Darwinism and Morality," *The Canadian Monthly and National Review* II (October 1876): 319-26. For other contemporary Canadian examples of the discussion (with bibliographies) see: Samuel E.D. SHORTT, *The Search for an Ideal: Six Canadian intellectuals and their convictions in an age of transition 1830-1930* (Toronto and Buffalo: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1976);

Alexander B. MCKILLOP, *A Disciplined Intelligence. Critical Inquiry and Canadian Thought in the Victorian Era* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's Univ. Press, 1979); Carl BERGER, *Science, God and Nature in Victorian Canada* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1983); COOK, *The Regenerators*; and David B. MARSHALL, *Secularizing the Faith. Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief 1850-1940* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1992).

45 St. Anne's Church, Toronto. *Fiftieth Anniversary and Jubilee 1862-1912* (Toronto: Carleton Press, 1912), 7.

46 William WESTFALL, *Two Worlds. The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth Century Ontario* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's Univ. Press, 1989), 132.

47 Lawrence SKEY, "Anniversary Sunday," *St. Anne's Parish Magazine* (October, 1921): 1.

48 WESTFALL, *Two Worlds*, 10-11.

49 James WHITE, *Protestant Worship and Church Architecture: Theological and Historical Considerations* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1964), 95-8.

50 WESTFALL, *Two Worlds*, 10-11. See also John BETJEMAN, "Nonconformist Architecture," *Architectural Review* 88 (December 1940): 161-74.

51 CARR, *Toronto Architect Edmund Burke*, 21-5.

52 Victor FIDDES, *The Architectural Requirements of Protestant Worship* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1961), 47.

53 *Ibid.*

54 When designs for Westminster Cathedral were being considered, Cardinal Vaughan favoured the Byzantine because it was less expensive to build than the Gothic. See L'HOPITAL, *Westminster Cathedral and its Architect*, 25.

55 MACDONALD, "The Choir Invisible," 111.

56 Pierre B. LANDRY, *The MacCallum-Jackman Cottage Mural Paintings* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1990).

57 Paul DUVAL, *The Tangled Garden* (Scarborough: Cerebrus/Prentice Hall, 1978), 20.

58 Thomas KENNEDY, "Editorial," *St. Anne's Parish Magazine* (September 1923): 1.

59 Lawrence SKEY, "The Re-opening and Diamond Jubilee of St. Anne's," *St. Anne's Parish Magazine* (December 1923): 1

60 GREENAWAY, "Lawrence Skey's Byzantine Defiance," 22.

61 STACEY, J.E.H. *MacDonald: Designer*, 117.

62 SERVICE, *London 1900*, 169.

63 Gleeson WHITE, "The Work of Heywood Sumner, I. Sgraffito Decorations," *The Studio* XIII (April 1898): 153-63.

64 Skey went to England in July 1892 according to *The Evangelical Churchman* XVIII (18 May 1893): 236.

65 Alison GARWOOD-JONES, "A Study of the Public Importance of the St. Anne's Anglican Church Mural Decoration Program," *Abstracts of the Universities Art Association of Canada*, Annual Meeting, Victoria, 1992, unpag. See also MACDONALD, "Interior Decorations of St. Anne's Church," 85.

66 MACDONALD, "Interior Decorations of St. Anne's Church," 85.

67 E. Robert HUNTER, *J.E.H. MacDonald. A Biography and Catalogue of his Work* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1940), xii and 20.

68 MACDONALD, "Interior Decorations of St. Anne's Church," 85. For Brown's work at Manchester see John H.G. ARCHER, ed., *Art and Architecture at Manchester* (Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 1985), 162-207. For the Royal Exchange paintings see Ann SAUNDERS, *The Royal Exchange* (London: Guardian Royal Exchange, 1991).

69 Marilyn MCKAY, "Canadian Historical Murals 1895-1939. Material Progress, Morality and the 'Disappearance' of Native People," *The Journal of Canadian Art History* XV, no.1 (1992): 68, fig.4.

70 MACDONALD, "The Choir Invisible," 112.

71 GREENAWAY, "Lawrence Skey's Byzantine Defiance," 22.

72 MACDONALD, "Interior Decorations of St. Anne's Church," 85. See Jürgen HABERMAS, trans. T. Burger, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere. An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989 [first published 1962]), for a theoretical discussion of the obliteration of distinctions between the private and the public spheres in the late nineteenth-century.

L'ÉGLISE ANGLICANE ST. ANNE À TORONTO

Byzance et la modernité

C'est en 1908 que fut construite, pour la paroisse anglicane St. Anne de Toronto, la première église néo-byzantine au Canada, dessinée par William Ford Howland. En 1923, un paroissien, Samuel Stewart, fournit les fonds pour la décoration intérieure, composée de somptueuses murales byzantines exécutées par une équipe d'artistes sous la direction de J.E.H. MacDonald. À cette époque, Toronto était encore une ville typiquement provinciale. Les paroissiens de St. Anne appartenaient à un milieu ouvrier et conservateur, et le style byzantin de l'église en scandalisa plusieurs. Par conséquent, le choix de ce style et de cette riche décoration demande explication.

Jusqu'à récemment, toutes les discussions concernant cette église portaient sur ses peintures intérieures, parce que MacDonald, de même que deux autres membres de l'équipe de décorateurs, Franklin Carmichael et F.H. Varley, faisaient partie du célèbre Groupe des Sept. Cependant, on se contentait de faire l'éloge de l'œuvre. En 1988, Catherine Mastin, en étudiant le premier plan de l'église, conclut que le premier pasteur de St. Anne, le révérend Lawrence Skey, fut pour une grande part responsable du choix du style. Les recherches de Mme Mastin ont révélé que le révérend Skey était fortement en faveur de l'union avec d'autres Églises protestantes et, si possible, avec les Églises orthodoxes orientales. Il aurait donc vu dans le style byzantin, qui remonte aux origines de l'Église, avant les schismes qui devaient la diviser, un symbole approprié de l'union des Églises. Mme Mastin a aussi appris que le révérend Skey aurait fait un voyage à Constantinople, ce qui aurait suscité son intérêt pour l'architecture byzantine.

Il est clair cependant, d'après les archives paroissiales, que le révérend Skey n'était pas encore allé à Constantinople au moment où le choix du style byzantin pour l'église avait été fait. De plus, comme élève lauréat en théologie, il n'était pas sans savoir que les premières divisions au sein de l'Église ont précédé le développement du style byzantin. Mais surtout, une renaissance du style byzantin avait débuté au XIX^e siècle, alors qu'à peu près à la même époque, on commençait à orner les églises protestantes de décors recherchés. Ces deux développements, tout comme la renaissance des styles gothique et roman au XIX^e siècle, sont dus au désir de créer des environnements hautement spirituels pour faire contrepoids aux aspects négatifs de la vie moderne: l'industrialisation, l'urbanisation et la sécularisation. Aussi, lorsque l'architecte William Ford Howland — qui connaissait sans doute les églises néo-byzantines récemment construites aux États-Unis — expliqua

que le style byzantin était le plus ancien de la chrétienté et, par conséquent, plus chargé de spiritualité que le gothique ou le roman, fut-il bien accueilli par le comité de construction de St. Anne.

Toutefois, le renouveau byzantin était beaucoup moins important que le renouveau gothique ou roman, et il est peu probable qu'aucun des paroissiens traditionalistes de St. Anne ait jamais vu un tel édifice. De plus, l'église byzantine dessinée par Howland devait remplacer un temple de style gothique. Que le comité de construction ait donné son accord à un style byzantin, plutôt que gothique, s'explique par le fait que, depuis le milieu du siècle précédent, les églises évangéliques de Toronto, contrairement aux églises évangéliques en Angleterre et aux États-Unis, avaient adopté le style gothique, bien que ce style ait été largement associé à l'Église anglicane. Cependant, à l'intérieur, elles étaient aménagées en salles ou en auditoriums pour la prédication, plutôt qu'en basiliques gothiques typiques avec allée centrale. De cette manière, elles démystifiaient le sacrement et rapprochaient les fidèles du clergé. Il est à noter qu'à la même époque, l'Église anglicane souhaitait, depuis des décennies, faire la même chose pour ses paroissiens. Le plan byzantin en croix grecque permettait à St. Anne d'arriver au même résultat sans imiter les évangéliques.

C'est dans ce contexte qu'on fit appel à J.E.H. MacDonald pour superviser la décoration. En dépit du fait que, en 1923, MacDonald s'était acquis une solide réputation de paysagiste hardi, il peut sembler étrange qu'on l'ait choisi pour décorer une église. Cependant, il était considéré comme un artiste important et s'était présenté au concours de murales de la Royal Canadian Academy. Il avait vécu à Londres de 1903 à 1907 et avait certainement visité la cathédrale de Westminster, et peut-être aussi d'autres églises anglaises construites dans le style néo-byzantin. De fait, le révérend Skey a mentionné qu'il avait rencontré MacDonald des années avant la décoration de St. Anne, pour discuter «des mystères de l'architecture byzantine». Enfin, l'intérêt bien connu de MacDonald pour le besoin d'un élément spirituel dans la vie moderne l'aurait recommandé au révérend Skey comme décorateur de l'église. Comme le déclarait MacDonald: le décor servirait de lien entre «notre époque mouvementée et mécanisée et la poésie d'une époque lointaine où l'église était l'âme de la ville et sa décoration, l'idéal des riches et la prière des artistes».

Le décor créé par MacDonald s'inscrivait dans un mouvement muraliste, plutôt que dans la tradition chrétienne (et catholique) de la décoration d'église. Ce mouvement, né dans les années 1830 en Europe du Nord et en Grande-Bretagne, a donné des murales reproduisant des thèmes classiques pour des lieux privés associés à la vie moderne, et d'autres sur des thèmes chrétiens pour des églises protestantes. Dans le premier cas, il s'agissait du passage de la culture classique, jadis associée à l'aristocratie, dans la classe moyenne, confirmant ainsi le progrès matériel dont le mouvement, dans son ensemble, se faisait le promoteur. De la

même manière, les murales des églises protestantes devaient servir d'antidote aux aspects négatifs de la vie moderne, sans mépriser pour autant d'importantes sources de revenus. Paradoxalement, elles étaient commandées par des bienfaiteurs, tels que Samuel Stewart, paroissien de St. Anne, dont la fortune provenait de la Révolution industrielle.

Traduction: Élise Bonnette