

# VISIBLE SYMBOLS

*CULTURAL EXPRESSION AMONG CANADA'S UKRAINIANS*



*Edited by MANOLY R. LUPUL*

## COVER ILLUSTRATION

Peter Shostak. *Was that your Baba's coat?* Oil. 1978.

"Through a good quality silk-screen reproduction, *Was that your Baba's coat?* has become a resurrected symbol. Ukrainian pioneers in Canada were known as men in sheepskin coats, the latter being undoubtedly among the most highly valued of the immigrant's first possessions during the cruel, harsh Canadian winters. Later, the functional, bulky coats became objects of derision and their wearers targets of discrimination. To be less conspicuous, the once proud possessions were left on the farm. A very small number have survived and today can be seen mainly behind glass in museums. *Was that your Baba's coat?* was painted to make the most important symbol of the Ukrainian pioneer again an important image."  
(Peter Shostak)

**Visible Symbols:  
Cultural Expression Among Canada's Ukrainians**





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*Edited by*  
Manoly R. Lupul

Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies  
University of Alberta  
Edmonton 1984

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## PREFACE

This volume is based on the proceedings of the fifth annual conference on Ukrainians in Canada held at the University of Manitoba in November 1981. The conference was entitled "Visible Symbols: Cultural Expression Among Canada's Ukrainians" and was organized jointly by Manitoba's Department of Slavic Studies and the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Alberta. The conference provided an objective, scholarly forum for the examination of the ways in which Ukrainian Canadians express themselves culturally through architecture, museums, art, music and dance in order to understand better the different cultural currents within the group and the direction(s) cultural development might take in the future. Of special concern was the relationship of Ukrainian Canadian culture to mainstream Canadian culture.

The conference sought to relate theory and practice by combining academic presentations and the views of leading practitioners in the fine arts. All participants were directed to address themselves to such questions as the following: What is the nature of contemporary Ukrainian Canadian culture in specialized areas? How do cultural forms express the Ukrainian Canadian identity? Are experimental cultural forms removing the Ukrainian essence from Ukrainian Canadian culture? How does cultural expression in the organized Ukrainian Canadian community differ from that in the general Ukrainian population in Canada? Why do certain aspects of Ukrainian culture survive, evolve and continue to have meaning for Canadian participants, while others do not? What effect have Soviet Ukrainian cultural styles and politics had on the development of Ukrainian Canadian culture? What has been the impact of official multicultural policies on Ukrainian Canadian cultural development?

In the deliberations, one question became central: What are the *visible symbols* through which Ukrainians in Canada express their identity in the cultural milieu of contemporary North America? Of the many issues that face ethnocultural groups in a pluralistic society, none is more crucial, and it is hoped that the facts and views presented in this book on that important question may assist all ethnocultural minorities in Canada to understand themselves better.

As director of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies and editor of this volume, I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Professor Jaroslav Rozumnyj, head of the Department of Slavic Studies at the University of Manitoba, and of his staff in developing the programme and looking after the arrangements for the conference. The co-operation of all who participated in the conference, and especially those who contributed illustrations to this volume, is also gratefully acknowledged. Equally significant was the financial assistance of the Multiculturalism Directorate of the Secretary of State and of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

MRL

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# INTRODUCTION

**Jaroslav Rozumnyj**

In 1971, at Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario, the Ukrainian Canadian University Students' Union (SUSK) organized the Ukrainian Canadian Festival of the Arts, which was designed "To bring together many Ukrainian Canadian artists from all across Canada to discuss problems in art, to examine various artistic and cultural developments, to exhibit to all Canadians their unique contribution to the growth of this nation, to give a national stimulus and encouragement to Ukrainian Canadian artistic and cultural development, to exchange ideas about the arts and to critically evaluate the state of Ukrainian Canadian culture." The sessions encompassed dance (modern and folk), drama, literature, music (classical and folk), painting, sculpture, film and photography. Festival activities included workshops, lectures and discussions, displays and performances. After five days, the following resolution was passed:

Whereas Canada is a multicultural country where all groups have the right to develop culturally and whereas the artists of Ukrainian descent are an integral part of the Ukrainian Canadian community and the general society, be it resolved that this first national Ukrainian Canadian Festival of the Arts establish a permanent body to project future artistic and cultural development in the Ukrainian community in Canada. This body will hereby be known as the Ukrainian Canadian Arts Council.

The council was to have a board of directors and an executive and full-time secretariat to administer projects. As its first project, the council was to prepare and publish a Ukrainian Canadian Arts Catalogue.

As a participant at the festival, I vividly recall the powerful impact it made on some 400 other participants and on Ukrainian cultural and artistic life in Canada. The festival gave many a new awareness of the cultural potential of Ukrainians in Canada; to some it was an enormous intellectual, aesthetic and emotional shock. Ten years have passed and the festival is now only a memory, akin to an impressionistic piece of art. The Ukrainian Canadian Arts Council and the Ukrainian Canadian Arts Catalogue, both very ambitious projects, lacked the sustained enthusiasm and the organizational skills needed to carry them out, and today material collected for the catalogue lies somewhere in Toronto, outdated and forgotten. Many prominent artists who participated in the festival became

disillusioned with the council's functioning and disappeared into the mainstream of Canadian society.

If the purpose of the festival was to create an awareness of the Ukrainian cultural presence in Canada, this volume on "Visible Symbols" intends to identify the form and psyche of that presence. The contributors direct themselves to a number of vital questions and problems which face every uprooted and transplanted ethnocultural group or society that seeks to retain or search for a respectable identity. Is there such a phenomenon as "ethnicity" in art? Is ethnicity relevant to an artist's intellectual make-up? Does an artist have to be conservative and static to be ethnically "true"? Must an artist sever his cultural roots in order to create "pure" and "universal" art? Is folkloric necessarily populist? Is "high" culture higher than "low" culture? Does adaptation mean cultural loss and assimilation? Such questions confront all threatened minority cultures that are not dominant.

Basically, culture is the conditioned mode of individual or collective behaviour, rooted in the past and projected into the future. It forms a cycle: there is no present without the past, and there is no future without the present. The cultural specificity of a people/nation is the sum total of historical, suprahistorical and environmental factors, and the national psyche is that mysterious force that abides in national customs, oral tradition and in the language of everyday life. It is that power which, beyond our awareness and despite our unwillingness to cultivate it, motivates our behaviour and triggers our impulses. Although imperceptible, changeable and not easily defined, the national character manifests itself in all aspects of the life of a nation—both in its historical accomplishments and tragedies.<sup>1</sup>

This volume searches for the invariants and codes, the archetypes and symbols which recur in the Ukrainian Canadian material culture, fine arts, music, dance and mores that could be labelled Ukrainian or Ukrainian Canadian. The book offers theoretical and practical views on the Ukrainian ethos in Canada—on its form and manner of expression and on its place and role in the hierarchy of the broad complex of the dominant and non-dominant cultures in Canada's pluralistic society. Finally, it shows the visible symbols of a living culture.

## NOTES

1. D. Chyzhevs'kyi, *A History of Ukrainian Literature* (Littleton, Col. 1975), 222.

**PART I**

**UKRAINIAN MATERIAL CULTURE IN  
CANADA**





## **Endurance, Disappearance and Adaptation: Ukrainian Material Culture in Canada**

**Radoslav Zuk**

### *Introduction*

Products of material culture are probably the best indicators of a country's or a community's cultural position. They are the basic source for archaeological research, as they reflect the life style of the broadest spectrum of a society. Material culture is the culture of daily existence. As such, it becomes the most telling expression of individual and collective beliefs and preferences and the environment of the vast majority of the population.

Unique, creative individuals—writers, painters, composers, architects, scientists, engineers and other experts—may be professionally active outside their society but unless their works speak to it or about it, or are made for it or affect it in some way, they do not represent the culture of that society. Material culture, however, becomes the medium through which the measure of their contribution to the general cultural development of that society is revealed.

While this paper will deal with specific areas of material culture, it will, by implication, relate also to other areas of the cultural process. Products of material culture serve practical purposes primarily, but in their configuration they may possess attributes similar to those of music, be expressive like poems and be of formal excellence peculiar to any work of art.

In general, the discussion will be limited to non-perishable items such as personal attire, household utensils, furniture and private and public buildings. The intent will be to identify key situations, trends and processes and to speculate on possibilities for the future, rather than to give a detailed account of the evolution and decline of a tradition.

### *Early Settlers and Ukrainian Canadians Today*

While the first Ukrainian settlers in Canada transported few possessions, they brought with them an extensive, centuries-old capability and applied it to develop the basic environment and equipment needed to survive in the new land.<sup>1</sup> Whatever they produced—the clothing and linen (frequently embroidered) and rugs; the traditional household tools and utensils—sickles, flails, wooden forks; the home-made wooden furniture; the white-washed log houses with thatched roofs and unique, simple, unpainted (or white) wooden churches with cupolas—everything closely resembled items in the highly developed folk culture of their homeland. Thus a rather coherent and complete cultural expression appeared, reflecting the daily life and preferences of a distinct segment of the Canadian population, and one can speak of the existence at that time of a unique Ukrainian material culture in Canada.

Today this living culture has all but disappeared. It would be difficult, perhaps even impossible, to see a man's embroidered sheepskin coat worn to the office in Edmonton or Saskatoon. The embroidered blouse, recently legitimized by world fashion, is now part of the daily wardrobe of Western women, but it may contain Romanian, Bulgarian, Ukrainian or other colourful patterns. In any case, it is a recent development, an exception that may soon be replaced by other fashionable trends. Much more rarely are embroidered shirts, ties or dresses seen at official banquets, even at Ukrainian ones. Some homes are decorated with embroidered cushions and *kylymy*, embroidered table coverings and porcelain, *pysanky*, paintings by Ukrainian artists or wall calendars with such distinct Ukrainian subject matter as Cossacks, sunflowers, *pysanky* and wooden churches. Churches with pseudo-Baroque or pseudo-Byzantine domes and gilded iconostases are common and are still being built, albeit larger than the earlier ones. And the more recent ones, in particular, often offer interesting contemporary adaptations of traditional characteristics. According to John Lehr,

From pioneer days until recent years churches have been built in the customary pattern. In building style they range from the pioneer simplicity of St. Michael's Ukrainian Orthodox Church at Gardenton, Man., to the intricate and ornate massiveness of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church at Cooks Creek, Man., which has towered over the prairie since its completion in 1931. In modern professionally-designed Ukrainian churches there has

been a conscious effort to break with rigid traditional forms and to adopt modern building materials and construction methods. The old elements have been retained but expressed in a conceptual way through abstract or impressionistic forms.<sup>2</sup>

Otherwise, the daily environment of the contemporary Ukrainian Canadian shows little or no reference to the culture of the early settlers or their homeland. The suits, dresses, shoes, undergarments, ties, hats, scarves, overcoats and furs worn for daily or festive occasions; the refrigerators, kitchen ranges, washing machines, blenders, can openers, bread boxes, pots, pans and tableware; the towels, bed sheets, pillow cases, bed covers, carpets, drapery and upholstery; the furniture, wallpaper and lampshades; the fireplaces; the cars, trucks, tractors, motorcycles, bicycles, perambulators, skis and sleds; or, finally, the architecture of houses, community centres, Sunday schools, commercial institutions (credit unions, co-operatives, restaurants and stores) and their landscaping—all objects that permeate the daily life of most Ukrainian Canadians—have hardly any relation to the Ukrainian cultural heritage. One can state categorically, then, that save for a few new churches and isolated decorative household items, a contemporary Ukrainian material culture of daily life in Canada does not exist.

The reasons for this are easy to see. Material culture is the result of the production, acquisition or commission of physical objects for specific use, which, in turn, are governed by the exercise of individual and collective choice. Choice is conditioned by the availability of material or financial resources, practical preference and the degree of aesthetic sophistication. The financial and practical aspects constitute the essential difference between material culture and other forms of cultural expression. Music can be heard on the radio, books read in public libraries, paintings viewed in museums and theatre and film viewed on television, but the acquisition of a suit, a sofa or a car, not to mention a house, implies a major financial investment.

Assuming that financial resources are available for a reasonable range of different choices, preference as to practicality (the level of technical performance—durability, flexibility, manoeuvrability) and as to aesthetic acceptability will be subject to a wide range of motivations: familiarity through previous experience (security); the accepted thing to do (tradition); general popularity (the wish to conform); appropriateness for the established activity (habit); innovation (opportunity to change one's life style); personal taste (independence of judgment); advertising or the advice of friends (new knowledge); competition with friends or neighbours (one-upmanship); resale possibility (investment value).

The production of objects is thus subject to pressures that are technological and aesthetic. Technological pressures seek the best performance in response to climate, ease of operation, repeated use, adaptability, maintenance, portability, speed of delivery and safety. Aesthetic pressures seek to appeal to the widest possible market, not to offend and to offer a wide range of easily produced alternatives. A few new products which are the result of such pressures are synthetic linen and clothing, mini-cars, transistor radios, videotape recorders, push-button telephones and prefabricated metal houses. The consumer is also subjected to a variety of commercial pressures. Distributors, producers and governments vie for new markets through such inducements as free delivery, catalogue buying, and, above all, advertising to shape consumer preference. In technologically and financially competitive markets it is the matrix of communal and personal preferences that determines the final decision to buy. Thus all possible means are used to influence preference: direct and subliminal advertising, creation of fashion trends and the promotion of specific life styles by means of books, films, exhibitions, television and radio programmes, articles and reviews.

These pressures are not confined to Canadian sources. All Canadians are open to pressures from such highly industrialized countries as the United States, Britain and France, which have their respective traditions of highly developed and constantly evolving cultures. Thus it is not surprising that one hears constantly of a Canadian crisis of cultural identity.

### *Process*

To understand better the contemporary state of material culture, it is necessary to review briefly the major ways in which it is produced. In general, one can distinguish three modes in the design and manufacture of material objects: self-made, commissioned and mass produced.

In early agrarian societies most items were self-made: basic clothing, linen, simple wooden utensils, basic furniture, even houses. Items of greater intricacy requiring specialized technical skills in execution or in the working of such hard materials as metals were commissioned or bought from the ready stock of local tradesmen—shoemakers, tailors, cabinet makers, ironmongers, potters, glazers, carpenters and masons. The guiding principle was the repetition of existing patterns and models, involving a gradual refinement according to inherent cultural preferences, and leading often to a high level of artistic excellence. Material culture produced by the rural population in Ukraine toward the end of the nineteenth century was the result of such a process. Ready objects, remembered patterns and models were transported and adapted to conditions in Canada.

Today's process of production in Canada and in other industrialized countries is vastly different. The self-made item is a rarity. Alongside the odd home-made dress, embroidered blouse or cushion is the great variety of industrially produced clothing, utensils, furnishings, household and farm equipment, vehicles and prefabricated houses designed by highly skilled professionals according to current standards of taste, economics and technology, and sold by large and small entrepreneurs. Hair is set or cut by commercial hairdressers and barbers, according to current fashions. What is worn or used and how people look and live is conditioned by generally accepted trends and the products available at a given time.

The commissioned item is also very rare. It is the mark of a unique individual or of an exclusive group, the result of the desire and courage to transcend the common denominator and to look for special quality. As custom-designed and custom-made items cost more, their acquisition depends on the independent, the adventurous and the affluent. In the past it was usually royalty, the aristocracy, the merchant class and the church hierarchy that contributed decisively to the evolution of culture, not only in the spiritual and intellectual realms but also in its material manifestations. Cathedrals, monasteries, palaces, fortresses, town and country houses with all their furnishings, ships, coaches, weapons, costumes, toilet articles—now considered great works of art to be preserved in museums—pay witness to this contribution.

Today government and institutional committees commission large projects: harbours, airports, ships, highways, parks, mass transportation systems, sports stadiums, university campuses and school buildings, churches and community centres. With differing tastes, knowledge and cultural awareness, most committees strive for consensus, and creative imagination all too often is sacrificed to compromise. Commissions by individuals are restricted to economically accessible items: private homes and their furnishings and decoration; clothing, jewellery and similar items. In each instance, even the most enlightened committees or individuals must depend on the creativity, sensitivity and technical expertise of design and production specialists: the planners, architects, engineers, industrial and interior designers, artist-craftsmen and other experts. The results of their combined efforts determine the quality of the material culture produced.

### *Quality*

Basically, the quality of any cultural manifestation depends on three sets of criteria: the relevance of content, the timeliness of style and the excellence of form.<sup>3</sup> Thus for a material object to have positive cultural significance, it must

- a) suit its purpose, i.e., its arrangement, shape, component parts and



materials must be such and be so assembled as to perform its function well (this by implication demands the application of the best available technological means and methods and a proper consideration of environmental conditions);

- b) respond to the user's universal cultural context and specific cultural temperament;
- c) contribute in a fresh manner to the cumulative human experience, i.e., be stylistically in the forefront of contemporary world standards while maintaining its own special uniqueness;
- d) possess formal integrity which transcends function, meaning and time and which turns the practical object into a work of art.

### *The Ukrainian Dilemma*

Like all Canadians, Ukrainians are exposed to the external cultural forces referred to above. They identify with and absorb the prevailing cultural environment, since what is generally promoted as "Ukrainian culture" cannot easily become part of today's life style. Yet culture must be practiced to be true culture. It must be part of daily existence.

The crux of the dilemma, then, lies not only in today's general commercial cultural environment, but also in the attitudes and concepts of Ukrainians as to what generally constitutes Ukrainian culture. These attitudes and concepts include

1. The identification of Ukrainian culture almost exclusively with the agrarian, albeit highly developed, culture of the homeland and its transplanted forms in Canada. These forms can no longer satisfy fully the spiritual, intellectual or material needs of the predominantly urban Ukrainian Canadians of the last quarter of the twentieth century. And "urbanization is not something that refers only to the city... high mobility, economic concentration and mass communications have drawn even rural villages into the web of urbanization."<sup>4</sup>
2. The lack of interest in and knowledge of Ukrainian urban traditions. Italian Canadians, for example, can refer not only to isolated monuments and objects of Italian history, but to all aspects of well-documented, urban life styles of various periods, including the twentieth century.
3. The limiting of Ukrainian cultural experiences to fixed events, institutions and time periods: a folk dance or choral concert, museum or Sunday school, Christmas, Easter or possibly an hour in church on Sunday. These isolated experiences, while very

valuable in themselves, can form only a small part of a larger comprehensive concept of a contemporary cultural life style.

4. The reliance on superficial symbols in the absence of cultural substance that would pervade every aspect of daily life. The colourful folk costume, the Cossack dance, the embroidery pattern, the *pysanka*, popular food or even the fanciful church domes become substitutes for a meaningful contemporary cultural experience.
5. The fostering of mediocrity for the sake of obvious, blatant symbolism: the numerous churches that are parodies of Ukrainian architecture, the printed embroidery patterns on crockery, blue and yellow ball-point pens; flirting Cossacks on calendars; the *kovbasa*, *holubtsi* and *pyrohy*, which judging by the various posters and other announcements of student events are some of the most popular identification symbols among the young.

### *Characteristics and Modes of Expression*

It is of fundamental importance to distinguish between the basic cultural characteristics and their modes of expression. The essence of cultural character is abstract in nature. It resides in the specific shapes, lines, rhythms, proportions, textures and colours and their combinations which are especially in harmony with, and preferred by, a specific native cultural temperament, and to which members of that specific cultural group will most readily respond. Music may serve as the best illustration, as it is the most abstract of all cultural manifestations. A specific simple tune—an abstract entity without words or previous hearing—will easily be recognized (felt) as Ukrainian and will elicit a strong sympathetic emotional reaction on the part of the Ukrainian listener because of its specific abstract characteristics: the melodic line, its harmonic implications (proportions), its phrase structure (shape) and its rhythmic pattern. The same is true of the visually perceived object. Two similar pieces of embroidery with the same motif will be recognized as Ukrainian and Romanian respectively because of the distinction in their abstract characteristics—their patterns of lines, shapes, proportions, colours, etc. Such specific abstract characteristics are part of every person, action or object. A direct expression of the specific cultural temperament will embody directly such specific characteristics. This is most obvious in folk culture where the expression is immediate, continuous and evolves gradually in various parallel modes. The mode of the folk costume is the result not only of a native preference for a specific set of patterns and colours, but also an adaptation to a characteristic shape of face, hair growth, body build, set of postures and movements.

Should a new mode become necessary in, for example, the generally accepted contemporary wardrobe—jacket, shirt, tie, trousers, socks, shoes—a strong cultural temperament will transform it and endow it with culturally unique abstract characteristics, even if the latter's outward manifestation is quite different from the earlier mode (folk costume). If such a native cultural force is lacking, the new mode will maintain its "imported," less appropriate set of abstract characteristics. The old, out-dated mode which contains the native abstract characteristics will still elicit a sympathetic emotional response, yet it cannot be used anymore—it becomes a sentimental memento, a superficial symbol of cultural identity to be deposited in the ethnic museum or reserved for the yearly school concert.

Folk culture, by the very nature of its individual production, which in each mode of expression constitutes the purest embodiment of specific abstract characteristics, cannot be transformed; it can only evolve gradually. However, in urban, commissioned or mass-produced (and thus internationally influenced) cultural manifestations, such transformations are possible and are the basis of general cultural evolution. As stated earlier in the discussion on quality, a complete, historically significant statement results from the adoption of the highest world developments in appropriate technology and in stylistic innovation, as well as from the achievement of relevance in terms of the particular function and the combination of general human significance and of specific cultural characteristics. That and the attainment of the highest possible formal integrity are the decisive factors in the development of new, meaningful cultural forms.

### *Transformations*

The development of the Late-Gothic style in European architecture may be used as one of the many examples of distinct parallel transformations in various countries of a prevailing world style (initially a French style in the case of Gothic). Nikolaus Pevsner, the noted British historian, has written:

As for Spain, the briefest comparison between an English parish church or even King's College Chapel and, say, the decoration of the front of the church of St. Paul's at Valladolid (begun shortly after 1486, probably by Simon of Cologne) is enough to realize the contrast between English restraint and Spanish extremism. Substitute the St. Lawrence portal of Strassburg Cathedral for Valladolid, and you will see Anglo-German contrasts as glaringly. It might be said that German Late-Gothic decoration is as extreme as Spanish, which would not be surprising, since Germany and Spain, as against France, England, Italy, are the countries of the extremes in European civilization. However, there are obvious differences between the Spanish and the German ways of decorating. Ever since Mohammedan days Spain has had a passion for filling large surfaces with close-knit





Fig. 1 *Cologne Cathedral. Begun 1248.*

*The illustrations which follow demonstrate the importance of abstract attributes in determining the cultural identity of material objects—in this case, architecture.*

Figs. 1 and 2. The Cologne and Milan cathedrals typify the Gothic style of the Renaissance, transformed by the distinct cultures of Germany and Italy. The cathedrals are examples of how ornamentation and universal geometric shapes (e.g., the pointed arches) can be modified by the overall outlines, proportions and rhythms of their component parts.



Fig. 2 *Milan Cathedral*. Begun 1387.





Fig. 3 Petro Krasovskyj. *Chapel of Three Saints*, Lviv. 1578.

Figs. 3 and 4. The two churches in Lviv exemplify how two different universal styles, the Renaissance and Baroque, had been transformed by one specific culture. Both are experienced as Ukrainian because of the specific cultural character inherent in their abstract configurations, notwithstanding the marked differences in the elements of construction, basic geometric shapes (e.g., the domes) and surface articulation typical of the two respective styles.





Fig. 4 Bernard Meretini. *St. George's Cathedral*, Lviv. 1756.







Fig. 5 Lodovico Barbiano di Belgiojoso, Enrico Peressutti, Ernesto Rogers. *Torre Velasca*, Milan. 1957.

Figs. 5 and 6. The Milanese structures exemplify two unique approaches within the same "universal" (mid-twentieth century) and "specific" (Italian) cultural contexts. The reinforced concrete construction, extensive use of glass, simple geometry of component shapes and absence of applied ornamentation mark both as contemporary buildings, but in their proportional and rhythmic configurations, they are Italian, even if they look quite distinct from each other (i.e., the expression of a specific cultural character does not imply a set formula).



Fig. 6 Gio Ponti. *Pirelli Building*, Milan. 1958.







Fig. 7 Zunic and Sobkowich (Radoslav Zuk, Consulting Architect).  
*Holy Family Ukrainian Catholic Church, Winnipeg. 1963.*

Figs. 7 and 8. Both churches are part of twentieth-century Canadian urban architecture in their overt use of contemporary building technology, preference for clear geometric shapes and response to their environment. In their outlines, proportions and rhythms, however, they evoke the same spirit which is present in even widely diverse wood, brick and stone buildings of different stylistic periods in Ukraine.

*In the course of history, abstract characteristics endure, outdated styles disappear and new styles evolve, are adapted and transformed to produce fresh, universally and specifically meaningful forms of cultural expression.*



Fig. 8 Radoslav Zuk. *Holy Eucharist Ukrainian Catholic Church*, Toronto. 1967.





two-dimensional ornament. The Germans share this *horror vacui*, but there is always a marked spatial curiosity in their ornament. That connects German Late Gothic with German Rococo, just as the flatness and the frantic movement of the Charterhouse vestry at Granada, which dates from the middle of the eighteenth century, seems heralded in the details of the Valladolid facade.<sup>5</sup>

The history of Ukrainian architecture serves as a clear demonstration of a continuous transformation of a sequence of prevailing world styles. The Byzantine, Renaissance or Baroque churches, while clearly maintaining their respective stylistic symbols (e.g., flat, hemispherical or irregularly curved domes respectively), are endowed with those specific abstract characteristics which make them also uniquely Ukrainian. These characteristics are, of course, most clearly evident in the indigenous wooden churches built by local craftsmen out of local material and using an evolving local technology. However, even some of those buildings show the stylistic influence of the prevailing urban masonry prototypes—e.g., curved domes, normally foreign to wood technology.

In spite of present-day pressures toward uniformity, possibly due to the almost parallel technological advance throughout the developed world and to the global transportation and communications explosion, examples of unique transformations still abound, especially in countries which are highly developed culturally. There is a marked difference between Italian and Danish furniture, British and French fashions, American and Japanese cars and German and Canadian housing projects. In all these examples we are dealing with cultural statements of quality which contribute in a unique and innovative way to the cultural heritage of their countries and of the entire world. They thus indicate a given country's cultural maturity and creative force.

### *Possible Opportunities*

How can individual Ukrainian Canadians or the Ukrainian Canadian community generally take part in creative processes which might lead to distinctive, contemporary Ukrainian material-cultural expressions? There may be two possible approaches which could be combined to produce the widest range of possibilities.

The first approach involves the selection of those objects from commercially available products which exhibit abstract characteristics closest to the Ukrainian cultural temperament in shape, proportion, pattern, texture and colour. This may involve the entire range of necessary material objects from houses and cars to ties and towels. With this approach only an approximation can be achieved at best, but it would be preferable to the indiscriminate mixture of unrelated or non-sympathetic

characteristics that one usually finds. This approach is based on the premise that out of a range of similar objects there will always be some that come closer than others to a particular cultural temperament. If sufficient demand were to exist, a limited number of manufacturing opportunities might arise for objects that are easily produced.

The second, parallel approach applies in all situations where a direct commission is possible on a personal or community basis. Domestic and community buildings—houses, summer cottages, community centres, churches and parish buildings, credit unions, museums (including their furnishings and landscaping)—are one group where large-scale, visible quality expressions of cultural characteristics are possible. Interior design—custom-built furniture, floor, wall and ceiling coverings, light fixtures, murals—is another possible group, albeit of much smaller public impact. Finally, personal clothing and hairstyles of distinct character for special or daily occasions may be commissioned from artist-designers and may set widespread popular trends. Self-made objects may be included in this group. A discerning individual creative effort may result in a proper transformation and become an example to follow. A successful and (to my knowledge) unique case is the girls' brown *serdak* (coat) developed by members of the Ukrainian Youth Association—Plast, which is acceptable in terms of today's universal fashion and is tasteful, striking and capable of individual variations, yet is clearly recognizable on the streets of Toronto, Edmonton, New York or Paris. However, a distinctly Ukrainian contemporary urban house, while possible, is incomprehensible to most Ukrainians. When the subject is raised, the automatic response is: "How could one build a thatched roof house as one's city home?"

## Conclusion

To take advantage of the above opportunities, a drastic change in the attitudes to, and concepts of, Ukrainian culture is needed. This involves recognition that in matters where choice is possible, existing prejudices and patterns of behaviour do not have to prevail, but may change substantially through education and exposure to viable examples of alternatives.

The primary change in attitude must involve the realization that the essence of cultural uniqueness does not lie in a few superficial symbols, but in characteristic abstract relationships inherent in any physical object, action or set of sounds, and that these characteristic abstract relationships may manifest themselves in an unlimited variety of forms subject to the circumstances of time and place. An instinctive absorption of these abstract relationships occurs through immersion in folk culture, where they exist in their most basic form. *Thus participation in various modes of folk culture is essential as a preparation and basis for the appropriate*

*everyday cultural choices, but not as a non-realistic cultural end in itself.* What is also essential is a conscious, scientific investigation and documentation of these relationships in all modes of cultural expression.

The second change in attitude must involve the realization that a culture of significance must be in the forefront of contemporary universal cultural evolution and that the reality of everyday existence makes the participation in its various, mostly *urban*, manifestations unavoidable. As the quality of the more visible of these manifestations is usually quite low (witness the visual and acoustical environment of some streets in any typical Canadian city) and the subconscious and automatic participation is usually at the same level, a conscious effort must be made to learn to appreciate and participate meaningfully in the evolutionary process of the finest achievements of human creativity.

The third change in attitude must involve the realization that there is no completely neutral "international" culture, that universal human values are always interpreted in a specific way and that corresponding viable contemporary Ukrainian forms of expression of high quality may be found and in a few isolated cases already exist. They are the result of innovative creation or the transformation of currently evolving universal trends. Thus the conflict between "ethnic" and "non-ethnic" culture can be resolved.

The fourth change in attitude must involve the realization that it is precisely such culturally specific manifestations of universal values that must become the symbols or the prototypes with which a community may not only realistically identify and which it can emulate, but which can also inspire further creativity and cultural self-esteem. The music of Bela Bartók, the architecture of Alvar Aalto, the designs of Emilio Pucci may serve as examples.

Without the above changes, it is not likely that a significant Ukrainian culture—material or otherwise—will develop in Canada or elsewhere. There must be a will to achieve endurance. Yet cultural endurance does not consist of the preservation or imitation of old forms or of the establishment of insignificant symbols. Rather it resides in an attitude which strives for an evolving, living culture of quality and of universal as well as specific significance. The attitude becomes the symbol.

## NOTES

1. Z. Keywan and M. Coles, *Greater than Kings* (Montreal 1977), 77.
2. J. C. Lehr, "The Ukrainian Presence on the Prairies," *Canadian Geographic* 97, no. 2 (Oct.-Nov. 1978): 33.
3. R. Zuk, "Projekt rozbudovy ukrainskoi diaspornoi kultury" (A Proposal for the Development of the Ukrainian Diaspora's Culture), *Dzvony* (Rome-Detroit 1977),

no.1: 89.

4. H. Cox, *The Secular City* (New York 1966), 4.
5. N. Pevsner, *An Outline of European Architecture* (Harmondsworth 1972), 167–9.

## **Museums and Ukrainian Canadian Material Culture\***

**Steve Prystupa**

Museums should strive to do more than preserve the past; they should try to make culture more viable by assisting to adapt and transform it to modern life styles. The proposition, however, is not without its difficulties because of the kind of ethnic communities in Canada today. The Ukrainian Canadian situation is well-illustrated in a passage from a grade-ten project called "Ukrainian Roots":

My mother's father came from a family that traces its roots as far back as the 17th century. Some of the family members moved from England to Ireland and then back to England during the potato famine. They then moved to Pennsylvania where they intermarried with a Scottish branch of the family. From there they moved to Illinois where they remained until the early 1900's, and then moved to Saskatchewan. In 1937 my father married my mother, whose parents came to Sinnett, Saskatchewan, from the portion of the German Empire that is now Poland. Her father was German and her mother Polish, so my mother's background is a combination of Scottish, Irish, English, German and Polish. On the other hand, my father's background is primarily Ukrainian. His mother is three quarters Ukrainian and one quarter Polish, and his father is entirely Ukrainian. My father's family lived in a predominantly Ukrainian community in Saskatchewan and carried on the Ukrainian customs and traditions. For this reason, our families followed the Ukrainian customs more than others. Canadian law defines

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\*Abstract only.

ethnicity according to the father's family background. I do not agree with this, but since my background is mostly Ukrainian, I have chosen mainly to deal with that part of my background. Since both of my parents were born in Canada, I'm not only Ukrainian but Ukrainian-Canadian.

Thus just about everybody in most ethnic communities has a family background that is blurred. Structurally, ethnic communities are very different from what they were fifty years ago. They no longer have a basic biological and geographic focus, but are primarily associations of people with a common interest to maintain the culture of a particular group. In such associations, there are basically two types of people: one is a small group of highly dedicated activists who make up the leadership (about half of whom for the Ukrainian group are probably at this conference!) and who are deeply interested in an equally small body of cultural heirlooms, beliefs and practices. Alongside are other members of the group who participate periodically within a fairly structured framework of institutional events and activities. This may seem like a shaky basis for perpetuating and preserving a viable culture, but that is close to where we are at today. It may be that fifty years from now some might say that the effort to maintain the culture was not worthwhile, but those at this conference would certainly think otherwise.

What, then, can museums do in this kind of socio-cultural setting to help preserve and nurture Ukrainian culture? First, museums can serve a fairly important integrative role. As the community becomes more and more dispersed, physical and social space is needed to enable people to come together. To some extent, Ukrainian churches continue to perform this function, but beyond them there are very few centres for common cultural interaction within the community. Museums can be one such centre.

Museums can also serve to break the generational gap. With the disappearance of the extended family, children and grandchildren do not communicate easily across generations. Most people generally know very little about the past, their ancestral roots included. Museums can be an institutional mechanism for examining the past and fulfilling personal and group needs that bridge generations. Moreover, because the mass media are not much interested in portraying ethnic roots, museums can influence media content by bringing forth such information.

Architecturally, museums and especially historic sites have a role to play in preserving culture, as they themselves become visible symbols in a community, attesting to a common heritage and identity for people who live apart in separate suburbs. There are, for example, virtually dozens of neglected or even abandoned Ukrainian churches which are fascinating structures—visible symbols of a community's cultural background—which



could be converted into on-site museums for purposes of cultural identification.

Museums can also play a role in cultural development and in maintaining a viable group culture by advancing knowledge about the group. Among those who think that ethnic allegiance is basically a good thing and voice regret when people drift away from their cultural roots, there are some who proclaim their ethnic allegiance for the wrong reasons. They create simplistic we/they cultural stereotypes about themselves and other ethnic groups. Thus the strength of a group is often based on a degree of prejudice toward other groups. Museums, on the other hand, can show the wide range of underlying cultural influences and nuances, thereby placing all cultures in the best light. By encouraging a more enlightened community, museums can provide a more satisfactory rationale for cultural affinity than some of the older, more simplistic attitudes.

The research which museums conduct is multi-faceted, taking in all aspects of every-day life—food habits, clothing styles, seasonal customs, daily activities, folklore—and not just the activities recorded in written documents. Compared to other institutional research centres, museums are better equipped to confront this kind of broad multi-sensory subject matter because they use not only artifacts, but photographs, documents and tapes and are also in direct personal contact with the community when pursuing their research. As a result, the end product can be a much broader understanding of a group's culture.

## Collecting Material Culture: Alberta's Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village\*

Radomir B. Bilash

The collection of early Ukrainian Canadian material culture has been an ongoing process since the turn of the twentieth century. At first, collection was related to drama groups at various *narodni domy*, which needed "props" for plays. The items, usually discards with their original purpose fulfilled, consisted mainly of portable goods: hand implements, utensils, clothing.

With time, to overcome the sense of inferiority caused by discrimination, Ukrainians began to exhibit their culture to non-Ukrainians. As stage productions and handicraft displays increased, their aesthetic appearance grew in importance with increased attention to beauty, colour and intricacy of design. The private museum as a depository to exhibit cultural adaptations or transplanted immigrant vestiges of material culture was a natural outgrowth.

Today the collection of Ukrainian Canadian artifacts is no longer confined to privately sponsored Ukrainian museums. Among the collections in federally and provincially sponsored public institutions, one of the most unique is that at the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, some forty kilometres east of Edmonton on Highway 16. Operated by Historic Sites Services of Alberta's Department of Culture, the 320-acre village is the

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\*Abstract only.





Fig. 9 *Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, Government of Alberta Photo.*

Fig. 9. Located east of Edmonton, the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village re-creates several farmsteads and a typical farmsite in east-central Alberta *c.* 1930. Largely initiated and co-ordinated by railway companies, the townsite sold the manufactured goods and reflected the technology and general life style that gradually transformed the material culture of rural Ukrainian settlements.



Fig. 10 Eugene Dub. Visitor Reception Centre, Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, Government of Alberta Photo.

Fig. 10. The Visitor Reception Centre at the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village is an example of Ukrainian folk architecture adapted to a contemporary Canadian socio-cultural milieu. It blends the layout of a traditional Hutsul *grazhda* (enclosed farmstead) with the style of domestic architecture transplanted to the prairies at the turn of the century.



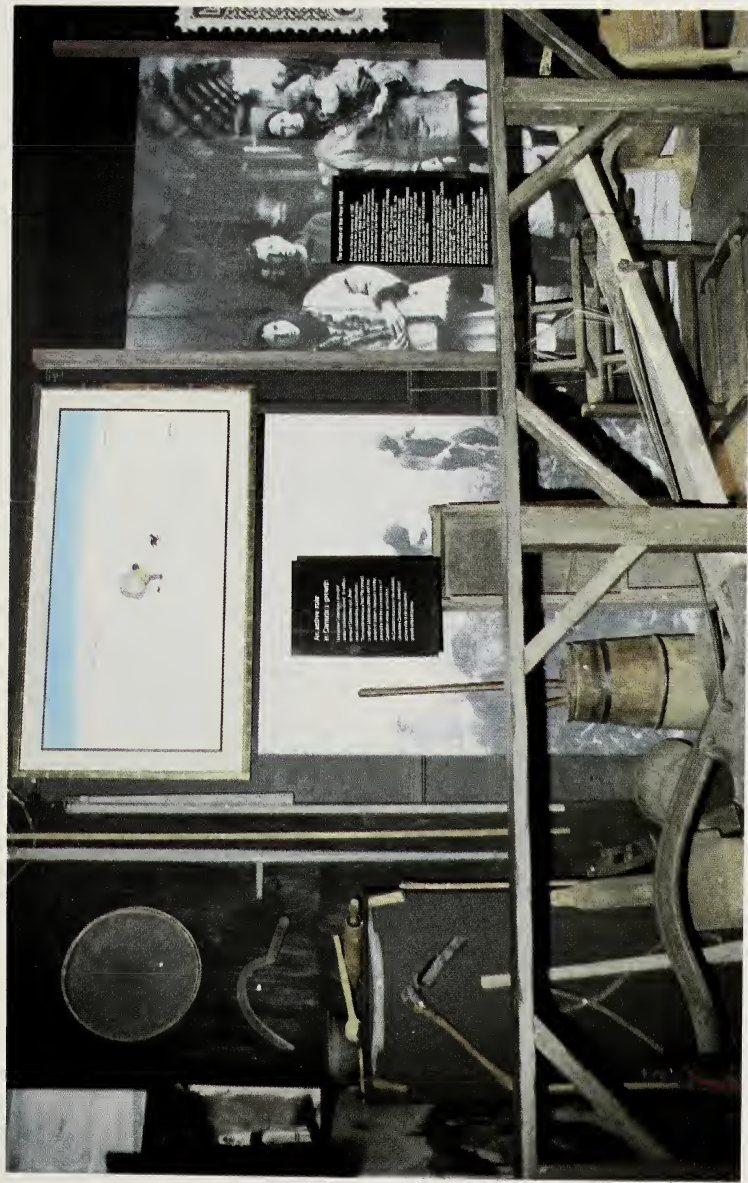


Fig. 11 *Display of Household and Domestic Utensils, Ukrainian Heritage*  
Museum of Canada, Casa Loma, Toronto.





Fig. 12 *Display of Ukrainian Arts and Crafts*, Ukrainian Heritage Museum of Canada, Casa Loma, Toronto.







Fig. 13 *Display of Ukrainian Dress, Arts and Crafts, Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre (Oseredok), Winnipeg.*



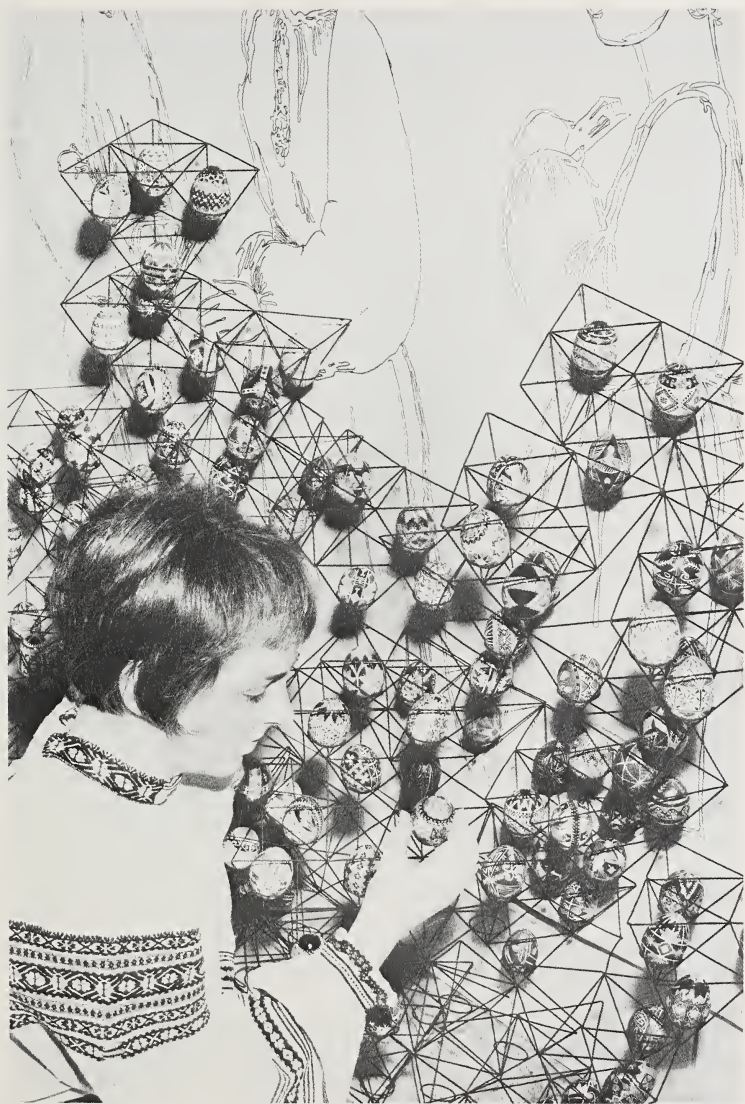


Fig. 14 *Display of Ukrainian Easter Eggs (Pysanky)*, National Museum of Man, Ottawa.



only such project outside Ukraine to be wholly funded by government.

The purpose of the village is to commemorate the early settlement of east-central Alberta by people from Galicia and Bukovyna. As an open-air museum of original and reconstructed buildings furnished with various pieces of material culture, the village endeavours to create an appreciation for the ways in which people coped with the hardships and isolation of homesteading.

A key feature of the village is recognition that the architecture of buildings is as important as are artifacts in the representation of folk culture. Unfortunately, however, both the reconstructed and original buildings were treated at first not as material culture, but as galleries to house material culture. Within their walls exhibits were poorly assembled to create a nostalgic atmosphere, frequently bordering on popularized versions of western Canadian and more frequently western American history as portrayed on television and in movies, with scant attention to historic fact.

In 1976-7, after the village was purchased from the private Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Society (formed in 1971), its concept was reworked by a professional group of landscape architects, and further research and planning by the staff of Alberta Culture and Alberta Housing and Public Works followed, all under the watchful eye of the minister of culture, advised by a Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village Advisory Board, with representatives from the larger Ukrainian community organizations in Alberta and the local county government and MLA. Basic to the concept is the portrayal of three types of buildings as material culture: 1) those in a typical rural townsite, 2) those in a typical rural community complete with the proverbial crossroads as the hub of social and cultural activities, and 3) those on five typical farmstead sites in various stages of development—all before the 1930s when town and farm layouts, road size and domestic architecture were profoundly changed by the Great Depression and earlier technological changes brought on by the construction of a third railway line and increased motor transport.

The question of authenticity has been a prime consideration in the development of the village. To this end, reconstructed buildings have been modified or replaced by historically accurate structures representative of the appropriate period. This concern for accuracy has led to studies of landscaping, town-site patterns, settlement patterns, farmstead layout patterns and other general studies bearing on Ukraine and Canada, which allow for the relocation of buildings to proper locations within the village complex, as well as for the accurate representation of their physical surroundings and furnishings.

Inserted into this general framework are more specific structural, socio-economic and material culture studies of the buildings which place

them and their related furnishings within the broader Ukrainian, Ukrainian Canadian and western Canadian context. As much as possible, the village strives to recreate the specific history, furnishings and life style of each building and its inhabitants, while at the same time viewing it as a "representative" sample of similar structures found in the Prairie provinces.



## Discussion

*Peter Shostak:* Is it possible to have a group of Canadian architects of Ukrainian background examine the folk architecture of the pioneers and provide designs and blueprints for contemporary houses or summer cottages that would reflect Ukrainian characteristics?

*Radoslav Zuk:* The idea is very good in principle, but its practical implementation would be very difficult. It took me many years to understand and to transform the essentials of Ukrainian religious architecture into a new church architecture. A house design would take much time, especially since distinctly modern Ukrainian houses, parallel to Japanese houses, German-type houses and Southern California-style houses, do not exist. Churches are practically the only "Ukrainian" buildings being built, and in a community where there is little interest, it would be very difficult simply to design a truly contemporary Ukrainian house. Attitude is involved. Ukrainians must first want to have a Ukrainian architectural environment. Houses are one thing, but when one looks at Ukrainian institutions other than churches, there is hardly anything Ukrainian in the new buildings and most are poor architecture at that. The desire must first exist to have quality expression which is Ukrainian and also contemporary.

*Participant:* In referring to cultural temperament and characteristic abstract relationships is not Professor Zuk promoting Ukrainian artistic stereotypes?

*Radoslav Zuk:* No, because the reference is to *abstract* relationships that express themselves in different forms. When one looks at the history of Ukrainian architecture or art, even folk art, one finds a wealth of diverse forms that belong to different periods and regions, yet they all have something Ukrainian in common: that abstract set of relationships that a sensitive artist will incorporate, whether the art be abstract or figurative. The problem is that we do not want to look for these relationships. It is not an easy process and unless there is public demand to motivate the artist, especially in the case of material culture where objects usually have to be commissioned or sold, the search for such relationships does not take place.



**PART II**

**UKRAINIAN ART IN CANADA**



## Ethnicity in the Works of Ukrainian Canadian Artists

Lydia Palij

This paper deals with concepts that are not easily defined or easily measured. What is ethnicity in art? What, for that matter, is a Ukrainian Canadian? According to Professor Wsevolod Isajiw, few social scientists are concerned to define ethnicity, and there are more questions on the subject than answers.

Because of the recent world-wide interest in identity among minorities, one occasionally comes across discussions of ethnic expression in art. The views vary greatly. Some authors like Theodore Allen Heinrich, professor of art history at York University in Toronto, insist that art movements of real significance are in essence supranational; others like Charles Maillard, director of Montreal's École des Beaux-Arts in the 1940s, say: "Art must be national to be human."<sup>1</sup> It is interesting that many French Canadians are rethinking their attitude toward nationalism in art.

Ethnicity in art can express itself in two ways: 1) through an ethnic theme or subject matter, and 2) through the ethnic "spirit" (*dukhovist*) of a creative work. The first is used widely, is not difficult to define and is the basis of traditional style; the second is much more elusive. The division between theme and spirit, moreover, is not clearcut and characteristics overlap. Ethnic spirit is hard to describe in words, and there are even critics who doubt that it exists at all.

### *The Role of Ukrainian Subject Matter in Art*

The use of an ethnic theme (subject matter) in art may be beneficial—national consciousness is healthy—but it can also be harmful because the aspiration to be ethnically unique can lead to cultural isolation.

Being Ukrainian is a learned experience; it is not inherited. What is perceived as being Ukrainian comes from parents, the school and from society. It has a lot to do with childhood. Ukrainian artists may be separated into two categories—those born and raised in Ukraine and those born in Canada. The first group has the advantage of remembering what Ukraine “feels” like and perhaps even of exposure to artistic expressions there. Canadian-born artists may, of course, learn about the country of their ancestors from others, from books or from occasional visits, but more frequently they depict the ethnic experiences of their childhood in Alberta, Manitoba or Saskatchewan. This may indicate the emergence of a Ukrainian Canadian subculture, where the images and symbols are different from those of Ukrainian-born artists.

Both geographical and social backgrounds have a lot to do with understanding and interpreting Ukrainianness. Individuals raised in farm communities are more likely to manifest their ethnicity through folklore. The folklore of the pioneers was the only means of preserving ethnic identity in the foreign, hostile environment of the time. Having served its purpose, it has unfortunately lasted too long, becoming for many the only form of cultural expression. Instead of finding its honourable place in museums, it is frequently artificially nurtured, often fed by a sustained infusion of such Soviet kitsch as wooden *pysanky* and carved eagles.

The post-Second World War immigrants did not affect the situation greatly. Folklore and objects that pass for folk art are still extremely popular, and there are pressures to accept them as national symbols. Often “folk art” becomes a cheap solution, an easy self-indulgence, a pacifier (“We might not read Ukrainian books, we might not speak the language, but we still have embroidered cushions”). And a whole series of false symbols has been introduced. Cross-hatched geometric embroidery from a small area in western Ukraine has been elevated almost to a national symbol. The Trypillian design is another example of a good idea gone wild.

The above has influenced the Ukrainian Canadian fine arts. In its most destructive form aesthetically, it appears as embroidery on a pseudo-Byzantine Madonna or in saccharine-sweet paintings of idealized Ukrainian villages and girls in folk costumes. They might adorn grocery-store calendars, but they should not be considered High Art or, worse still, be exhibited as Ukrainian culture.

There are other harmful aspects of traditional art. Iryna Petrenko-Fedyshyn, a Ukrainian American artist on a panel ("Where Do We Stand in Art?") in New York on 30 January 1977, said: "When tradition become static and is continually and blindly imitated, it can lead to stagnation and, as a result, can leave us behind in the rapidly passing kaleidoscope of the social and cultural process of our era."<sup>2</sup> Under the guise of Ukrainian tradition, amateurs frequently misuse Ukraine's great iconographic tradition. But imitation of Byzantine art does not necessarily make it Ukrainian, for this style was used from Ravenna to Cappadocia and from Moscow to Addis Ababa. According to Yuriy Solovij, Ukrainian American artist and critic: "Not everything brought from Ukraine is good. On the contrary, the artist who makes his debut in Ukraine often performs the duty of national-dogmatic hygiene, ritual duties without problems, instead of attempting to depict phenomena in a fresh way."<sup>3</sup>

On the positive side of ethnic subject matter in art, there are several artists of Ukrainian origin in Canada who produce good creative works in styles from the realistic to the abstract. Some have easily recognizable Ukrainian themes, others do not. Since all artistic expression comes from the turmoil in our subconscious, it is very difficult to explain why an artist chooses a certain subject matter, style or technique.

Some Ukrainian Canadian artists use traditional imagery in a new way. In some of their works, Myron Lewyckij and Halyna Nowakiwska from Toronto, for example, have combined ethnic elements with a contemporary style. Yulian Kolesar (Montreal) appears to use ethnic elements in most of his modernistic paintings. Natalka Husar (Toronto) expresses her perception of what it means to be Ukrainian in Canada in her witty exhibit of ceramic sculptures, "The Golden Form," whose style resembles Oldenberg's pop art. Other artists—Ann Alexandra Harbuz, Molly Lenhardt, Primrose Diakiw, Lina Kostiuk—see the world as sincerely and as innocently as children. Similar sincerity and innocence can be seen in the works of Peter Shostak and William Kurelek. To Kurelek, "Ethnicity cannot be manufactured any more than morality can be legislated. It is there by birth or experience and can only be uncovered or nurtured."<sup>4</sup>

Currently, there is an emerging group of fourth-generation Ukrainian Canadian artists who feel the psychological need to seek out their ethnic roots and to express themselves creatively, mostly in writing. As children frequently of nationally indifferent parents and thus not "burdened" by a knowledge of ancestral history or culture, they have learned about their ethnicity from folk myth and Baba's tales. Such are Ted Galay's play *After Baba's Funeral* and the early poetry of Andrew Suknaski. It would be interesting to see whether paintings produced by a similar creative process would still be Ukrainian in spirit.

Official Soviet art has had little effect on Ukrainian Canadian artists. "Socialist Realism," being quite out of touch with the artists' reality, has had little appeal. However, unofficial non-conformist art in Ukraine, which occasionally reaches the West, is generally well received. It is alive, contemporary and vibrant, displaying the most imaginative use of Ukrainian subject matter. For example, Fedir Humeniuk and Andrij Antoniuk produce superb paintings on Ukrainian historical themes. Ivan Marchuk and Bohdan Soroka are inspired by mythology and such ancient symbols as the deer and the horse, which may well have been the Ukrainians' tribal totems. Recent arrivals Volodymyr Makarenko and Antin Solomukha, on the other hand, resort to elements that seem to go beyond Ukrainian subject matter.

### *The Role of Ethnic "Spirit" (Dukhovist) in Art*

Ethnic spirit is difficult to define. It is more like a dreamy enigma that can only be *felt* by an observer. It is mythic; it comes from the depths of an artist's subconscious; it is like the memory of a scent—"Ievshan Zillia"—the memory of a mother's lullaby or of the colour of the sky from one's childhood.

Can art reflect the psyche of a cultural group or of a nation? Can one see reflected in Ukrainian art Ukrainian ethnic characteristics or their tragic history or love of the romantic and the lyrical? Such elements can be seen, especially in the semi-abstract and abstract works of artists like Makarenko, Marchuk and Solomukha, still close to Ukrainian soil. However, the less realistic the work, the more one tends to overlook its external quality and to focus on the internal, that is, on its psychological effect. This, of course, does not mean that the works of artists who express themselves in a realistic manner cannot have Ukrainian "spirit," but it would be interesting to hear the views of others on the subject.

### *Canadian Artists of Ukrainian Origin Who Shun Ethnic Elements*

An artist has to be good to use ethnic subject matter successfully, but an artist does not have to be "ethnic" to be good. Not everybody can and not everybody wants to use ethnic themes or styles. All who are creative and express themselves honestly, contribute equally to Canada's culture. In fact, it has been mainly abstract artists like Kolisnyk, Kostyniuk and Zeleniak that non-Ukrainian critics have accepted and mainstream galleries have exhibited. With their names, they see themselves and are easily identified as Ukrainian Canadian artists. After all, the "non-ethnic" Archipenko did more for Ukrainian art in the eyes of Western critics than anyone else. And on the question of his Ukrainian "spirit," one might best

paraphrase the Canadian critic Kay Woods: "Art does not have to speak of Ukrainian culture but *for* Ukrainian culture."

### *The Future of Ukrainian Canadian Art*

The Ukrainian émigré Sviatoslav Hordynsky wrote: "Formal and spiritual problems of our past and present should be at the centre of our artistic concern. We must study and recognize our ancient traditions."<sup>5</sup> While Ukrainian Canadians should certainly learn about their past and be concerned about the present, some might prefer to focus their artistic concerns elsewhere. The priority should be creative, honest expression. Artists who do not feel the need to incorporate ethnic elements into their art, should not feel obliged to do so. At least one young man known to me suffers considerably every time he listens to his mother and paints "Ukrainian style!"

The editor of *Artscanada*, quoting Andrew Forge, Yale University, captures the paradox well: "Of course art has roots. Of course art leaps over frontiers."<sup>6</sup> One must have roots but to succeed beyond one's own community, one's art must be understood and appreciated by others. Contact with other cultures is essential to enrich one's aesthetic vocabulary. Art critic Maryna Antonowych-Rudnycka warned at the 1977 New York conference on Ukrainian art: "As long as we only repeat, copy or imitate the stereotypes of our past, we will not advance. One should know the tradition of our cultural heritage and with it as a base create new artistic values. The contemporary creative output of Ukrainian artists should reflect today's very complex demands of life."<sup>7</sup>

Thus art can reflect the many-faceted Ukrainian culture, but the cultural process must not be isolated from the rest of Canada and the world. It needs to depict the dynamism of change, the dynamism of the present generation, including the changes and turmoils of Ukrainian Canadian society—and that not only in painting and sculpture, but in the graphic and applied arts and in such contemporary crafts as pottery and weaving.

Most lamentable is the lack of competent criticism of contemporary Ukrainian Canadian art. During exhibits some art sells well, and artists are judged solely on their popularity. However, average consumers shun anything that is innovative, original or experimental; they distrust what they do not understand. The public is not educated about Ukrainian Canadian art. There are dozens of colourful books on folklore, but not a single anthology of Ukrainian artists in Canada. As a result, many leave, afraid of Ukrainian "ghettos" and eager for appreciation elsewhere. Also needed is a gallery, similar to the Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art in Chicago, that would exhibit only high-calibre contemporary works.



Grants from the Multiculturalism Directorate of the Secretary of State are now available not only for community projects but for individual artists and small groups, yet a former minister of multiculturalism could say: "All you Ukrainians ever ask for is grants for dancing boots." Why are not efforts made to obtain funds for art education or for communication with the younger generation interested in art? Why is a good travelling exhibit screened by a professional jury not organized? Why are not funds sought to publish a book depicting good contemporary Ukrainian Canadian art? A lot could be done that is not being done to help Ukrainian Canadian artists—both those who use ethnic symbols and those who do not.

## NOTES

1. Quoted by François-Marc Gagnon in "Paule Emile Borduas and Modernism: I Hate All Nationalism," *Artscanada* (Dec. 1979-Jan. 1980): 15.
2. Quoted in *Svoboda*, 15 Feb. 1977.
3. "Z zapilla na fronty" (From the Rear to the Frontlines), *Suchasnist* 1, no. 217 (Jan. 1979): 35.
4. "Development of Ethnic Consciousness in a Canadian Painter," in W. Isajiw (ed.), *Identities: The Impact of Ethnicity on Canadian Society* (Toronto 1977), 55.
5. Quoted in *Svoboda*, 15 Feb. 1977.
6. "To Celebrate the Paradox," *Artscanada* (Dec. 1978-Jan. 1979): ii.
7. Quoted in *Svoboda*, 15 Feb. 1977.



Fig. 15 Molly Lenhardt. *Daughter of a Ukrainian Canadian Pioneer*. Oil. 1978.

Fig. 15. The painting is one of the most basic applications of an ethnic motif that is both naive and honest.



Fig. 16 Primrose Diakiv. *Embroidered Memory*. Acrylic. 1976.

Fig. 16. The work illustrates well another use of the Ukrainian folkloric theme.





Fig. 17 William Kurelek. *The Second House*. Oil.

Fig. 17. Many of Kurelek's works reflect childhood memories in Ukrainian villages in western Canada.





Fig. 18 Myron Levytskyj. *Hutsul Musicians*. Oil. 1961.

Fig. 18. The work is a good example of ethnic elements in a contemporary painting by a Canadian who was born and educated in Ukraine.





Fig. 19 Yulian Kolesar. *Wedding*. Acrylic. 1967.

Fig. 19. The work is another example of folkloric motifs in a contemporary painting by a Canadian who grew up in a Ukrainian settlement in Yugoslavia.



Fig. 20 Fedir Humeniuk. *Ivan Mazepa*. Oil. 1976. Dnipropetrovsk.  
(Unfinished.)

Fig. 20. The contemporary painting on a historical theme is by a non-conforming artist in Ukraine.

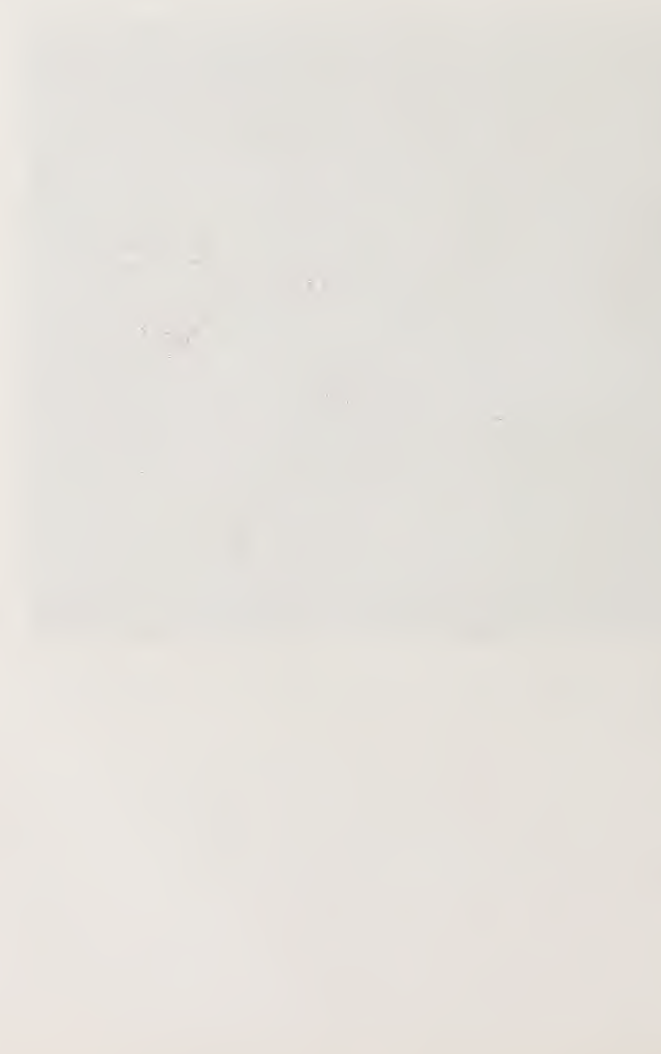






Fig. 21 Bohdan Soroka. *Drowning of Marena*. Woodcut. 1967. Lviv.



Fig. 21. The work is an example of painting inspired by pagan mythology in Ukraine.



Fig. 22 Roman Petruk. *Voron*. Ink. 1968. Lviv.

Fig. 22. In this painting, symbols from ancient Ukrainian folklore are used. The raven and the dying horse represent sorrow; the horse's folded legs invoke Scythian imagery.



Fig. 23 Wolodymyr Makarenko. *Melancholy Evening in Kiev*. Oil. 1975.  
Tallin, Estonia.

Fig. 23. Even without any historic or folkloric elements, the painting by a recent émigré from Ukraine “feels” Ukrainian.



## **The Relevance of Ethnicity: A Personal Perspective**

**Peter Shostak**

My comments are those of a professional artist, someone who took the plunge several years ago and resigned from university teaching to make a living as an artist in Canada.

The situation in Canada, both in the Ukrainian community and in Canada generally, is such that today we have more art galleries and more art bought, sold and viewed than ever before. It was probably a good thing to assume the role of full-time artist. People have been falling all over each other to establish galleries, especially in Calgary and Edmonton. Even though many gallery dealers know very little about art, some know a good deal about selling. Still, only a small number of so-called mainstream galleries handle known Canadian artists.

As an artist, I owe my start and initial success to the Ukrainian community for its encouragement and support through the establishment of galleries. In Winnipeg there is an excellent gallery at the Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre (Oseredok) and another in Toronto at the Ukrainian Canadian Art Foundation. Across Canada people like Mrs. Sofia Skrypnyk of Edmonton have organized exhibitions and made art available. All have played a very important role in encouraging artists like myself. The battle is not an easy one, for all artists compete for gallery space and time, and for the dollars spent on Canadian art.

What appear to be the most important qualities to succeed as an artist? First, most gallery people will not touch anyone who is not a 'lifer'—one who does not make a living out of painting. Galleries want work that is

unique. It has to be different from that produced by other artists. Secondly, the artist must be prolific. If you are Alex Colville you can produce five meticulous pieces a year, but if you are a young budding artist, the galleries want an exhibit at least once every two years to warrant the cost of advertising.

The most important quality in painting is integrity and honesty in the work produced, which is why my Ukrainian background and my art work really cannot be separated. However, people who buy art in the galleries are less interested in the painter's ethnic background than in what the artist can produce. The most important quality therefore is that the work be honest.

My own work stems from my background of growing up on a farm in northeastern Alberta. The only art I ever saw, if you can even call it that, were the calendars my father collected at Christmas time from the different stores. Not until I went to university did I see paintings by the Group of Seven and by my professors, as well as by others in the books I read. And not until well into my university years did I get a chance to look at art from Ukraine, art in terms of Ukrainian style, symbolism and colour. So my exposure to Ukrainian subject matter in terms of style and approach, in terms of what has been happening in Ukraine artistically, is a very recent one, and I am not sure that it really has affected my work.

My work is regional—it can be classified as regional art—but I am also concerned to inject cosmopolitan appeal. And just as people do not worry about ethnic background, they do not worry about its being Albertan; they respond to the work because of what is there. In the last few years, I have been more and more concerned with the human condition and with human interaction—the two brothers on the farm who have to play with each other because there really is no one else. Their environment is that of the physical outdoors, where there is no intrusion from television or even from radio. The concern is with human interaction, the interaction of two or three people within an environment that is often harsh. Maybe my work does have an innocence, but I also think it has sincerity and I hope that comes out.

In the seventies we had a lot of artistic work that seemed to be future-oriented—art concerned and influenced by technology and computers. Today there is a definite switch. The people are less interested in the future because the future in a lot of cases is not that rosy. The artists are therefore looking back, trying to pick up and expand on little things—a human activity, a spirit. Ukrainian elements are obvious in some of my paintings, but in a lot of them I think it is more the Ukrainian spirit, the abstract, that comes out.





Fig. 24 Peter Shostak. *Going to town*. Oil. 1973.

Fig. 24. "In 1969, after moving to Victoria, I had some difficulty selecting and focusing on subject matter. The appealing West Coast landscape, with its rugged rocks and large trees, furnished my first images. While initially satisfying, I soon found it difficult to go beyond the basic visual components. Many others using the same subject matter were producing more dynamic work because the West Coast was part of their background. Dissatisfied with my work, in December 1973 I painted *Going to town*, a key piece in my development as an artist, for it was the first image to portray an activity and a life style that was so much a part of my youth."  
(Peter Shostak)



Fig. 25 Peter Shostak. *It should be dinner time soon*. Oil. 1981.

Fig. 25. "Growing up on the prairies, with wood frequently the only fuel, the wood-sawing bee was an annual event. On a Saturday in late March or early April, with twenty or more loads of poplar trees in the farmyard, the family spent the entire day cutting up stove lengths. *It should be dinner time soon* has no visible Ukrainian symbols, but it does carry the spirit of generations of hardworking Ukrainian farmers." (Peter Shostak)

## **The Relevance of Ethnicity: A Personal Perspective**

**Robert Achtemichuk**

There is little doubt that ethnicity has relevance to an artist's intellectual make-up. The period of formation as a person surrounded by ethnic thought and discipline remains forever. It is the historical inheritance, about which Carl Jung spoke in modern psychology. The interest in one's ethnicity, however, will manifest itself in different degrees. In some cases the individual's intellectual growth stops with ethnicity; in others it reaches beyond. As pioneers, our forefathers removed themselves from Ukraine. As Canadians with new life styles and concerns, we should now try to evolve in the new location.

It is difficult for an artist like me, who hopefully gives rise to concerns about the present and occasionally about the future, to really concern himself with what seems to be an irrelevant historical outlook. I have not lost the seeds planted in me by my parents; I am only an extension much removed from their situation.

Good art has little to do with ethnic beliefs and much with the universality of man. When Taras Shevchenko wrote, Volodymyr Tatlin painted or Alexander Archipenko sculpted were they concerned intellectually with Ukrainian identity? They were involved in expressing their observations, thoughts and feelings, creating subject matter full of universal concerns and knowledge using images that could be understood by all.

The questions central to this conference may confuse the reader because of what appears to be a rather loose definition of art. In defining it, I

would not relate it to politics or to the Ukrainian essence or identity. It is much larger than such issues and irrelevant to them. Art that becomes 10 per cent political, nationalistic or religious is not 100 per cent art, which should aspire to deeper meanings in its nature.

As for the nature of contemporary Ukrainian Canadian art, it aligns itself with other art trends, some being abstract, others realistic, dealing with new techniques. In our midst we have everything, all the good and the bad. Since Ukrainian Canadian galleries are few in number, they show everything. It is likely because of this that they cannot recognize the difference between art and its opposite—facile, mindless landscapes with thatched roofs, heroes of the last century, modern commercial pottery, sickly sweet enamel work, religious icons and political holocausts. It is too bad that the word “art” must cover them all. Such art works are in galleries because they sell and thus they probably express Ukrainian Canadian identity. Not all art that deals with such subjects is bad, but there are very few good items. Serious artists are generally not interested to win acclaim by painting such subjects. Since Ukrainian Canadian galleries handle such “art,” artists shy away from exhibitions for fear of being included.

But the problem of clientele is not just a Ukrainian dilemma. Canadian art buyers, other than the French Canadians, cannot relax and look at a new work of art. They feel intimidated by their lack of knowledge, and what is even worse, they do not trust their inner selves sufficiently to discuss their value judgments with others.

It is difficult to approach the subject of Ukrainian essence in Canadian art. In my work, which is in some respects considered experimental, there may be an ethnic flavour. Being third-generation Canadian, I feel that I have an ethnic essence, but how it affects my work I cannot determine. I can get sentimental, satirical and romantic; I can use purple, red, green, yellow and blue in one image, but can that be related to Ukrainian essence? My work is figurative. I study the psychological and philosophical issues of Western and Eastern influences in my work. I hope through my painting to come to an understanding of the world and the essence of my time in it.

Experimental art forms cannot remove essence from a work of art. It is all combined. If there is no Ukrainian essence in a work of art, it is because the artist is little concerned with that aspect of his being. It has nothing to do with the art form. The largess of the culture that surrounds us and to which we contribute either removes that particular essence or changes it. For me, the essence of a work of art is its character. What counts is not the subject matter but the taste, smell and angle of approach that the artist gets into his art.





Fig. 26 Robert Achtemichuk. *Hot Rod Hummingbird*. Woodcut with Water Colour on Paper. 1979.



Fig. 26. The painting depicts a very mobile spruced-up bird, which courts a princess who sits leisurely on a sofa or swims in the water.

A community expresses itself by the objects it collects or supports through attendance. The organized community usually has as its reference point a gallery or a common meeting place. It expresses itself in a type or style drawn from its different individuals. It usually collects what readily appeals to the latter and which does not require much promotion. It tends to be conservative since there are many individuals to appease.

As an artist, I would personally avoid an organized community, feeling that it would have a philosophy to bind me, while in the general population I could develop freely with only one criterion: to be good and not necessarily accepted.

Ukrainian art forms which usually draw Canadians are those accepted as good entertainment. The public is not out to support any Ukrainian essence but attends because artists such as the Koshetz Choir and the Rusalka Dancers in Winnipeg are professionals and their art has universal appeal. Artists more esoteric in Ukrainian essence are not supported because their works lack meaning in the surrounding culture.

On the effect of Soviet Ukrainian art styles and politics on Ukrainian Canadian art, I have little to say. I believe there is no influence. Little comes out of their artistic stature in Canada or in other parts of the world. Soviet politics are similar to that of other unfortunate countries where peace and freedom are stifled. We find ourselves concerned about them and are influenced mainly by the fact that we do not wish to live there.

In summary, the questions being considered are only relevant to a person who is concerned and involved in the Ukrainian Canadian art movement. With my definition of art, my work falls outside that movement. I am involved in my own formal issues, expression and communication, hopefully on many levels; I am not involved in documenting and narrating my Ukrainian heritage.

## The Relevance of Ethnicity: A Personal Perspective

Natalka Husar

I was born American, raised Ukrainian and my status is Canadian—a hyphenated consciousness reinforced by anger and guilt, and, of course, there is going to be evidence of this in my work. I do “art” about that which I know best and understand best (but not enough), and honesty also is very, very important. Here I agree with my colleague, Peter Shostak. You are not marketable unless you are honest and I am constantly confronted by that question. I face the problems he mentioned in getting into galleries. Without crying the blues, being a woman raises the question of whether in five years I will be producing art or babies. Nevertheless, I am in it for life. I do art because I have to. The content is always very specific, usually biographical. Sometimes, if I am lucky, the concept is universal.

Because of the specific roots of my work, I have often been labelled an ethnic artist and to me that connotes a folkloric, passive, calm temperament, which in my respect is misleading. I have always considered myself an angry artist. I never wanted simply to express the beauty of the Ukrainian cultural tradition. *Koliady*, *korovay*, *korovy* (carols, wedding cake and cows) have never motivated me to create. It is the emotions and the conflicts of the people that live with these traditions that have bothered me, and expressing this in an art form has been a therapeutic process for me. There is humour, pain, irony and evil in my work, and that which is ironic and repulsive and kitschy when alone becomes beautiful when related to life. Seeing the relationship and extracting it is how I see my



Fig. 27 Nataalka Husar. *Veroniky Vareniky*. Porcelain, 1977.

Fig. 27. "Seven perfect *varenyky* arranged on a cloth, that come back to mind as Veronica's veil. As a child I was always fascinated by the negative and positive form used in cutting out *varenyky*. From the negative comes the positive, and in this allegory [the series "The Golden Form," from which *Veroniky Varenyky* and *The TV Sviat Vechir* (opposite) are taken], I have used the *varenyk* as the symbol of the Ukrainian in immigration." (Natalka Husar)



Fig. 28 Natalka Husar. *The TV Dinner Sviat Vechir*. Porcelain. 1977.

Fig. 28. "A more complex piece than *Veroniky Varenyky*, *The TV Dinner Sviat Vechir*, the twelve-course meatless Christmas Eve supper (just heat and serve!) eliminates more than just labour. It eliminates tradition, ritual, religion—all that is truly important—leaving only the food. The 'ingredients' listed on the side of the package include love, faith, hope, belief, nostalgia, bitterness, wit, guilt, passion, hate, etc. The package also advertises the tempting Extra Vooshka—as I remember there never could be too many. The brand name, using the familiar Swanson's logo, is Svyntstvo [swinishness]. I remember feeling irreverant doing this piece, but I actually heard people suggesting after they saw it at the showing that it is a brilliant idea for Ukrainian senior citizens—sort of a meal on wheels for the sixth of January!" (Natalka Husar)





Fig. 29 Nataalka Husar. *After All That, Supper*. Porcelain. 1977.

Fig. 29. "This is my favourite piece, *After all that, supper* or "Sex and the single Ukrainian girl." It consists of Ukrainian red boots arranged like meat, a brassiere like potatoes and beads tied with a green ribbon, like carrots garnished with parley. Think what you may, it is a Ukrainian girl on a platter." (Natalka Husar)



Fig. 30 Nataalka Husar. *Boys from the Legion*. Porcelain and Mixed Media. 1980.

Fig. 30. "The blue-yellow tie and the *tryzub* on the lapel are specifically Ukrainian Canadian, but hopefully the feeling of self-importance, the feeling of a misplaced fighter, are universal." (Nataalka Husar)

task as an artist, resolving the ironies and the questions that have faced me all my life.

In my first body of work, entitled "The Golden Form," there were seventeen conceptual, three-dimensional objects (images) in clay. These objects were personal emotions, the experiences of a child of good immigrant parents growing up in a new land, belonging and yet not quite belonging, raised on hot dogs and borshch.

The second series, exhibited in 1980 and called "Faces—Facades," was a collection of fictitious Ukrainian Canadians, composites of people uprooted from a past. What I did was travel in Canada for a couple of years, taking photographs and sketching people who I thought were classic Ukrainian Canadians. I invented their names, backgrounds and occupations and kept an extensive book—files, so to speak, as if creating characters for a play—with notes for their characters. I tried to capture the energy of the emotions that have disturbed me since childhood: fear, anxiety, guilt, self-deception, complacency, the constant search for a respectable identity. The characters—their dress, titles, occupations—are specifically Ukrainian Canadian, yet within their ethnic characteristics, there are attitudes common to all humanity: the same fears, hopes, needs, desires, the same longing of the soul for something better, the same entrapment of the human condition.

I depict the universal characteristics of human nature specifically through Ukrainian people because I am Ukrainian and therefore I see myself in my work. Only by confronting that which I hate can I resolve my guilt and see that which I love.

## **The Relevance of Ethnicity: A Personal Perspective**

**Irka Onufrijchuk**

Decorative symbols, when read with a sense of intuition and knowledge, can reveal the essential features of a culture. Display of such symbols creates an environment conducive to a specific way of interpreting and imagining the world. Even the basic shapes of interior space have symbolic meaning which is commonly interpreted. For example, the circle is an international symbol of the sun, our primary life-giving force. The square and its variant, the rectangle, are internationally recognized as symbolizing the number "4," which represents the four directions, the four elements, the four seasons, the four stages of man, and the Christian cross. Creativity and growth are symbolized by the triangle. The triangle represents the number "3," which, in symbolic understanding, is two elements uniting to create a third, or three elements working in harmony with one another.

Symbols of Ukrainians, born out of a centuries-old agricultural experience, are informed by the Earth. The black line, the symbol for earth, represents the continuity of life implied in her fecundity. The extended use of outline in Ukrainian arts and crafts reflects the importance of this primary symbol. Ukrainians also have numerous symbolic motifs that represent the earth's products. Wheat and bread are the principal symbols for life, with bread usually seen in the form of a circle called a *kolach*, also the symbol for the sun, interpreted as the ultimate life-giving force.

The Ukrainian symbolic language includes certain elements of nature. The sun is represented in the many variations of the circle, the rain in vertical and diagonal lines, the dynamic effect of lightning in zigzag lines. All these symbols relate directly to the growing season. Ukrainians have no symbol for snow.

Symbols representing flora are infinite. The most numerous motifs are the rose and the sunflower. The rose symbolizes the beauty and wisdom of the female, therefore of the earth. The sunflower symbolizes the sun, which causes the earth to bring forth life and is associated with the masculine principle. The animal kingdom is also represented. Especially important are the bird motifs. Birds are believed to be foretellers of spring and predict the coming of the growing season; they are symbols of fertility.

In general, the language of Ukrainian symbols is rich and complex. The motifs are not only numerous but many in their variations: realistic, geometric, abstract. The inspiration for these symbols has likely been Ukraine's land, its wealth and its generosity.

In urban North America, Ukrainians experience these symbols today predominantly on a subconscious level. In homes and in institutions they appear on *kylymy*, pottery, *pysanky* and graphic art, where the primary motivation is ornamentation. The ornamentation succeeds in giving space a distinctly Ukrainian flavour and, for some inexplicable reason, it evokes in some an immediate sense of belonging, of feeling "at home."

Symbols follow a cycle. With the passage of time and urbanization, some Ukrainian symbols have lost their relevance and become instead forms of ornamentation. As ornaments, they are now displayed for their "broader" value as being in and of themselves representative of a certain "Ukrainianness." The symbols become the signs of a "community" which the individual acquires as environmental components for a personal celebration of identity.



## Artists and Art Critics On the Relevance of Ethnicity to Art

Jaroslav Rozumnyj

*One should live wherever there is singing—evil people don't have songs.* (Friedrich Schiller)

A lot has been said and written about tradition and the Ukrainian style, forgetting the principal tenet of art—art has to be creative. In the arts, tradition as such is poison. One can speak of certain mental affinities, held in common by a people—a nation, which go toward imbuing the work with a mystique all its own, imparting to it a particular psychological and philosophical nuance. . . . I believe that it is high time we ventured out onto a higher and broader plane in our discussions, advocating innovative and daring concepts instead of persisting in a fruitless discussion regarding the question of tradition and a national style. (Jurij Solovij, "On Art, Architecture," *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 13 September 1981)

My ancestors, the same as the Russians, availed themselves in the past of Byzantine and Oriental influences. I like Byzantine and Oriental art, in fact all that is of genius in every country and of all times, and my real tradition is found everywhere—in the genius of human creation. There is no nationality in my creations. In that respect, I am no more Ukrainian than I am Chinese. I am no one person. (Alexander Archipenko in D. H. Karshan (ed.), *Archipenko: International Visionary* (Washington 1969), 36)

Coming here at the age of thirty-six at the height of his European fame, he [Archipenko] remained something of a displaced loner, a man who always seemed to be looking in from the outside. Moving from place to place, he restlessly pursued his roots, but they were not to be found in America. And, of course, during the early twenties, this country was scarcely ready for his sophisticated metaphors. Later, his ebullient colour, admittedly more decorative than structural, disturbed American eyes which at that time were happier with restrained Gallic taste. For, from beginning to end, Archipenko remained a Ukrainian—a man who often seemed closer to the near East than the West... But, make no mistake, Archipenko belongs securely to the history of modern art, less because he reflected its influence than because he himself helped create it. (Katherine Kuh, Foreword to *Alexander Archipenko: A Memorial Exhibition 1967–1969*, 9)

It would be interesting to find the abstract causes responsible for the formation of such styles as Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Gothic and modern. The causes of the creation of the Egyptian style are the Egyptian climate and religious philosophy. (Alexander Archipenko in Karshan (ed.), 52)

Beethoven had always meant universality to me... heart-to-heart communication... But then I performed Beethoven with the Wiener Philharmoniker... and everything suddenly changed. True, it was still universal, in fact more so; but in Vienna, Beethoven's own city, and with that orchestra, his music suddenly acquired a sense of place in the universe, and seemed to elicit from my mind ever new ideas about the composer's deepest intuitions... (Leonard Bernstein, *Ludwig van Beethoven, 1770–1827, 9 symphonien*, 1980)

The national *Weltanschauung*... manifests itself in what the nation likes about the world, what it avoids in life, what it values most in people... Of course, throughout the ages the national world-view does not remain the same. Both the influence of foreign cultures and significant changes in the life of a nation leave their mark on the national psyche. (Dmytro Chyzhevs'kyi, *Narysy z istorii filosofii na Ukraini* (Sketches from the History of Philosophy in Ukraine) (Praha 1931), 16–17)

During the copper-bronze period in the second half of the first millenium B.C., the territory of modern Ukraine plays a particular role in the arts of the world as a centre of artistic interaction and as a mediator in the exchange of artistic values between Asia and Europe. It was not only Ukraine's geographical position but also the peculiarities of artistic traditions formed during the preceding millenia that conditioned this. (Platon Bilets'kyi, *Skarby netlinni. Ukrains'ke mystetstvo u svitovomu khudozhn'omu protsesi* (Immortal Treasures: Ukrainian Art in the Development of World Art) (Kiev 1974), 11)

The problem of the formation of a pan-Russian multinational culture is an extremely complicated one. Nevertheless, one of the fundamental sources that enriched this culture were, beyond any doubt, the traditions of Kievan Rus'—a crossing of completely opposite elements. Thus, alongside a high spirituality of thought, an extreme rationalism was expressed; alongside a strict ascetism, impetuous activism; alongside an all-encompassing universalism, the specificity of underlined national traits; and alongside the ideals of Christianity, the pagan cult of Moist Mother Earth. (Valentyna Marcadé, "Selians'ka tematyka v tvorchosti Kazimira Severynovycha Malevycha (1878–1935)" (Peasant Themes in the Works of Casimir Severynovych Malevych (1878–1935)), *Suchasnist* 2, no. 218, (February 1979): 66

Ten years of Ukrainian belles-lettres [*Vestnik Evropy* (European Herald), 1875]—in which I attempted to show that the Ukrainian movement is strong not when it chases after superficial nationalism and dreams of national independence, but when it has as its goal the universally human interests of culture and the social interests of the people. ("M. P. Drahomanov's Autobiography," in Paulo Bohats'kyi (ed.), *M. P. Drahomanov: Selected Works*, vol. 1 (Praha-New York 1937), 72)

There is a popular though naive assumption in the Ukrainian American community that an architect of Ukrainian descent, regardless of his training, experience of talent, has to know how to design a "Ukrainian church." The end result is that, in the past years, too many imitations (and too costly) have been done, until mediocrity has become an accepted standard. At worst, we get good examples of our own Ukrainian kitsch. One such recent example of a "Ukrainian church" is one adorned on the facades by the all-familiar embroidery patterns, probably borrowed from its kindred printed porcelain. (Titus Hewryk, "On the State of Contemporary Ukrainian Church Architecture," *The Ukrainian Weekly*, 23 August 1981)

The insightful artist has ample opportunity to give expression to his individual interpretation, just as a pianist, who is playing the compositions of Beethoven or Bach, gives his own rendition. Combining the old and the new poses great problems which can only be solved by sound judgement and aesthetic sensibility. (Sviatoslav Hordynsky, *ibid.*, 27 September 1981)

## Discussion

*Participant:* Would Nataalka Husar consider the audience for her paintings to be the Ukrainian or the universal community?

*Nataalka Husar:* The universal community.

*Participant:* Do you think it would appreciate the humour in your works?

*Nataalka Husar:* I have asked that question myself, but it really has not prevented me from doing or not doing the work. Judging by the sales at three shows, 50 per cent of my work was purchased by non-Ukrainians—with lots of money and good taste!

*Participant:* Since I admire much of the work that Robert Achtemichuk does and empathize with a good deal of what he had to say, I wonder what artists have influenced him?

*Robert Achtemichuk:* Every couple of years one goes through a period where one sees new things, steals things or is influenced by things. I suppose I am influenced most by abstract European artists. A few years ago I began with Max Ernst, a surrealist, and now its Rothko, who paints using full colour and is very Eastern. His blobs are very inspiring in their use of colour and in the way they sit on the page—very poetic visually, very little subject matter. In Paris I was trained by a surrealist and that is

probably why I began there. Now I am more interested in colours, and I am looking at people from whom I feel I can learn.

*Radoslav Zuk:* How many commissions has Irka Onufrijchuk had from Ukrainian institutions?

*Irka Onufrijchuk:* I have had no opportunity to do anything Ukrainian, other than my own home, but I am willing.

*Participant:* The suggestion of a Canadian anthology of Ukrainian artists is a good one, but where would one begin such a project?

*Lydia Palij:* By selecting a jury of five professional critics, who would then select those to be included.

*Participant:* Should the jury be made up of Ukrainians?

*Lydia Palij:* Not necessarily. Paintings should be judged on their artistic merit, not their ethnic content. On a jury of five, there might be one Ukrainian and four other Canadians, Americans, Chinese or whatever, as long as all were good professional critics who knew their art history. That is something Ukrainians have been lacking; there are very few Ukrainian critics. Ukrainian weeklies that describe exhibitions in nice terms do not educate the viewer. In a gallery that portrays *maky* and *soniashnyky*, an artist is deemed fantastic when fifty *soniashnyky* are sold. There is something wrong with people who judge art in that way.

*Participant:* In view of the great differences of opinion about what is good Ukrainian art and who is a good Ukrainian artist, how does one choose five persons to establish standards for an art catalogue?

*Lydia Palij:* That is, of course, a great problem. Occasionally, huge anthologies are undertaken and anyone who has ever held a pencil is included, because Ukrainians do not want to insult anyone. In Ukrainian literature, if something appears in *Suchasnist*, it is usually of good quality. But Ukrainian art does not have a magazine of that standard anywhere. There is no body or society of artists to set standards. As a result, when there is an exhibition, all artists must be included because the jury is afraid to reject anyone.

*Natalka Husar:* I strongly believe that everyone should be included in such an anthology. I cannot see what jury could decide what is good and bad art, what is saleable and what is marketable and what would hang nicely

and what would not. Art is everything and that is how it should be—anything that is Ukrainian art should be in such a collection.

*Participant:* I understand that Bob Hope purchased one of Peter Shostak's oils, and I am curious to know how that happened.

*Peter Shostak:* The Hopes bought a painting when they were in Toronto in June 1981. The painting was entitled *Maybe I will get new skates for my birthday*. They saw the reproduction, and wished to buy the water colour. When informed by the gallery that I possessed the original oil, they purchased it, although I was not too keen to sell it. This is a good example of how works with a Ukrainian element can have a cosmopolitan appeal. I do not know whether the Hopes realize it is there, but the concept of the three boys sitting or standing around a bonfire with a little skating rink in the background and a farm half a mile away, discussing the possibility of new skates for a birthday, obviously meant something to them.

*Manoly Lupul:* What do terms like honesty, sincerity and integrity mean in an artistic sense to someone who admits to being an artist of Ukrainian background?

*Peter Shostak:* A beginning artist is faced with so many external influences that the questions of where to start and what to produce are always very big. Unfortunately, a lot of artists (myself included, as I look back over the years) get caught up too easily in work of the latest vogue. I found that the only work that was meaningful (and I think, in turn, that became meaningful to others) was that which grew out of my experiences. The latter led to creation that was much stronger than that of artists who happened to find themselves on the West Coast, as I did when I first moved to Victoria. Painting boats and using West-Coast subject matter was so superficial that it did not really mean very much. I found I was not saying anything about it. The compositions may have been pleasing but the paintings lacked soul. To create works of art, one must start from a very solid base. From it, one can create art that is honest, that has integrity and a soul that speaks to a large audience, not just to a small group of people.

*Participant:* The works of Nataka Husar and Peter Shostak on Ukrainian themes are directed to a certain audience. They say something about Ukrainians, or at least about the way the artists see Ukrainians. What are they trying to say?

*Nataka Husar:* I would like my work to be a mirror into which Ukrainians would hopefully look and laugh at themselves. Not until they



learn to relax will they be able to deal with their ethnicity. I would like my work to be a confrontation, but for that very reason it is often rejected by Ukrainians. But I too found it difficult to look at my self-portrait.

*Peter Shostak:* I find that when I do work that is more serious in terms of social comment (and I think that is the type of art I enjoy doing most), most people do not take the time to look at the work, to put the pieces together, to put the title together with what is happening visually so as to get the real meaning. I would like to spend more time bringing to their attention the things that are ignored. In Edmonton there is a very prominent route on which thousands of Ukrainian immigrants hauled their meagre belongings to Mundare and elsewhere. That road today is called Santa Rosa Road. In Smoky Lake, Alberta, Barvinok is an old folks' home, whose sign is spelled Bar-V-Nook, as if Baba and Dido lived on a ranch! Such little things when ignored slowly chip away and remove evidence of the Ukrainian presence on the prairies. We must start paying more attention to these things. More streets in our cities must have Ukrainian names. If we do not fight the battles no one else will.

*Sofia Skrypyuk:* I would like to defend *Ukrainian Art Digest*, the only Ukrainian arts magazine, which has been criticized. It is very easy to say that only those who pay tend to be published. But without a single advertisement, it has been one of the best magazines to publish regularly over the past twenty years. With costly colour reproductions, the artist must surely assist with publication. A large art magazine for ten dollars is not that much.

*Lydia Palij:* It is a good magazine, but it is not exclusive enough. Perhaps I am not competent to judge, but I feel there are many artists who should not be included. Most issues are good, and the last issue showing some artists from Ukraine was exceptionally interesting. But the magazine still has a lot of second-rate art, perhaps because no other is available. As a result, second-class artists can pay to have their art engraved and then published.



**PART III**

**UKRAINIAN MUSIC IN CANADA**



## Folk Music

Robert B. Klymasz

### *Introduction*

At the turn of the century, all productive forms of folk music were successfully transferred from Ukraine to Canada. Some, like the *haivky* have almost completely disappeared; others, like the winter carol, have become petrified; still others, like *tsymbaly*-making and -playing, remain dynamically active albeit unstudied; and some completely new folk-music phenomena—Ukrainian country music in western Canada—have emerged. The essentially *rural* folk music has been joined in recent years by arranged folk music imported from highly sophisticated folk-production sources in urban Soviet Ukraine. All folk music has been greatly influenced by the impact of mechanical, portable and impersonal mass means of dissemination (e.g., the commercial recording industry and ethnic programming on radio and cable-TV), which shall be the focus of this paper.

First, it is important to review briefly the nature of the sound recording *per se*, comparing it with at least one other instrument of communication, the printed word, with which the sound recording shares such attributes as portability, economy and impersonality, permitting it to be used indiscriminately by anyone wishing to exploit its potential. Such exploitation may promote conformity, standardization or regimentation for purposes of predictability, social control and economic gain.

Essentially, the sound recording is an acoustic record of almost any audible sound imaginable, which allows for *lieder*, the sounds of Mother

Nature, or common smut to mingle freely in combination with personalized interpolations and varied forms of ostensibly creative editing. This democratic and seemingly wanton nature of the sound recording must be fully appreciated to understand the parameters within which ethnic sound recordings operate today, for folk music from the old country is not the only material that is available. Because of the instrument's inherent liberality, it is not uncommon for ethnic spokesmen to criticize as irresponsible commercially popular ethnic recordings that reinforce stereotyped patterns of ethnic behaviour and threaten the group's self-image.

Certain specific features of the sound recording set it apart as a distinctively different medium of communication. Unlike print, the sound recording is gloriously free of such intermediate and visually based encoding and decoding systems as old-fashioned and cumbersome script.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the ability to record sound mechanically has permitted musicians and the public to listen repeatedly to the sounds being made and to judge objectively. Sound recordings are thus effective educational tools to improve quality. Moreover, the techniques of sound reproduction may enhance egos through novelty items which even feature duets by one and the same person!

The laissez-faire nature of the sound recording applies not only to *what* is recorded but to the *who*, *how* and *why* of recording. In certain countries such license is considered politically dangerous and governments exercise strict control over production, circulation and public transmission of commercial sound recordings. Such fettering abroad has had a special impact on the recordings of Ukrainians in North America, whose ancestral homeland is strictly controlled.

### *The Ukrainian Canadian Experience*

The discussion of Ukrainian sound recordings in western Canada<sup>2</sup> will focus on Winnipeg, where 10 per cent of the residents are of Ukrainian descent, one of the highest ratios of any Canadian city of comparable size. Moreover, North America's most productive and unique manifestations of Ukrainian sound recordings may well be in Winnipeg. One Ukrainian church in the city, for instance, uses recorded Ukrainian liturgical music as a kind of inspirational Muzak between masses and during the offering of communion; a few miles away, a funeral home that caters to Ukrainians uses similar recordings as background music. Close by, the city's largest credit union caters to the Ukrainian population during the winter holiday season with recordings of Ukrainian Christmas carols while customers queue at wickets. At altar and bier, cafe juke boxes and weddings, community-hall socials and ethnic celebrations, the commercially produced

Ukrainian sound recordings in Winnipeg penetrate and infiltrate almost every aspect of the Ukrainian community's way of life.

On public radio and television, Winnipeg currently receives about ten weekly hours of Ukrainian programming (ranging from daily variety hours to a weekly produced by a nativistic religious cult). The CBC contributes negligibly since its official mandate is to offer programming only in English and French. Radio stations for the province's large French and Mennonite minorities in the St. Boniface and Altona areas respectively have catered to Ukrainians. Winnipeg's multicultural radio station, CKJS, airs a daily Ukrainian hour from seven to eight in the evening. The programme, hosted by young and congenial announcers, bravely juggles materials to meet varied tastes. In a typical week, works by classical Ukrainian composers alternate with Ukrainian country music from western Canada, assorted polka-playing wedding bands and a judicious mix of non-Soviet musical recordings and Soviet Ukrainian imports of the most popular current song and instrumental renditions by amateur and professional folk song-and-dance ensembles, urban rock groups and soloists. Because Christmas within the Ukrainian community is celebrated according to either the Julian or Gregorian calendar, the festive season poses special problems and carols are aired in December (Gregorian) and in January (Julian).

Winnipeg is the unofficial capital of Ukrainian country music because of the long-playing and cassette releases of V-Records, an enterprising commercial company headed by Alex Groshak.<sup>3</sup> In the mid-sixties the company initiated a series of promotional activities, including both a "national cymbaly contest" with Ukrainian dulcimer artists from various parts of Canada (two contests were released on commercial long-playing records) and an annual Ukrainian New Year's "Malanka" Ball in 1977 in the city's prestigious downtown Holiday Inn with assorted bands and artists on the V-Records label. Other companies in Winnipeg and elsewhere in western Canada have issued similar releases. The 1976-7 season saw "Nestor" and "Metro" make their successful debuts as recording artists.

### *The Case of "Nestor" and "Metro"*

Both "Nestor Pistor" (Don Ast) and "Metro" (Les Pavelick) hail from Regina, Saskatchewan. Ast is of Romanian descent, Pavelick of Yugoslavian. Nestor's hit song, "Winestoned Plowboy," is a parody of Glenn Campbell's popular "Rhinstone Cowboy." To one radio programme director, Nestor is "the embodiment of every ethnic I've seen while growing up in Regina."

He's a story-teller who sees things as our parents would have seen them, and he speaks as our parents did when I was growing up. The character has a way of butchering the Queen's English: he twists things around and the outcome can be a damn funny situation.<sup>4</sup>

Nestor's style leaves little to the imagination:

Climbing onto the stage in a formidable aura of stale garlic, Nestor uncorked a jug of frothing "bingo" to fortify himself and his audience for an hour of so-called humour that should set back Ukrainian culture a thousand years. For this is no herald of a brave new art form, but a twice-teller-of-tales heard first at surreptitious stag-parties or read once on long-forgotten lavatory walls.<sup>5</sup>

Metro has two long-playing recordings to his credit. The more popular is "Eleven Days from Christmas" and features a string of hilarious parodies on most of mainstream America's all-time Christmas favourites. The album's title song ends with the following stanza:

On the elevent day from Christmas my wife she gave to me,  
 Eleven pails of borshch, borshch, borshch, borshch, borshch,  
 Ten pounds *chasnyk* [garlic],  
 Nine months pregnant,  
 Ate all my supper,  
 Seven four by two shleps,  
 Six overalls,  
 Five golden rings—of "koobasa," [*kovbasa*]  
 Four "holubchi" [*holubtsi*],  
 Three rubber boots,  
 Two *pyrohy*  
 And a bowl of sour cream for me.

In general, Metro's stage routine is similar to Nestor's:

On the face of it, someone who wears a funny hat and affects a strange accent while telling long, complex yarns about Ukrainians, sounds as if he might get through a house party without serious damage. But surely this couldn't be professional humor? Well, this is the Prairies, heartland of Canada's Ukrainian invasion—and telling Ukrainian jokes is something of an amateur sport. Ask anyone if he knows a good Ukrainian joke and he'll lay three of them on you. . . .

It's doubtful if such Bohunk humor can be easily exported. It's a regional growth that seems to flourish in the hardy soil of the Prairies, where it's appreciated. But when it travels, it loses something in translation.<sup>6</sup>

The recordings and routines of Nestor and Metro include songs, dialect jokes and anecdotes that poke fun at lingering old-world folkways in a new-world setting. The best known is Metro's version of "'Twas the Night Before Christmas," recited against the background of "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas." The complete transcribed text follows:

'Twas da night before Christmas, when all true da house  
Not a creature was stirrin', not even a mouse.  
Ma and I—dat's my wife Katrina—we just finished doing da  
chores,  
You know—milking da cows an' everyting.  
We just put da kids to bed because dey were makin' noise all  
night an' during da day dey were by da barn an' da chicken  
coop playin' hide-and-go-look.  
So I says, "Kids! Get to bed right away! School's tomorrow an'  
you have to catch a school bus."  
So mama an' I had a cup of coffee an' havin' launch.  
Den all of a sudden we said, "Let's look on da news!"  
So we opened da tee-wee an' we were watchin' da news,  
An' I hear in da distance some kind of noised, some rustlin'.  
I taught, "Son-of-a-gonna! Must be Halloween joke!  
No! It can't be Halloween joke! It's Christmas!  
(But close together—side page like dat).  
An' Katrina says, "I tink dere's somebuddy on da outside!"  
I say, "No siree, baba! I don't tink so!"  
"Well, Metro, open up da light dat shines past da barn dere,  
near da chicken coop an' where we keep da dogs in dere."  
So I open, an' dere standin' by my Massey forty-four cockshot  
diesel, next to my half-truck-ton-pick-me-up-one, was some kind  
of guy wit red suit on!  
Now I never looked on his face, but I knew him from some  
place before.  
I knew I knew him from some place but I can't make him.  
But I go out an' grab my twenty-tree, just in case somebuddy  
wanted to steal my two end a half bull year-old.  
Tree years ago last summer one guy come an' makeda  
collectiondangerr like he was some kind of highshot.  
Now dis guy—I walk up to him an' I says, "*Dai Bozhe!*\* How's  
everytin'?"  
He says, "Like dat, you know—sixty-forty." (Must be for sure  
two hundred per cent!)

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\*A greeting, literally "God give!"



An' I look closer on him, an' he's got a big beard you know; he looks like a hippie—a hippie, you know a guy dat looks like a Jill but smells like a John!

But I look close, an' he has a red uniform on.

I figure he must be from da fire department, but he's not, he's got some kind of funny animals you know.

I says, "How's everytin' goin'?"

"Purty good! Purty busy, you know, tonight."

I says, "Well, where are you goin' wit dose funny lookin' animals pullin' dat uh look like a sleigh but it has you know a caboose an' you got da fire inside to keep your foots warm so you don't froze it."

"I'm goin' to Solomonchuk's. Could you give me directions?"

I say, "I? No problem!" I says, "Now from here you go to da main road; you go past da fifty-turd correction line eleven miles south—no, pardon me—*chekai, chekai* [wait, wait]—you go tree miles south and turn right four miles—no, pardon me..."

Katrina says, "Metro, Metro—udder direction! Four miles east an' seven miles south!"

"No sirree, baba! I don't tink so!"

I finally look at him an' say, "I don't tink you can get dere from here."

He says, "I'll try my luck," he says. "I want to feed my reindeers."

"Reindeers!? Aw come on, you're pullin' my leg," I says. "Dat wouldn't be reindeers!" I says, "Da only guy dat gotted have reindeer is Kris Kringalowich—Santa Claus!"

"Sure!" he says, "dat's I am!"

I say, "Aw come on! You makin' danger to my head! You're pullin' jokes, you little devil!"

No but—but he jumps, he goes—"I got sleigh!" An' he shout you know someting like "Merry Nettle!"

Although the above is crude and coarse, it also underlines the spuriousness of an alluring and seemingly superior socio-cultural system that traps but never quite devours the dazed and innocent immigrant as he treads the tightrope of survival in America. In effect, much of this "party record" material represents a kind of overdue "Bohunk" backlash—a folkloric confirmation of Michael Novak's "unmeltable ethnics"—that is essentially a vicious and devastating (not merely devastatingly funny) form of veiled protest against not only the mores of the North American mainstream, but its self-righteousness and materialistic bias and its pressures to conform.<sup>7</sup> Instead of chestnuts, Metro sings of roasting

*chasnyk* by the fireplace in his rendition of the all-time American favourite, "White Christmas," and transforms the American cowboy hero of the freedom-loving frontier into a lowly country bumpkin, into an old-world peasant—a blundering immigrant "plowboy" who appears lost in the land of smart, alert and up-to-the-minute mainstream WASPs. The thick underlay of covert protest consists largely of parody that caricatures features of the *ur*-text that are either easily misconstrued or whose ambiguities lend themselves to literal interpretation and resulting hilarity.<sup>8</sup>

## Synthesis

In several important respects the Ukrainian Canadian sound-recording industry functions very much like the non-ethnic industry and shows signs of being just as faddish. Even the popularity of Nestor and Metro waned considerably after the initial winter season (1976–7). Straightforward entertainment is also high on the list of shared attributes, and for the uninitiated the ethnic recording can be a kind of exotica that the mainstream generates with difficulty.

But the ethnic recording does have unique and distinctive functions. It reinforces feelings of ethnic identity and helps to gain recognition for feelings of distinctiveness. As a form of cultural feedback, it is a sign to those in the Old Country that the loyalties of sons and daughters long emigrated still linger. It can be part of a two-way boulevard that links a given historical and cultural centre with its diaspora in an inextricable interrelationship that can enrich the experiences of both. Thus the Ukrainian community's recordings of liturgical and ethnic-rock music in North America have stimulated the production of similar works in Ukraine, and in the case of religious music have served to preserve and document what is officially out of favour.

In alleviating moments of nostalgia and homesickness, the sounds of home, reproduced instantly, can also provide psychological comfort. The recent arrival of the cassette has opened up new and richly innovative possibilities for such interpersonal communication, especially since the personal cassette-letter, like the singing-letter, relies heavily on music in composing its total message.

As in the case of print, the sound recording can raise the prestige or status of individual artists or performing groups. The old excitement of "I got my name in the paper!" becomes an equally telling "I'm on records!" The possibility of creating an ethnic hit and the notion of being "part of everyone's record library" brings the glint of fame and fortune. Thus the sound recording can raise one's self-esteem and promote a group's feeling of solidarity and accomplishment. The preparation, production and release of a sound recording can operate much like a class photo—a personalized

memento, a historical souvenir or memoir that is cherished by the participants, irrespective of artistic value.

The above, however, does not obtain in every case. As in the examples of Nestor and Metro, the sound recordings can take on a perfidious character, an ambiguity that almost frees the artist from responsibility because of the time and space that separates the original recording session from countless subsequent listenings. The recording can thus take on a life of its own and assume an independence that overtakes its status as merely a popular or prized object.

But while the recording can fix or even fossilize the items recorded, it can also produce new responses to it. Thus an elderly Ukrainian primitive artist in Saskatoon became so enraptured with a recording that he copied in appreciative oils the performers pictured on the LP jacket.<sup>9</sup>

The potential of the ethnic sound recording, at least in North America, can be seen in its ability to compete on the open market as a packaged, saleable commodity. In its aesthetic dimension, it enriches the lives of those it reaches. For its listeners, the pleasure and potency of its art matches (and often surpasses) other creative formulations—and all because of the critical kernel of meaning couched deep within its message of ethnicity.

## NOTES

1. For a folkloristic case study, see R. B. Klymasz, "The Letter in Canadian Ukrainian Folklore," *Journal of the Folklore Institute* 6 (1969): 39–49.
2. See also R. B. Klymasz, "'Sounds You Never Before Heard': Ukrainian Country Music in Western Canada," *Ethnomusicology* 16 (1972): 372–80.
3. See *ibid.* and the discography in R. B. Klymasz, "Ukrainian Folklore in Canada: An Immigrant Complex in Transition" (Ph.D. thesis, Indiana University, 1971).
4. "Unlikely Songbird Has a Hit Record," *The Tribune* (Winnipeg), 4 Dec. 1976.
5. E. Mutimer, "Pistor's Ethnic Humor Panned: A Review," *ibid.*, 10 Jan. 1977.
6. T. Alderman, "Saskatchewan Crude: The Bohunk Humor of Les 'Metro' Pavelick," *The Canadian*, 1 Jan. 1977.
7. M. Novak, *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics* (New York 1972).
8. Metro's second album, "Broadway Hits," is a slam against the ostensibly more important cultural centres on the continent as seen by Metro—a member of the cultural periphery.
9. The painting is by Mr. Dmytro Stryjek, Saskatoon, 12 Aug. 1976.

## Ukrainian Popular Music in Canada

Bohdan Zajcew

This essay is a synthesis of three types of experiences: 1) the writer's research into contemporary Ukrainian Canadian music, some results of which may be seen in the column of musical reviews in *Student*, the Ukrainian university students' publication in Canada, and in a lecture series presented annually as part of Selo, the cultural-immersion programme sponsored by the Canadian Ukrainian Youth Association (SUMK); 2) the writer's experience as a Ukrainian radio programmer, familiar with public attitudes toward contemporary Ukrainian Canadian music; and 3) the writer's first-hand experiences as a musician and composer who performs contemporary Ukrainian music.

If culture is a people's world view—their window onto and into the world, their means of rationalizing and making sense of their spiritual and physical environment—then the music of a culture becomes the oral expression of a particular world view; it becomes a reflection of a particular material and non-material environment. Music also acts as an intergenerational conveyor and retainer of history and tradition, particularly in a pre-script culture, where the mnemonic aspect of music is of critical importance. As songs are handed down from one generation to another, so the history, traditions and other cultural components in the songs are passed on. This so-called oral tradition is particularly evident within Ukrainian folk culture, where we see folk customs and rituals reflected in the *obriadovi pisni* (ritual songs), be they pre-Christian rituals associated with the fertility festival of *Ivana Kupalo* found in the *kupalski pisni* (Kupalo songs) or Christian traditions ensconsed in the folk carols or

*koliady*. By the same token, the aura of the historical epoch of *Kozachyna* is strongly reflected in the *kozatski pisni* (Cossack songs) of the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In approximately the same period, more literal historical accounts are contained in the *kozatski dumy* (Cossack epic songs), which are part and parcel of the Nordic tradition in Ukrainian culture.

Contemporary Ukrainian Canadian music is popularly understood to refer to musical developments within approximately the last thirty years. However, with very few exceptions, the genre has not developed in isolation, either in terms of time or geographic location. By and large, it is grounded in the idiom of Ukrainian folk music. Most consists, in fact, of stylized Ukrainian folk music, whether it be the Sal Defeo Swing Sextet experimenting with jazz renditions of *arkan*, Mickey and Bunny grinding their way through "I shumyt, i hude" (It Rustles and Blusters) or Montreal's Rushnychok belting out for the umpteenth time "Rozpriaahaite khloptsi koni" (Unharness the Horses, Boys!). Given this fact, at first glance it may be difficult to justify the music as a Ukrainian Canadian phenomenon. The Ukrainian has been established, but how does the Canadian come in? Just as the *narodni pisni* (folk songs) were influenced by a variety of extenuating factors, so contemporary Ukrainian Canadian music is influenced by numerous circumstantial elements—factors directly attributable to the time and place of the genre's continuing development. In most cases the Canadian aspect is found in the stylistic influences on the music. These are not, however, uniquely Canadian. While they certainly play themselves out in a Canadian context, they are really international in scope.

The stylistic influences consist of two dimensions. First, there is the aspect of contemporary instrumentation adapted to the music. In most cases, it is the type found in North American or European pop-rock bands: electric guitars, keyboards, synthesizers, large percussion sets and the occasional brass action. Thus, rather than the lead line of a folk song being carried by a *sopilka*, in the contemporary rendition it might be carried by a synthesizer. For a more innovative and perhaps more uniquely Ukrainian approach to stylizing, a traditional *bandura* accompaniment might be supplanted by an electric *bandura* played through a phase shifter, which alters the tonal variations and therefore the impact considerably. Unfortunately, Ukrainian Canadian musicians to date have largely ignored this realm of stylized creativity for reasons discussed later. Suffice it to say that such Soviet Ukrainian groups as Kobza, Arnika and Vizerunky Shliakhiv lead the way in this area.

The second major stylistic influence on contemporary Ukrainian Canadian music is defined by the music categories into which European and North American pop-rock bands fall. Just as Ukrainian folk music has



its sub-categories—*obriadovi pisni*, *pobutovi pisni* (customary songs), *lirychni pisni* (lyrical songs), *istorychni pisni* (historical songs)—the realm of popular non-Ukrainian music also has its subgroups, including country and western, jazz, blues, North American folk, folk rock, pop, pop rock, new wave and punk. All of the latter have distinct characteristics, whose influence can be discerned in contemporary Ukrainian Canadian music. Some of the forms lend themselves to Ukrainian adaptation more readily than others; the jazz idiom, for example, with its basic syncopated 6/8 rhythms can be easily adapted to the 3/4 time of many Ukrainian folk songs. But all forms are there—from the Ukrainian pop-rock sound of the Montreal foursome Veselka, to the Ukrainian North American folk influence in the music of groups like Suzirya and Trio Kalyna, to the Ukrainian punk music played by Petro Perih and the Holubtsi.

To what extent do the stylistic non-Ukrainian influences overshadow or outweigh the “Ukrainianness” of music? Is the music Ukrainian simply because its lyrics are sung in Ukrainian and the melodies are patterned after the *narodni pisni*? Just as the emerging Ukrainian Canadian culture is both distinct yet directly derived from traditional Ukrainian folk culture, so the music is both distinct and connected. With culture seen as a world view and music as its reflection, the realities of the traditional folk culture and the Ukrainian Canadian culture are, of course, very different. Just as the *narodni pisni* reflect the reality of Ukrainians living in the predominantly agricultural society of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Ukraine (surrounded almost entirely by individuals with a common language and similar life experiences), so the stylized Ukrainian folk songs reflect the reality of urbanized, bicultural Ukrainians living among other Canadians (some equally bicultural), increasingly pressured toward assimilation by the electronically captivated North America of the 1980s.

Yet the rural past and the urban present are connected, and the *pobutovi pisni* originating on the steppes of seventeenth-century Ukraine can be relevant to the Ukrainian Canadian living in Winnipeg today. There is first the obvious connection—the common thread that links hundreds of years of Ukrainian culture. That intangible which moves people to partake of *Sviat vechir* on Christmas Eve also evokes a strong stirring within us when we hear “Nich taka Hospody” (God, What a Lovely Night!), whether performed by the stately Capella Bandurystiv or by the popular Syny Stepiw. Despite the passage of time and geographic relocation, the strength of the bond remains intact. And there is, secondly, the fact that before a culture rejects any piece of cultural baggage, there must be a replacement component ready to fill the vacuum. What is there in the wings to replace the *narodni pisni*?

Quite frankly, there is not very much and therein lies the most critical obstacle to the development of contemporary Ukrainian Canadian music.

The latter consists of stylized Ukrainian folk songs because there is very little original composition: non-stylized folk music is usually the work of Ukrainian Canadian composers of earlier generations or Soviet Ukrainian composers active in recent years. The fox trots, rhumbas and tangos of Weselowsky are still a mainstay of most contemporary Ukrainian Canadian performing musical groups, who have also been quick to incorporate into their repertoires the works of contemporary Soviet Ukrainian composers like Volodymyr Ivasiuk, Ihor Poklada and Myroslav Skoryk. In fact, it was the release of Ivasiuk's "Chervona ruta" (The Red Rue), recorded by the Bukovynian vocal instrumental ensemble Smerichka, which sparked what is referred to as the revolution in contemporary Ukrainian Canadian music in the late sixties and early seventies. We should note, however, that there is nothing particularly reflective of contemporary Ukrainain Canadian physical reality in either category, or in the *narodni pisni* for that matter. This is not to advocate the abandonment of either the folk idiom as a basic framework for contemporary Ukrainian Canadian music or the musical legacy of Ivasiuk and company. It is simply to underline the lamentable absence of Ukrainian Canadian composers to create Ukrainian Canadian contemporary music that is unique.

The absence is the result of several factors. The most obvious is the language crisis in the Ukrainian Canadian community. With use of the mother tongue decreasing rapidly, the loss is particularly hard on the culture's literature and music. Few individuals in contemporary Ukrainian Canadian music are comfortable enough with Ukrainian to compose in it.

The degree of popular acceptance accorded Ukrainian Canadian contemporary music has also inhibited its development. The Ukrainian Canadian community has been reluctant to accept innovations in its music. A simple survey of record sales in western Canada would show that Mickey and Bunny, Peter Picklyk and the Rhythm Aces, and the Interlake Polka Kings—who fall into the category of Ukrainian Canadian country and western music—are outselling mainstream contemporary groups like Rushnychok and Syny Stepiw by a margin of at least five to one. In eastern Canada, on the other hand, the 1980 Taras Shipowick album, which differed markedly from the same mainstream contemporary Ukrainian Canadian music, experienced little commercial success. This apprehensive attitude toward the new—whether it be country or western or more sophisticated renditions—discourages musicians from attempting new forms. The widespread rejection of innovations is the result of regional market fragmentation. Few realize how really very different are the Ukrainian communities of western and eastern Canada. While the Ukrainian Canadian music industry can never hope to match its non-Ukrainian North American counterpart, steps can still be taken to develop a more sophisticated marketing approach.



The key to marketing is exposure. Over 90 per cent of every band's live exposure comes from playing the wedding and social (*zabava*) circuits. Appearances at major Ukrainian festivals are rare because these are relatively few and exchange of talent between eastern and western Canada is generally very expensive. As a result, bands cultivate the local dance circuit, where what is expected is mainstream Ukrainian dance music—folklore, waltzes, *kolomyiky*, butterflies, fox trots, rhumbas and tangos. Bands that venture to record albums include the music for which they are best known, and innovation is eliminated through a Catch-22 process. Another means of exposure, especially for recording artists, are the hodge-podge of radio stations with Ukrainian programmes. Most bands, however, do not know how to mount promotional campaigns, and most Ukrainian programmers are reluctant to playlist anything that smacks of innovation for fear of negative listener response on advertising dollars. While paid newspaper advertisements that showcase new albums are now more frequent, very few Ukrainian newspapers review contemporary Ukrainian Canadian music.

Today perhaps only four out of ten Ukrainian Canadian musical groups record albums, largely for lack of funds rather than talent or ability. Federal policies of multiculturalism notwithstanding, obtaining government funding for recording projects has been very difficult, and Ukrainian Canadian organizations have also provided little support. Because at least \$12,000 are needed to press 5,000 copies of a quality album, groups that have done it for less have lived to regret the scrimping. At times the quality has also been low because groups have had little idea how best to utilize the magnificent technology at their disposal.

In summary, what contemporary Ukrainian Canadian music lacks most is professionalism in and outside the recording studio, especially in the area of promotion. Because of ineffective advertising, inadequate knowledge of the potential market, haphazard distribution and failure to ensure that something as simple as complimentary albums with pertinent information reach all radio stations and music reviewers, programming, a most recent form of cultural expression, has been experiencing greater-than-usual growing pains. While increased federal and provincial funding would certainly help, even more important would be greater access to such government-subsidized media outlets as the CBC and the National Film Board to increase the amount of nation-wide exposure. In such circumstances, the financial support that the Ukrainian Canadian community itself could provide would mean more than money. It would signify moral support and a recognition that contemporary Ukrainian Canadian music is a valid form of cultural expression—one which will not supplant or replace other forms of Ukrainian musical expression but only supplement and enrich a beautiful culture.

## Ukrainian Classical Music in Canada

Zenon Lawryshyn

Although Ukrainian classical music in Canada suffers from problems common to all cross-cultural and interdisciplinary arts, these manifest themselves with greatest impact on the Ukrainian Canadian composer, since they touch the fundamental premises of his artistic stance: why, how, and for whom to compose? Any attempt to escape the ties of cultural identity completely place the composer on a negative, even nihilistic footing, which leads, on the one hand, to a kind of cultural absurdity and, on the other, does not effectively obviate problems which may appear in a different guise, but are essentially the same.

The motivation for a composer to create comes from within. The desire to create is a basic and necessary human instinct. But whether the creator works in sound, paint or through words (and in whatever material medium), one's ideas are largely moulded by the parameters of one's time and place, and by one's culture. The creative process consists therefore of two distinct parts, one arising organically out of the inner self and the other out of one's time and place.

There are probably no great creative artists of whom it could be said that their inner self coincided completely with the character of their time and place. It seems that their very greatness was the result of a tension and struggle between the two. Artists must accept the challenge of this struggle and try to resolve the tension by re-establishing a unique harmony between the two in the very act of creation. Any attempt to subjugate the one to the other is bound to fail. The romantic ivory-tower artist who places self above environment is one type of cultural absurdity. Another is

today's Soviet artist whose self, subjugated to the interests of time and place, must conform to the stereotypes of "Socialist Realism." Artists programmed by the state who enjoy minimal tension between themselves and society may be very productive quantitatively, but theirs is hardly a condition conducive to the most meaningful kind of creativity.

What are the implications of the above for Ukrainian Canadian composers? In addition to the usual problems faced by Canadian composers (partly alleviated through government-sponsored institutions), Ukrainian Canadian composers face specific hardships from the juxtaposition of two distinct cultures in their environment. The hardships emanate from the demonstrably reactionary and perhaps counter-"artistic" pressures within the Ukrainian environment, and from the economic difficulties that come with minority status in the Canadian environment. And yet the increased tensions, if met effectively, can produce most meaningful and unique results.

A prime example of cultural tensions successfully resolved is the case of Igor Stravinsky, who early in the twentieth century asserted his unique personality and Russian background within the milieu of French ballet. His was not simply a triumph of one man's transcending will; equally meaningful was the role played by the Russian cultural coterie, dancers, performers and entrepreneurs in Paris. The tension between self and environment afforded Stravinsky the opportunity to transcend the contemporary clichés that may well have resulted had he remained in Russia or had an indigent composer been commissioned for Diaghilev's ballets in Paris. The heightened tension of a Russian primitivist personality entering a refined French tradition produced truly explosive results, which in no small way motivated Stravinsky's further career and even heralded the coming of a new musical age.

From this point of view, a Ukrainian Canadian background is not necessarily a handicap and may even be an asset, provided the organizational problems of cultural enterprise are resolved by concerted effort. The general tendency of Ukrainian Canadian artists is to shun enterprises that appear extravagant for a society's resources. Speaking personally, I ventured naively into the production of Ukrainian opera, expecting it to be much less costly than it has become, and had it not been for the enterprise exhibited by others, including many non-musicians whom I can only call "entrepreneurs," I should long ago have abandoned it. After much hesitation and several false starts, I am again encouraged to write an opera, thanks to the enterprise of Volodymyr Kolesnyk and the incorporation of opera associations in Toronto and Edmonton. Even a librettist has been found.

For an artist of Ukrainian background to accept only the character of the Canadian time and place is dangerous because what are possibly the

strongest motivational forces for creativity—identity and tradition—are thereby discarded. In identity, what is important is constancy, the survival value of that in which trust is placed. Time and place are both fleeting, full of less constant values than the constraints imposed by native identities: those hereditary traits, the prenatal and early postnatal formative experiences of the family environment, and the imagery and patterns of thought nurtured by linguistic, musical and other traditions. Artists who place their sole trust either in the character of their time and then find time passing them by, or in the character of their place and then are forced by circumstances to relocate, imperil the very source of their creativity.

The constraints of identity may be more obvious in arts that rely on linguistic communication, yet music and language are related phenomena, and the same constraints apply in both, even though their effects on musical expression may be more subliminal. The sounds of language are, after all, essentially the same as the sounds of song, and the same conventions of perception and expression apply. The existence of national styles in music is a well known and intriguing phenomenon; the interrelationship of all the arts is an equally convincing and yet elusive notion. In the cases of music and language this interrelationship is not only a matter of parallel development, but also of such substantial similarity and unity as exhibits itself most conspicuously in oral traditions and permeates to varying degrees all but the most constructivistic or alleatory styles. In some cases music's cultural identity has been attributed directly to the effect of intonational patterns in language, which may account for the great popularity of some composers in their own country and their virtual neglect elsewhere. And rather notably even the works of composers that have a universal appeal are culturally identifiable.

For me, Ukrainian language is filled with concrete imagery that often shows a special sensitivity to sound. This linguistic concreteness bespeaks underlying preferences for concrete patterns of thought that also exhibit themselves in musical preferences for clear-cut melody, simple rhythmical images, often regularly concrete metrical organization (which it shares with Ukrainian poetry) and persistence of tonality. This is not to say that subtleties are foreign to such patterns, although, as in the case of "Shchedryk" (Epiphany Carol/Carol of the Bells), they may need to be rediscovered.

Cultural dualities, then, are not negative problems for the composer *per se*; they become negative only when the composer or artist confronts an unresponsive society. Artists cannot flourish without an active and indigenous milieu; they need cultural feedback to which they can readily relate. It is clearly not acceptable for them to practise a kind of compositional schizophrenia: to write in one style for Ukrainians and in

another for more universal appeal, as some composers avowedly profess to do and others are forced to do by circumstances.

The formative experiences available to an artist who feels an empathy for Ukrainian culture are severely limited, since Ukrainian culture is not readily available in libraries or in practice. Because there are no significant archives of Ukrainian music "composed" outside of Ukraine, Ukrainian scores are not readily available to performing ensembles. Even orchestras that exhibit an interest in performing Ukrainian music cannot find appropriate material, and scores of Ukrainian operas remain unpublished and are almost impossible to obtain. As a result, Ukrainian composers often find themselves in a cultural vacuum, having very little contact with meaningful indigenous written traditions. They often must pioneer anew already trodden paths or rely on the unity of folk traditions. The combination of both circumstances is likely to result in overly traditional styles. This seems to be the Ukrainian inheritance from centuries of oppression, as a result of which any unity of historical development has relied heavily on mechanisms arising from folklore.

The absence of an artistic milieu that is receptive to new music is especially depressing to composers, who are too often forced to divide their attention by involving themselves in organizational work. Although amateur music-making might possibly fill this void, practice shows that amateur ensembles prefer the immediate appeal of folk and popular music rather than the classical Ukrainian repertoire. (Church music is a qualified exception.) The word "commission" seems to be lacking in the Ukrainian vocabulary. Perhaps Ukrainian Canadians are not accustomed enough to their time and place. Not knowing how patronage of the arts operates in Canada, they may well be missing opportunities already at their disposal.

As a result, the options of a Ukrainian Canadian composer are severely limited: one cannot sanely choose to write symphonies or operas that will not be performed. The main output then tends to revolve around folk-arrangements for amateur choirs and vocalists, dances for incomplete orchestras, songs which singers will hopefully perform and educational materials for piano and violin students. This is not the way it should be. Creativity is a witness to the refinement of culture in general and is an important element in the morale and cohesiveness of a society or cultural group. To restrict one is to restrict the other! Creativity is a necessary answer to societal, individual and instinctive human needs, and should not be made subservient to political or other motives, however desirable these may be of themselves.

And so we come back to the age-old question: who should decide on the direction that such refinement should take? If society answers, as it tacitly does in this age of specialization, that the artist should decide, since he is the most competent, I do not think that it should qualify this any further.

There is a need to transcend the commonplaces of both folk and popular milieus. Society should also make a commitment to culture and accept the hardship of having to sift through a dearth of disappointing material in order that the opportunity for the kind of meaningful creation, which is potentially ours, is not waylaid.



## **Liturgical Music: Living with Religious Symbols\***

**Ivan Kowaliw**

### *Introduction*

There are many perspectives which influence the overall synthesis of the components of liturgical music. Among them are theological, historical, philosophical, psychological, mythical, aesthetic and ritualistic, as well as

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\*Although this essay does not discuss Ukrainian liturgical music in the Ukrainian Canadian context, it is included for several reasons: 1) it is the only known essay in English on Ukrainian liturgical music; 2) it illustrates well how little a musical form like *liturgy*, which affects the culture of the new world, may be susceptible to cultural influences in that world; 3) it may challenge the reader to consider what points (if any) could be raised in a discussion of the future development of Ukrainian liturgical music in Canada; 4) it illustrates well the views of a Ukrainian Canadian scholar and music instructor who, as a devout and creative postwar émigré Christian deeply attached to Ukraine, is concerned to place Ukrainian liturgical music within the philosophic tradition of transcendental idealism in European learning; and 5) it provides a larger context for the heated discussion of Ukrainian cultural expression in Canada which emerged later (pp. 167–79), prompted in part by Professor Kowaliw's own critical observations. (Ed.)



scientific aspects. This paper will focus on the most significant of these: the philosophical and the mythical and their symbolic representation.

The philosophical view is concerned primarily with the problem of transcendence and its exegesis, emphasizing either the fall of man, or possibility of his ascendance. It is concerned also with two variant attitudes on the efficacy of deity: God the Father and God the Son (Saviour). Finally, it is concerned with the reconciliation in Ukrainian religious culture of both of the above.

Subsequently, the roles that mythical and religious symbols play not only for the believer but particularly for the musician and for the conductor of religious music will be explored. The primary symbols are those of The Sacred Place, The Soul, and The Musical Space.

Finally, it will be shown how these ideas have affected the principal services of Universal Music. It will be shown how these universal tendencies have been accommodated in Ukrainian liturgical services such as *Woskresna utrenia* (the matins on Easter Eve), the Holy Mass and the *Panakhida* (the Ukrainian requiem).

### *Philosophical and Religious Influences*

It is generally well known how Friedrich Nietzsche, the irascible German philosopher and critic of culture, cried for new powerful symbols of transcendence in order to resuscitate and rejuvenate the cultural sterility of his time, and how finding them, he finally ended in a numb philosophy of the absurd Anti-Transcendence. The echo of this cry reverberates everywhere in our time. It does also in the appeal of the disillusioned, erudite theologian Richard Niebuhr, who emphasizes the great need for new religious symbols that are truly alive.

Such longing to escape frustration in some higher vital integrative metaphysical or religious state evokes the appealing optimistic anthropology of Carl Jung or the mythical philosophy of Ernst Cassirer, each reviving the archetypal value of the symbol with all its implications from the past; that live symbol which throws itself energetically from the darkness into the light of transcendence.

For a musician, it is always tempting to recall the aesthetic view of Arthur Schopenhauer, the great German idealist, who describes music in terms of a *non-discursive symbolism* and emphasizes the deep and serious significance which resides in musical meaning. "This is why the effect of music," he wrote, "is so much more powerful and penetrating than that of the other arts, for they speak only of shadows, but it speaks of the thing itself." He deepens his attitude, asserting that music "floats through our consciousness as the vision of a paradise firmly believed in yet ever distant from us." There is something of Schopenhauer's praise in Henri Bergson's

"angelic philosophy" with its vital "durée," in which a human being by intuitive creative effort achieves the "religious infinite."

Music is then a universal symbol, an ideal, a powerful authentic nucleus by means of which we penetrate Reality. Starting with those symbols which we use more practically, without quite consciously realizing their transcending quality, let us try to fuse them with the real life of transcendence.

It is impossible to evolve this theme further without at once introducing the greatest of all human symbols: God. To the Protestant theologian and philosopher Paul Tillich, the proposition "God exists" is the one proposition that expresses non-symbolic truth. If this is so, it circumvents God by indifference. There is a constant, active symbolic traffic (of ontological origin), an invisible pulse, between God and His creatures on all possible physical, psychological and spiritual levels, including the evolution and involution of all possible elements on such levels.

Let us contrast Tillich's sophisticated statement with that of the great Catholic theologian Karl Adam, who puts his trust not so much in the non-symbolic silence of God, but rather in the hands of His Son and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Adam is fascinated by Christ's courage in His struggle with temptations from the Fiend and from men, and at the same time he is enchanted by the enormous difference which separates the picture of Christ in the Gospels from the ancient ideas of the Saviour. "The pagan Hellenists," Adam writes, "regarded Him as a walking miracle, a sort of heavenly phantom, but in contrast to this, Jesus reveals the purest, simplest humanity, the smell of earth, praying, struggling, suffering out of the depths of His perfect humanity."

Such a picture of the Saviour is very appealing to Ukrainian theologians, who have struggled and suffered so much abuse at the hands of fiends for decades. It explains also why "the Son of man" is so close to the heart of the total Ukrainian Christian community of all denominations. Members flock to their churches with their symbols and struggles taken from lower reality, hoping to transform them with the help of "the Son of man" into the symbols of the higher transcendent Reality. Is there not something positive and creative in that Christian struggle which sublimates the soul from a lower to a higher reality?

The role of the musician in this general spiritual movement is not, of course, a precarious one. One is obliged to struggle and, if necessary, to suffer as a Christian and as an artist to achieve ever higher perfection in performing liturgical music. If one has chosen, among other musical duties, the career of a conductor of Ukrainian church music, one faces one of the most difficult and responsible tasks which any professional musician can face—more so than conductors of any other Christian denomination, for one cannot use any instruments in the church, only voices, which with few

exceptions are not trained. One has also a meagre liturgical literature; all one can compile are ten to fifteen masses and as many other church services. By comparison, the liturgical literature of the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches consists of thousands of works.

### *Mythical Symbols and Music*

The Sacred Place from time immemorial was always sacred, because it was always detached from space as a whole. In its spatial delimitation it carved out from the city and the world crammed with liberty, the sacred precinct belonging to God and consecrated only to God. Here the musician finds some other symbols which adorn that Sacred Place: the Cross, the Sanctuary, the iconostases, the icons, the main chandelier, the banners, the candles and, most of all, the invisible symbol of sacrifice—the all-unifying symbol of “Beyond.”

In silence, all the symbols must enjoy themselves like flowers awaiting the whiff of God. They wait for the musician to awaken them from their ideal sleep and to breathe into them human time. Into this place full of “unorganized innocence,” which William Blake called the “Sacred,” the musician must imbue life by movement and stillness, by the thunder and grace of his music. His dilemma is not only how to address his prayers to the highest pure Being, but how to lead the finite beings below to their purity.

Another mental symbol looms: the space—not sound-space but musical-space, as the psychologist of music would call it. The pure space of feeling devours the sound-space because in its purity it is an independent “inner being,” the “soul of space.” It waits for some kind of spiritual revelation, for the intimacy of the virtual time, for wonder, for that aspect of rhythm which runs through most of the lower and higher reality.

The third great mythical symbol is the soul. As everything in the world, the human soul is also the result of evolution. It took time before it reached the condensation of the soul of *homo sapiens*. But even so, the dynamic soul of Heraclitus, the first transcendent soul, is much richer and more developed than the primitive soul. The soul of Plato, which is like a well-tuned lyre that aspires to perfect harmony, is yet more complicated and on a much higher level. St. Augustine adorns or rather fills it with Christian grace and Hegel with magic and fullness. In all these visions the soul is always divine.

It is that fusion of space and time which the Orientals have in their feeling, in which the sound is the porter of space as stimulus to the metaphysical tension. It was taken by Oswald Spengler as a precedence in his philosophy of the spatial infinity, “one immense totality of spiritual expression,” in which the soul image that is called “will” becomes the passion of the fifth dimension.

But in the communion of souls in this sacred place, how many are there who would not fuse into the identity of their Christian community? How many philistines and how many intellectual alter egos are there to whom the stillness of the sacred sound will never penetrate and who are ready to explain any excessive thunder-sound of the Sacred as a manifestation of vulgarity? What a long way from the flame fed by the wax, to the self-illuminating Flame of the Cross!

### *Ukrainian Liturgical Music*

All Eastern Christianity is fed by the great metaphor: because Christ comes from the East, He *is* the light of the East. If it is fed by the light of the East, it is that which makes it different from Roman Catholic or Protestant liturgical services. The *Woskresna utrenia* is a perfect example of the fusion of Eastern and Western religious and musical elements. Here the dichotomy of East and West merges together. In relation to music it conforms perfectly to the term "mousikè" (music), a Sound Body, which Theodor Georgiades introduced in his work on music and language (*musik und sprache*). Let us dwell for a moment on his theory. In his view the ancient Greek "mousikè" is a unique synthesis of word and sound. It creates "the fulfillment of time," because the Greek language was the language of the poet, and in addition the Greek verse had a firm "sound-body." The single syllables were not subject to extension or to shortening. They were *originally* long or short. The principle of rhythm depended not on the separation between the organization of time and the filling out of notes through various values, but on the virtually "fulfilled time." The "mousikè" in its original form was intercepted by the Christians and in this form lasted into the Middle Ages when the process of the separation of language and music took place, establishing the gradual supremacy of music over language. The Eastern church music incorporated the heritage of the Greek "mousikè." Stimulated by Byzantine music, Ukrainian church music, in particular, accepted and tended this idea. The language in its uniform flow of text gives the impression of poetic prose. The sentences which music comprehends are stripped of all ornaments and follow the accents of the language. This recitative-like music reminds one of the primeval task of everything that was set to music from the Gregorian chant to the works of Henrich Schütz, the seventeenth-century German church-music composer. It reminds one also of the realization of language as a resounding form ("Gestalt"). The human being who talks and sings discovers, as it were, his own reality and identity. *Woskresna utrenia*, the matins on Easter Eve, is a supreme example of such liturgical "mousikè," in which the Ukrainians discover their religious identity.

*Woskresna utrenia* must be understood on several symbolic levels. First of all, it is undoubtedly the rite in which the pagan and Christian myths blend happily together. In pagan times it was probably a celebration of the glory of the sun-god, who in the highly poetic and beautiful text of St. John Damascene is replaced by Christ Himself. If we realize that the *Utrenia* should be celebrated just before sunrise, the analogy between the sun-god and Christ becomes obvious. In one of the "irmoses" of that paschal canon the participants are asked to bring a song instead of wordly things to the Lord: "Y Christa uzrym, prawdy solnze wsim szyzn wossiiiaushtcha" (And then we will see Christ, the Sun of the Truth, filling with radiance the life of all), rejoices the saintly creator of that translucent poetic text.

On another level *Woskresna utrenia* is the "mousikè" in which word and music are perfectly fused together, though there is no music extant which could equal or match the joyful light and the fervent religious vitality of the text of St. John Damascene.

Finally, *Woskresna utrenia* has a resounding deep national reverberation among Ukrainians, as the immortal symbol of the resurrection of Ukraine. As Christ has risen from the dead, so will Ukraine arise. In the famous song full of emotion and serenity "Plotiiu usnuv iako mertv" (He slept in the flesh as if dead), which is part of *Utrenia*, there is a hopeful answer to the fate of every individual Ukrainian as well as to the whole nation. For this reason there is almost no Ukrainian, irrespective of his religious feelings, who would not attend this unique Easter rite, filled with the intimate glimmer of candles and imbued with the warm smell of incense.

The Ukrainian Holy Mass differs conspicuously from the Roman Catholic or Protestant masses. The Roman Catholic concentrates on five extended prayers: Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Agnus Dei. The Ukrainian mass concentrates on four prayers: *Blazhenni* (the Beatitudes), three songs instead of antiphons; *My kheruwymiv* (Hymn of the Cherubim), *Wiruiu* (the Creed) and *Otche nash* (Our Father).

Musically, prayers of the Roman Catholic mass are very long, whereas the prayers of the Ukrainian Easter mass are much shorter and simpler. If Western church music abounds in well-constructed fugues and divides such prayers as Gloria, Sanctus and Credo in several musically elaborated sections, the Ukrainian prayers are short and poignant. Some, like *Alleluia*, which is tantamount to Gloria, or *Swiatyj Bozhe* (the Trizagion), which is tantamount to Sanctus, are extremely short, although in their shortness they might be very exuberant songs, reabsorbing dynamically in one concentrated moment all the well-constructed, ordered and slightly diluted surfaces of the Roman Catholic or Protestant compositions.



*Wiruiu* is a recitative, and even as a composition it faithfully follows the text of the prayer, syllable after syllable, occasionally introducing on certain words the deviations built on ligatures and ascending or descending musical passages. In contrast, *My kheruwymiv* and *Otche nash* are usually the real focus of musical concentration.

The compositions of *My kheruwymiv* usually move more slowly because there is time for singing, as the priest fulfills his duty of praying and "incensing" the altar, the entire sanctuary and the iconostases. In *Otche nash* we might have various elements of concentrated, exuberant, sombre, sad, serene or even romantic religious expression. There are, of course, completely different kinds of masses. For example, the terse and precise mass of Alemanov based on the chants of the old Kievan Lavra. Alternatively, there is the majestic and slow-moving mass of Bortniansky, or the spacious mass of Werbytzkyi (German influence), or the exuberant mass of Koshetz with many folk elements. There are also numerous beautiful psalms and motets of Bortniansky, Dekhtiarev, Orlow, Liryn (all of Ukrainian origin), which might be inserted during the Communion or before and after mass. All of these are tersely and precisely constructed sacred compositions.

There are also many exuberant carols, as well as Easter songs of Lysenko, Stetsenko, Leontowytych, Ludkevych, Koshetz, Hayvoronsky and others. These are the real adornment of Ukrainian Eastern mass, mirroring the spaciousness of the natural Ukrainian soul and conquering with unburdened natural dynamics and beauty the sacred space of The Sacred Place.

If all the countless *Ekteniay* make the Ukrainian mass a little tiring or superficial for a sophisticated ear, one should not forget that everything depends on the precision, terseness and fervour of performance, for which Ukrainians were famous in their homeland. Even in the simple *samoilka* (in which the congregation sings in unison or in two voices), one might be impressed by the religious abandonment and transport of singing. It is difficult to follow the ideal of precision and religious musical deepening and to avoid the discrepancy between word and music in the constant struggle to preserve the heritage and the idea of the "mousikè."

Because the mass is attended more often than the rest of the holy services, its singing conceals the danger of becoming a habit, particularly if the same mass is repeated several times in a row. The lack of concentration and vigilance on the side of the conductor may flaw it even more. There is no such danger in the *Panakhya*, the office for the dead, the third most important ritual in Ukrainian religious life, because one does not often face the death of a relative or neighbour. Notwithstanding the personal or national mourning, the *Panakhya* represents, and will remain for long, a kind of national religious Universal. It symbolizes the

Doomsday, the possibility and frustration of the total spiritual destruction of the nation. From the symbolic as well as from the spiritual point of view, the Ukrainian soul wavers between these two great rituals—between the two poles of *Panakhida* and *Woskresna utrenia*.

### Conclusion

It is important to refresh the awareness of Ukrainians with the significance of their symbols and myths. Mykola Shlemkewytch, the Ukrainian philosopher and editor in exile, expressed his conviction that Ukrainians as a young and live nation are susceptible to symbol and myth. What he may have had in mind was not only that focusing point of symbol and myth that draws together the wholeness of man's life on various national and spiritual levels, but also their transcendent qualities. But to this writer, the symbol and myth is also a "challenging agent," witnessed by the constant struggle of the Ukrainian church in the homeland to preserve under the aegis of its great symbols the unconquerable Ukrainian religious spiritual tradition. "Robbed of all institutional, organizational and material means," wrote Yosyf Cardinal Slipyj, "like the defenceless Christ, she [the Ukrainian church] is a source of inward strength and true renewal for all her sister Churches. Here, she is making her own valuable contribution to the spiritual treasures of the Universal Church." Let us hope that future generations of Canadian Ukrainians never forget their mission in the free world: in struggle and in unity to keep the faith of their fathers, to preserve the transcendent dynamics of our spirituality and thus contribute to the spirituality of universal culture.



## The Ukrainian Choral Tradition in Canada

Walter Klymkiw

The views in this account are those of a choral conductor of thirty years who is neither a scholar nor a professional musician. Strictly speaking, I cannot say whether there is a Ukrainian Canadian choral tradition. To me, it is still simply a Ukrainian choral tradition brought over to Canada. Whether its physical existence in Canada automatically makes it a Ukrainian Canadian tradition is a good question. The phrase Ukrainian Canadian tradition or culture implies some Canadian or North American or some non-Ukrainian influence or content. However, it is difficult to see much Canadian influence in the Ukrainian choral tradition. Eugene Dolny's Shevchenko Ensemble, a left-of-centre group in Toronto, specifically commissions works by Canadian composers on texts by Canadian writers. There are many who also write choral music for Ukrainian choirs in Canada and the United States—Serhii Eremenko in Edmonton and Zenon Lawryshyn in Toronto, for example. They are certainly Canadians but whether their work can be considered Ukrainian Canadian is difficult to say.

However, there is no question that Ukrainian choral practice in Canada has been much influenced directly and indirectly by Ukraine. Any study of Ukrainian choral programmes in the 1920s and 1930s would show a heavy western Ukrainian or *Halychanskyi* bias. With the people mainly from Halychyna (Galicia), most of the programmes were naturally laden with works by Vorobkevych, Kishakevych, Liudkevich and Yaroslavenko. In the early 1940s, with Alexander Koshetz in Winnipeg, the repertoire of choirs shifted to composers from eastern Ukraine—Stetsenko, Lysenko,

Leontovych and Koshetz himself. In the 1950s and 1960s, with the third immigration, choirs emerged that emphasized highly patriotic themes and featured martial and partisan songs. In the 1970s and 1980s one can detect a distinct influence from Soviet Ukraine. However, it is difficult to see anything that can be designated as a Canadian influence.

As for cultural forms that best express the Ukrainian Canadian identity, other Canadians appear to recognize Ukrainians mainly through the painting of Easter eggs (even the Chinese are doing it in Winnipeg!), and they know that Ukrainians dance a lot, have colourful costumes, great weddings and "perogies" (*pyrohy*); in short, they recognize us through our feet and our stomach! The intent is not to knock the above—in fact, it is all very basic and important. But as a visible cultural group if Ukrainians are recognized for precious little else, they could be in for a lot of trouble. At the risk of oversimplification, Ukrainians suffer development in areas that require language. High-level professional direction and financial commitment from the community are needed if all cultural forms are to be cultivated and expanded, not just the easiest.

Moreover, to wonder whether experimental cultural forms in choral music may remove the Ukrainian essence is hardly relevant where there is little but Ukrainian essence. *Avant-garde* music is usually initiated by individuals and groups well established in traditional forms and performance techniques. Before Ukrainian Canadians have to start worrying about the influence of experimental forms in choral music, their present practice must first reach at least a semi-professional level. Until basic things like intonation, diction, ensemble, knowledge of style and a fuller knowledge of choral literature are acquired, concern about experimentation ruining Ukrainian essence is premature. Besides, experimentation rarely destroys a healthy culture; it only enriches it.

Whether Ukrainians who belong to organizations get involved in Ukrainian culture differently than those majority Ukrainians who are on the organized periphery is perhaps best answered by studying other art forms. Certainly a choral tradition cannot exist without some form of organized community life. Certain aspects of Ukrainian culture survive, evolve and continue to have meaning because of upbringing. When I was a child in the 1930s in Brooklands, Manitoba, my parents and many others were deeply involved in the stage and dramatics. They put on something almost every Sunday, a tradition that has practically died out. Forms not predicated on a good knowledge of language appear to survive and evolve. Everybody is painting Ukrainian Easter eggs; weaving and handicraft groups are also cropping up in Winnipeg and elsewhere. There are dozens of artists of Ukrainian descent who want to be displayed in Ukrainian museums, yet cultural forms that require language and perhaps more direction from the community are dying out. What the Ukrainian Canadian

community needs is better leadership and more financial support in such areas.

The effect of Soviet Ukrainian cultural styles, if adapted discriminately, can be great and very beneficial. For Ukrainians in Canada to cut themselves off from musical ideas and trends in Ukraine, as some have suggested, would be very short-sighted. In spite of the political system, there are many remarkably fine composers, conductors and musicians in Soviet Ukraine. Not only should Ukrainian Canadians be aware of them and perform their works, but they should at every opportunity commend their efforts to enrich Ukrainian culture. Even though liturgical music, unfortunately, is not featured there, Ukrainians in the Western world have done very little to compensate. The records produced are far from the professional level needed to convince the world that Ukrainians have truly a fine choral tradition.

It is indeed a great pity that the political situation in the Soviet Union inhibits the development Ukraine's glorious religious tradition of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, though there are some stirrings now that non-Ukrainians are beginning to notice it. In my personal collection, there are some beautiful records of the Moscow Academic Choir doing Berezowsky, Bortniansky and Vedel, and of another choir from Moscow doing *Voskresensky kanon* by Dyletskyi and Bortniansky's 33rd Concerto (which the Koshetz Choir in Winnipeg did earlier). Another record of Bulgarian choirs contains equally beautiful works by Dykhtiariv, Dyletskyi and Symion Pikaletsky, a Ukrainian composer of the late seventeenth century, a most delightful discovery. All are performed by non-Ukrainian choirs. Ukrainians should not expect others to think highly of their culture when they themselves either do not know it, or knowing it, do not present it on a high professional level.

Government policies on multiculturalism have not stimulated choral development to any marked degree, at least in Manitoba. The Koshetz Choir has had Avdiievsky visit Manitoba twice, but it is hard to say whether that was the result of personal effort or governmental support.

Viewing the Ukrainian choral tradition generally, the 1920s and 1930s were a time of great cultural activity, as is clear from *Ukrainska muzyka* in Lviv, which occasionally reported events in Canada. In November 1937, for example, a remarkable exchange took place in Winnipeg when during the intermission the performers of the first half at the Institute Prosvita walked a couple of blocks to the hall of the Ukrainian Orthodox church and performed the second half of an identical programme, and those from the hall did the same at the institute during the second half—an idea that could be copied today. The same report listed the following as the most active choirs and conductors: Narodnyi Dim Choir (P. Macenko), Boyan Choir (P. Maievsky), Ukrainian Orthodox Church Choir (E. Turula),

Institute Prosvita Choir (M. Masniak), Prosvita Reading Room Choir (V. Tymkiv) and Yuri Fedkovich Choir (S. Michotski). Although only six choirs are mentioned, there must have been a dozen in Winnipeg at the time, not including the Communist ones, of which many were very active. Today the choral situation in Winnipeg (and it is likely not that different in other parts of Canada) is very sad. Outside the Koshetz Choir, there really are no other established choirs in Winnipeg. It seems that the choirs and participants in the 1930s were much more active. However, in terms of performance level and professionalism, I have it on Dr. Pavlo Macenko's authority that today's choirs are far superior to those of the thirties. We have thus a very interesting paradox. Yesterday there were many who were very active in cultural work; today there are still many talented people who wish to sing and perform, but unfortunately there is practically no one available to teach them.

It would appear that the Ukrainian community, from its sacrosanct political bodies to its church hierarchies, has its priorities all mixed up. There is anguish about the political situation at home and abroad and concern about the terrible obstacles to be overcome. But there are no deliberate steps to establish a systematic educational system to ensure a flourishing cultural heritage. The organized community does not seek out talented young people to assist their studies financially in institutions designed to upgrade cultural activities. In the field of choral music, there is at least one institution in Winnipeg that has a million dollars in the bank and pays its choir conductor \$150 per month, and for that he must be suitably grateful! That is utterly disgraceful! The priorities of Ukrainians are thoroughly misplaced. And if one takes away anything from this conference, it should be that more time needs to be spent on cultural things and less on politicking, because the main politics of Ukrainians right now is their culture.

## Discussion

*Andrij Hornjatkevyc:* As Bohdan Zajcew has pointed out, Canadian country and western music has influenced Ukrainian Canadian country and western music, producing a synthesis. Is there any Canadian choral music that could influence Ukrainian choral music in Canada in a similar way?

*Walter Klymkiw:* I do not know of any Canadian choral music that could have a similar influence.

*Ivan Kowaliw (to Zenon Lawryshyn):* Would you care to comment on composers in Canada such as George Fiala of Montreal?

*Zenon Lawryshyn:* The question should be directed elsewhere, as it is difficult for composers to discuss one another.

*Ivan Kowaliw:* My question concerns the development of George Fiala as a composer, who shows Ukrainian influences in the first and second periods and suddenly drops them for certain modern tendencies.

*Zenon Lawryshyn:* That kind of rejection can be very dangerous. It might be useful to consider a psychological analogy that relates to human perception. In one reported study a blind person who suddenly regains his sight through an operation displays abnormal perceptual problems. When

looking at a lathe, for instance, he can recognize only the handle. With the lathe in its case and with eyes closed, the same person touches everything and, opening his eyes, declares, "Now that I've touched it, I can see it." The point (and it applies to any composer who grows up in a particular milieu—perhaps a university milieu) is that a composer's formative experiences are set by and arise from that milieu. When one encounters reality and, upon opening one's eyes, finds a lot of non-receptive people, one must be careful in one's reaction.

In the case of George Fiala, his reaction toward Ukrainian society was that if it did not want him, he would go his own way. That was a dangerous decision because he had already shown his strongly formed Ukrainian background, and rejecting it at that late date was akin to the blind person rejecting his formative experience in touch, and trusting only his newly acquired sight. "When I did not see," the former blind person was reported to say, "I thought women to be things of beauty; now that I can see them I think they are ugly"—obviously a sign of depression rather than good vision.

*Radoslav Zuk:* I wish to defend George Fiala; he does write music that relates to the Ukrainian musical idiom. He was asked by my sister and brother to write such a work which they premiered in Edmonton. He is now writing another that they will play on their next European concert tour.

But the question, nevertheless, persists: What is Ukrainian cultural expression? It has been answered in many ways. In my paper I indicated that its principles perhaps applied to any form of expression, and it is interesting to contrast the discussions on the fine arts and on music. The artists definitely saw themselves as contemporary artists. They had unusual aspirations and some explicitly felt that they could combine the universal with the particular—that their works could be expressed in artistic terms on a level that could be understood by non-Ukrainians. The discussion on music, however, implied that only traditional idioms could be Ukrainian. Yet it seems to me that unless a composer is in the *avant garde* of contemporary music, with a particular set of Ukrainian characteristics that are not exclusive, we cannot speak of serious contemporary Ukrainian music.

Also the view that contemporary Ukrainian music can only be popular music is most disconcerting. It again suggests that serious Ukrainian music cannot be contemporary. Yet any mode of musical expression—folk, pop, symphonic, operatic, choral, liturgical—can be of high or low value, Ukrainian or non-Ukrainian, conservative or *avant garde*. A work either has that formal integrity (to which Peter Shostak referred) that speaks to any cultured human being in the world or it lacks it. Ukrainian artists can either introduce those universal values that speak to everybody or they can



limit themselves to what is peculiarly Ukrainian and parochial and comes out of a very limited experience. I believe that they should strive for all three of the criteria which I indicated and produce works of art or cultural manifestations that are relevant in universal and particular (Ukrainian) terms, that are *avant garde* stylistically and that are of such formal excellence as to transform humanity. Beethoven, a universal composer, is very German. One seems always to forget that. Our terrible problem is that Ukrainians do not want to look beyond their horizons.

As for the financial support that Ukrainian organizations provide for cultural activities, it is the community as a whole that is to blame. Its standards are simply too low. Student posters not only in Montreal and Toronto, but everywhere, advertise Ukrainian culture in events where *pyrohy* and *varenky* are served and where "Kovbasa, Beer Bash, Cheap Booze, Ukie Dancing" are featured. Such are our cultural aspirations. If the future intelligentsia at the university does not set standards that are higher, then, as Walter Klymkiw has indicated, Ukrainians are culturally and politically in deep trouble.

*Ivan Kowaliw:* The problem of Ukrainian musical composition is well-illustrated by Fiala. Under the influence of Hindemith and other composers (he was a student of Revutsky), above all of *les six*, especially Poulenc, he created some very good works. One of these, his *Sonatina for Violin and Piano*, he considered worthless, however, and would not have it played precisely because it was under the influence of *les six*. Another very good work, his *Concertino for Piano, String Orchestra and Trumpet*, is also an excellent example of how one can combine an alien style with Ukrainian expression. Fiala has a very beautiful slow part in that composition which uses melodies that are not from Ukrainian folklore but are in the spirit of Ukrainian folklore—very much in line with Bartók's ideas. Bartók's own work, in turn, can be divided into some five periods. In the first, he used folklore literally, but after the *Fifth Quartet* in the third period, the folklore was metamorphosed into his own distinctively national, Hungarian music. Bartók is the best example of how national music can be composed utilizing completely modern means. *The Second Symphonietta* is a good example of how European techniques, especially trends of the type found in Stravinsky, Prokofiev or Bartók, can be utilized in a Ukrainian idiom. This is precisely what Jeanne Kolodub is doing.

*Participant:* One hears constantly that moral and financial support for the arts is needed, as is the participation of youth in cultural activities. But as a teacher of young children in northern Ontario, the real problem is the lack of educational materials about Ukrainian culture. Students know nothing of contemporary or even past Ukrainian composers and artists.

Young people unfamiliar with Ukrainian culture will not support Ukrainian opera or contemporary art or an anthology of Ukrainian Canadian art. In music, for example, *kozatski pisni* may be nice, but teenagers brought up in a Canadian milieu cannot identify with them. We need cultural materials in Ukrainian school programmes that relate to Canadian-born children.

*Roman Onufrijchuk:* On the same theme, two points. About ten years ago in courses on film history, Alexander Dovzhenko was a name associated with three films that one had to see, and that is just about where it ended. Anyone studying Soviet film had reams of material to read on Eisenstein and Podovkin but nothing on Dovzhenko. Then Marco Carynnyk translated the journals of Dovzhenko and now in film courses Dovzhenko is no longer just one of the "ten great film makers" but a Ukrainian film maker, too. In courses on the history of music a passion for Tellemann and Bach is inculcated, but Europe ends at Hungary. And when one asks professors why the polyphonies of, say, Vedel or Bortniansky are not studied, people with doctorates in music concerned to teach students to appreciate world music plead ignorance. To them, composers east of western Europe do not exist.

*Zenon Lawryshyn:* The Gregorian chant was not studied with conviction until it was performed by the monks of Solesmes; it was their speciality and they imparted to this tradition a convincing aesthetic appeal. To convince, live images are usually needed. If Ukrainians themselves do not perform their culture, they will either lose their heritage to another culture, or it simply will not be known. It is as simple as that.

*Participant:* What subject matter would a contemporary composer of Ukrainian background in Canada turn to in writing opera, and would the libretto be in Ukrainian or English?

*Zenon Lawryshyn:* The subject matter of my opera would be on a Ukrainian Canadian theme during the pioneer period. In terms of language, it might be even better, in the first instance, to write in English because an opera in English and Ukrainian permits performance in either and the possibility of additional ideas rhythmically.

*Wsevolod Isajiw:* Can one really expect Ukrainian choral music to be composed and developed in Canada? Successful artists today must aim at the general market. We have heard that most of the successful Ukrainian plastic arts are sold to non-Ukrainians. Over 80 per cent of Kurelek's art was also sold to non-Ukrainians. How realistic is it to expect Ukrainian choral music to be composed for a non-Ukrainian Canadian audience?

*Walter Klymkiw:* With lovers of choral music in Canada few and even the best choirs in North America (the Ukrainian ones included) having limited audiences, the concern about the development of Ukrainian choral music on the basis of audience appeal appears misplaced. Much more important is a higher level of professional performance and knowledge about what constitutes Ukrainian music from the fourteenth century onward. It is such a rich heritage, and we know so little about it.



**PART IV**

**UKRAINIAN DANCE IN CANADA**





# The Evolution of Ukrainian Dance in Canada

Alexandra Pritz

## *Introduction*

Dance is one of the oldest and most colourful Ukrainian cultural expressions and its origins can be traced to prehistoric times. In Canada, since the first public performance by a group from Toronto's Ukrainian Narodnyi Dim at the Canadian National Exhibition in 1924,<sup>1</sup> Ukrainian dance has attracted large audiences and has consistently drawn favourable reviews. Over time, it has undergone many changes in presentation, form and function, but its universal appeal remains undiminished.

## *Historical Overview*

*The Avramenko Years.* Ukrainian folk dance in Canada was popularized by Vasyl Avramenko. Among the Ukrainian immigrants there was little organized dance activity, and dance played only a minor role in the socio-cultural life of the community prior to Avramenko's arrival. For the most part, early dance fulfilled a recreational need and was limited to weddings and social gatherings, with spontaneity and improvisation common. Dance was occasionally performed also by amateur dramatic groups in the ethnographic portrayal of village scenes.

During his first visit to Canada between 12 December 1925 and the beginning of 1928,<sup>2</sup> Avramenko awakened an incredible interest in Ukrainian dance. With his charismatic personality, seemingly boundless energy and a missionary zeal bordering on fanaticism, he set out to establish Ukrainian

dance "as a separate, completed and independent branch of Ukrainian art."<sup>3</sup> At numerous rallies he spoke about patriotism and the need to impart Ukrainian dance to children, maintaining that "dance has a great educative meaning in the raising of national consciousness."<sup>4</sup>

He instructed classes in Toronto, Fort William, Kenora and Winnipeg, while Ivan Pihuliak and Viktor Moshuk, his assistants, taught in Saskatoon and Edmonton respectively. Avramenko's first school of "Ukrainian National Dances" in Toronto staged two highly successful performances at the Standard Theatre on 24–25 February 1926.<sup>5</sup> They were the vanguard of 120 concerts in 1926–7.<sup>6</sup> The public demonstrations in full national dress brought Avramenko positive press reviews and an instant national reputation.

Spurred by the enthusiastic response, Avramenko organized a touring company of twenty members (twelve dancers, plus musicians and singers) from among his Winnipeg students, which in August 1927 toured Manitoba and Saskatchewan with eleven concerts. A second tour gave forty-seven performances in forty-five different Ukrainian communities in western Canada during a seventy-day period ending 6 December 1927. To date, no other Ukrainian dance troupe has undertaken so intensive a tour. The public performances caused a sensation, particularly in the rural Ukrainian settlements, where most people had never seen Ukrainian folk dances performed on stage. Avramenko's fame spread to the United States, and in 1928 he left to conduct Ukrainian dance courses in Chicago, bringing an end to his most fruitful period of work in Canada.

*The Period of Transition.* With Avramenko gone, Pihuliak and Moshuk continued to teach, along with M. Arsenii, V. Sawchuk, V. Pohoretskyi (Pohorecky), I. Ivanchuk, A. Darcovych and M. Dudar. Former Avramenko students also met the instructional needs of the pro-Communist Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association, with I. Grekul as an itinerant teacher and M. Sohatsky in Vancouver.<sup>7</sup> Dance thus became an inseparable part of cultural life and was taught in the *ridni shkoly*, *ridni domy*, reading associations, labour temples and churches. In advertisements for *ridna-shkola* teachers dancing became an important asset. As students performed at Ukrainian concerts and celebrations and occasionally before non-Ukrainians, they generated the public acclaim needed to sustain the folk-dance momentum.

By the early 1930s the popularity of Ukrainian dance was such that some emerging Ukrainian youth organizations offered instruction as an incentive to new members. The cultural programme of the Canadian Ukrainian Youth Association (SUMK) was so heavily dance-laden that it aroused the ire of more politically oriented youth organizations.<sup>8</sup> The outbreak of war in 1939 brought an inevitable decline, as dance teachers and older dancers enlisted. While work continued at the *ridna-shkola* level,

it was the Ukrainian National Federation's summer courses (*vyshchi osvichni kursy*) that played the most significant role in the forties and fifties. Dance was so popular at the second summer course in 1941 that it was subsequently included in nearly every one of the sixteen courses held. Peter Hladun of Winnipeg taught most frequently; other prominent teachers were Olenka Gerdan-Zaklynska, Daria Nyzhankivska-Snihurowycz and Jaroslav Klun. Enrolled were many individuals who later influenced Ukrainian dance in Canada: Chester Kuc of Edmonton, Nadia Pavlychenko of Saskatoon and Toronto, Halia Cham of Hamilton, Sam Dzugan of Toronto, Peter Marunczak of Montreal.<sup>9</sup> After the war, even youth organizations like the Ukrainian National Youth Federation (MUN), which had earlier frowned upon excessive dance activity, became involved, with the national executive staging "Ukrainian Cavalcade," a series of variety concerts across Canada between 1946 and 1949. By 1950, MUN was the leading force in Ukrainian dance, with branches from Vancouver to Montreal.

In the early 1950s Vasyl Avramenko attempted a Canadian comeback with dance courses in Toronto (1951) and Edmonton (1953). With the response poor, he moved from centre to centre, but by the mid-fifties it was clear his influence had waned. Individual instructors viewed his assistance as undesirable interference. Many of the younger dance instructors were not awed by his name and most of the young dancers had not heard of him.

*The Emergence of the Dance Ensemble.* The formation of dance groups, which began in the fifties, blossomed in the sixties into numerous dance ensembles. Unlike earlier dance groups to whom stage presentations were secondary to the cultural, educational and social objectives of their parent organizations, the ensembles were primarily performing companies. The great majority operated within the framework of some existing organization, most within MUN. Although organizational membership was mandatory and performance at organizational functions expected, ensembles also presented their own concerts and generally functioned as separate entities within the larger organizations. In the sixties MUN-affiliated dance ensembles existed in Hamilton (Chaika Ukrainian Dance Ensemble, 1957, Jaroslav Klun), Toronto (Kalyna Dance Ensemble, 1960, Sam Dzugan), Montreal (Marunczak Ukrainian Dance Ensemble, ca. 1961, Peter Marunczak), Winnipeg (Rusalka Dance Ensemble, 1962, Peter Hladun), St. Catharines (Dunai Ukrainian Folk Ensemble, 1966, Orest Samitz) and Edmonton (Ukrainian Cheremosh Dancers, 1969, Chester Kuc). The Vesnyanka Ukrainian Dancers (Thunder Bay, 1966, John Zurba) were affiliated with the Lakehead Prosvita societies and the Dancing Ensemble "Vesnianka" (Toronto, 1968, Mykola Baldeckyj) with the Ukrainian Democratic Youth Association

(ODUM). All restricted their membership to non-Communists. The pro-Communist Association of United Ukrainian Canadians (AUUC) organized its own ensembles in Vancouver (Kobzar Dance Group, 1943, Stevie Bobb), Regina (Poltava Dance Ensemble, 1955, Tommy Luchenko), Edmonton (Kamenyar-Lileya Dancers), Calgary (Hopak Dancers), Saskatoon (Veselka Dancers), Sudbury (Jubilee Dancers), Toronto (Shevchenko Musical Ensemble) and North Vancouver (Dovbush Dancers).

Youth organizations gave the ensembles a ready-made audience, a location in which to rehearse and the opportunity to meet ensembles in other cities. Gala concerts, dance festivals and competitions at conventions offered ensembles a chance to compare notes and exchange ideas. At the same time, several major ensembles emerged as independent units. The best known are the Ukrainian Shumka Dancers, established in Edmonton late in 1958 under the direction of Chester Kuc, and the Yevshan Ukrainian Dance Ensemble (since 1967, the Yevshan Ukrainian Folk Ballet Ensemble), organized in Saskatoon in 1960 by Nadia Pavlychenko. Both were incorporated as non-profit societies—Shumka in 1966 and Yevshan a year later. In 1969 Lecia and Myroslav Pritz organized the Ukrainian Dance Ensemble Dnipro (now Dnipro Ukrainian Dance Company) in Ottawa, and Natalka Dobrolige formed the Ukrainian Ensemble Sokil in Edmonton. All were former members of Shumka.

With exposure during the 1967 centennial and at Montreal's Expo '67 (largely before non-Ukrainian audiences), interest in Ukrainian dance intensified. After 1971 the Canadian government's policy of multiculturalism furthered development as federal, provincial and municipal authorities called upon groups to entertain and act as cultural emissaries. Many young Ukrainian Canadians with no knowledge of Ukrainian or a sense of ethnic identity became aware of their cultural heritage and ancestral roots. Through dance, Ukrainian culture became accessible. In the seventies, dance ensembles, in the main independent, registered societies, appeared in Vancouver (Ukrainian Cheremshyna Folk Dance Ensemble, 1970, John Kaminsky), Victoria (Veselka Ukrainian Canadian Organization, 1971, Joyce Kruk-Carr), Dauphin (Zirka Dance Ensemble Inc., 1972, John Huk) and Prince George (Yalenka Cultural Society, 1978, Bihun and Kadruk families). In 1975 with the addition of female singers, dancers and an orchestra, the Dnipro Male Chorus in Edmonton became the Dnipro Ensemble. Two others, formerly affiliated, became registered independent societies: Toronto's Shevchenko Musical Ensemble became the National Shevchenko Musical Ensemble Guild of Canada (1972) and Edmonton's Ukrainian Cheremosh Dancers became the Ukrainian Cheremosh Society (1977). In 1979 the Ukrainian Festival Dance Company was established in Toronto by Stanislav Hamuliak and

Roman Strockyj, and in 1980 the Luna Ukrainian Ensemble was formed in Vancouver by Lecia Pritz.

The fortunes of the ensembles have varied greatly. Some have existed for over twenty years; others are very new. During the sixties the average size was thirty or forty; today some are between sixty and eighty; most are over twenty. Most stage their own annual concerts and give single performances. Some perform nationally and a few internationally. Shumka, the first to leave North America, represented the Canadian Folk Arts Council at the International Bi-Annual Folk Festival in Tunis, North Africa, in 1969. Since then, every continent has been visited except Antarctica.<sup>10</sup> Each ensemble naturally has its own work pace, methodology and level of proficiency.

### *Work Methodology*

Avramenko, the first to organize the teaching of dance, used very efficient methods. Before arriving in a community, he would advertise his courses in the Ukrainian press. A set fee was charged each participant, who signed up for the duration of the course (approximately two months). The classes, usually in the local *narodnyi dim*, were conducted in the evenings and on weekends. Everyone, regardless of age or ability, learned the same dance at the same time in a large area. Motivated to develop 'Ukrainians,' Avramenko sought large numbers and stressed quantity. His response was not to produce trained dancers but to take dance to as many people as possible. Only the most promising received extra time and attention. The public performance at the end appealed to both students and parents. Avramenko's students followed his methods closely and taught only dances from his repertoire.

The new dance ensembles developed other work methods. With performance the mainstay, more time was devoted to preparation. In the sixties and early seventies, most groups rehearsed once a week (generally for three hours). Today most rehearse twice; the Yevshan Ukrainian Folk Ballet Ensemble has three weekly rehearsals, each up to four hours. Few have access to professional dance studios; most work out of *narodni domy* or other community centres, church auditoriums or school gymnasiums.

Before the sixties, little attention was paid to dance technique. With today's distinctive dance repertoires and exposure to professionals, more care is taken to include classical ballet and the character barre and centre-work methods of professional dancers. Local ballet teachers are sometimes hired, and prospective members audition. To ensure a steady supply of dancers, ensembles organize intermediate and junior groups, whom the senior dancers usually instruct. Some ensembles operate dancing schools for children, who then advance to junior groups. Senior dancers



from ensembles without schools often teach dance in the Ukrainian community.

Finances to cover instruction, choreography, music, wardrobes, props, transportation and rehearsal space come from membership fees, group earnings from performances, special fund-raising projects or organizational support. The 1967 centennial celebrations and later multiculturalism policies increased the government grants available. Donations and grants from private foundations and corporations have supported extensive tours. Annual operating budgets vary greatly, with some groups spending as much as \$75,000, or even more if extensive travel is involved.<sup>11</sup>

### *The Ukrainian Dance Repertoire*

The early dances, especially in isolated rural communities, differed little from those in the villages of western Ukraine. In the early 1920s, according to Mary Ann Herman,

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 would go in the middle and improvise in the center. The big circle moved left or right with a basic step. Sometimes if the middle dancers were extremely good the circle would stop and dancers would clap in place and call encouragingly to the dancers in the center of the circle. The center dancers could be a solo dancer, a couple or a threesome.<sup>12</sup>

All improvisation was within the framework of traditional steps and attitudes.

Avramenko's arrival changed the form of Ukrainian dance completely. His schools rejected improvisation and taught a series of set dances, which became the standard dance repertoire for many years. His basic curriculum consisted of eighteen dances, the most popular being "Hopak kolom," "Kolomyika," "Kolomyika siianka" (also called "Kolomyika vpered"), "Kozachok podilskyi," "Hrechanyky," "Kateryna Khersonka," "Arkan kolomyyskyi" and "Zaporozhskyi herts." Other Avramenko dances were "Velykodnia haivka," "Kolomyika v odny paru," "Zhenchychok," "Kozachok solo," "Honyviter," "Vilnyi hutsul," "Vesilnyi zhuravel," "Chumachok," "Metelytsia viucha" and "Tanok marshovyi." Avramenko admitted to "arranging" the dance material and in some cases "creating" new dances on the basis of what he had seen in Ukraine in 1920-1.<sup>13</sup> By removing improvisation, Avramenko "froze" Ukrainian dance into neat, specific dance routines that could be learned and performed easily.

After Avramenko's departure, good Ukrainian dance programmes contained well-paced selections from his repertoire. With the choreography set, instructors were expected to transmit the dances as authentically as possible. As marriage, war or age claimed Avramenko's protégés, new

instructors from the ranks grew impatient with the routines, but without an adequate knowledge of Ukrainian culture, their choreography was frequently poor:

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...."<sup>14</sup>

In the sixties dance ensembles with frequent performances brought many changes, as their programmes reached out to the uninitiated and to those uninterested in continuous repetition.

The appearances in Canada of Igor Moiseyev and the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the Soviet Union (1958, 1961, 1965, 1970) and the State Dance Ensemble of Soviet Ukraine under the direction of Pavlo Virsky (1962, 1966) had a great impact on all Ukrainian Canadian dance groups. The spectacular performance of highly polished theatrical forms by professionals rendered all other performances amateur and uninteresting by comparison. Books on dance published in Ukraine in the sixties and seventies began to appear in Ukrainian Canadian book stores. Some discussed the training of dancers and classified and described Ukrainian dance steps and movements, providing background information, choreography, sheet music and costume drawings for dances from various regions of Ukraine. Others presented the theory and history of Ukrainian folk dancing.<sup>15</sup>

In time, the repertoire of almost every Ukrainian Canadian dance group was affected. Some opened concerts with the traditional greeting of bread and salt—an idea taken from Virsky's "My z Ukrainy" (We're from Ukraine). Many followed the published choreography faithfully; others attempted to incorporate the more spectacular sequences into their own compositions. The result frequently was both a meaningless grouping of steps borrowed from dances differing in character and origin and an inane assortment of acrobatic stunts. The choreographers overlooked the essential principles underlying Virsky's and Moiseyev's works and concentrated only on their pyrotechnics. As Moiseyev wrote:

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 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.<sup>16</sup>

Lacking direct access to Ukraine's folk-dance treasury and without the means to study relevant ethnographic materials first-hand, Ukrainian Canadian choreographers looked to second-hand sources for material and inspiration. A few developed materials gathered through careful research and study of the original works. Their attitude was summed up by Jaroslav Klun, one of the most proficient, older-generation Ukrainian Canadian choreographers: "We do not attempt to present exact copies of established traditional dances, but to develop them and to create new ones on the basic elements of the original."<sup>17</sup>

The sixties and early seventies were most prolific in choreographic activity. Not only were new dances, based on traditional forms, created, but some younger choreographers with ballet, character and modern-dance training attempted to take Ukrainian dance beyond the confines of time-honoured structures. Instead of single dances, they produced suites of related dances and narrative folk ballets which told a story, sometimes with developed plots and characters. The first Ukrainian folk ballet in Canada—"Oi pid vyshneiu" (Under the Cherry Tree)—was staged by Natalka Dobrolige with the Ukrainian Shumka Dancers in 1964. Other Ukrainian folk ballets choreographed by her were "Nich pid Ivana Kupala" (St. John's Eve) for Shumka in 1965, "Rukavychka" (The Mitten) for the Alberta Ballet Company in 1967 and a revised version of "Nich pid Ivana Kupala" for the Alberta Ballet Company in 1969. Works by others in this idiom include "Ikhav kozak na viinonky" (A Cossack Goes to War) by Orest Semchuk and Eugene Zwozdesky for Shumka in 1969; Lecia Pritz's "Nich pid Ivana Kupala" in 1969 and "Oi pid vyshneiu" in 1970 for the Dnipro Ukrainian Dance Company; and Daria Nyzhankivska-Snihurowycz's "Nich pid Ivana Kupala" in 1970 for the Yevshan Ukrainian Folk Ballet Ensemble. Yevshan and its choreographers, Bohdan Zerebecky and Bohdan E. Wowk, have devoted most of their repertoire to dance suites and folk ballets since the late sixties.<sup>18</sup> Whether inspired by popular folk songs, folkloric rituals and customs or legends and historic events, the above works have dealt exclusively with traditional Ukrainian themes.

Ukrainian dance in Canada has not expressed a strongly Ukrainian Canadian identity, except insofar as the individual participants moulded by Canadian society may have outlooks on life different from their Soviet counterparts. Only in rare instances have choreographers dealt with Ukrainian Canadian themes and subjects. Notable have been "Canadian Kolomyika" by Lecia and Myroslav Pritz in 1972 and "Square-Kolo" by B. Kisilewich in 1974. Even better known perhaps was "The Ukrainian Pioneer: A Choreographic Offering" by Nadia Pavlychenko, created in 1966 for the seventy-fifth anniversary of Ukrainian settlement in Canada.<sup>19</sup>

Soviet involvement with pro-Soviet Ukrainian organizations in Canada culminated in the first staging of the Ukrainian Dance Seminar at the Saskatchewan Summer School of the Arts in Fort Qu'Appelle in the summer 1975.<sup>20</sup> Annual three-week seminars, alternating between Canada and Ukraine, have since been organized by the Saskatchewan Arts Board, jointly with the Ukraina Society in Kiev. Each summer is a complete package of dance, music and costuming, taught by teams of professionals from various regions of Ukraine.<sup>21</sup> The highly developed dance technique, improved methodology of dance training and expanded vocabulary of regional dance styling, particularly from western Ukraine, have been overshadowed unfortunately by the Soviet penchant for politicizing Ukrainian folk dance by "contemporizing" choreography and costuming to fit the norms of "Socialist Realism."

Soviet influence on Ukrainian dance in Canada has increased significantly since 1975. Groups without resident choreographers and others unable to utilize published materials because of unavailability or inaccessibility on account of language—as well as all AUUC-affiliated ensembles that have traditionally relied on Soviet choreographers—have sent at least one representative to each seminar. As a result, ensembles have grown increasingly dependent on the seminars and accept uncritically all material as authentic and representative of Ukrainian folk culture. The Soviet attitude toward studying Ukrainian dance in the Soviet Union seems also to have changed. During the sixties and early seventies very few Ukrainian Canadians not sponsored by the AUUC could study dance in Soviet Ukraine.<sup>22</sup> In recent years, such opportunities for dancers outside AUUC-affiliated ensembles have increased, but the long-term effects are still not clear.

Another important influence on several Ukrainian dance groups in Canada has been the work of Roma Pryma-Bohachevska in the United States. Since 1975 she and her male assistants<sup>23</sup> have staged annual dance workshops at Verkhovyna, the Ukrainian Workingmen's Association Cultural Centre at Glen Spey, New York. Like the Soviet dance seminars, the workshops provide dance "packages" which students can pass on to their home companies. Unlike the seminars which contemporize dance, the

workshops are primarily concerned with extending folk dance into balletic form.<sup>24</sup> The artistic license in such extension can, of course, be dangerous in the hands of unenlightened dance groups that adopt modified and adapted movement, costuming and music as genuine Ukrainian folk art.

Except for the above, very little else is available to the newest generation of Ukrainian dancers. The few choreographers (now mainly in their thirties) who have worked in companies since the sixties exist for the most part in isolation.<sup>25</sup> Their work has not been exposed through dance seminars and workshops. Very few young choreographers are being developed and most are either unwilling or unable or are not encouraged to compete with the overwhelming authority of the seminar and workshop instructors.

### *Functional Development*

The social and recreational dancing of the early Ukrainian settlers was solely for the enjoyment of the participants; there was no "audience" in the sense of people watching a staged performance. By standardizing the Ukrainian village dances, Avramenko saved and transformed the dance to serve three functions in Canada:

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.<sup>26</sup>

Since Avramenko, Ukrainian dance has functioned almost exclusively as a stage-form. Spontaneous, improvisational dancing at weddings and socials is done primarily by members (or ex-members) of ensembles who "improvise" only on what their groups have taught them.

Time has again changed the function of Ukrainian dance. With more and more third- and fourth-generation Ukrainian youth (largely unaware of Ukrainian folk culture and little concerned to preserve traditional forms) and non-Ukrainians joining the ensembles, the pressure to extend Ukrainian dance beyond the confines of traditional structures is great. As a result, it is beginning to function more as a fine-art form than a national folk heritage, though occasionally traditional folk forms (including even the Avramenko dances) are revived.

Because so many ensembles look to Ukraine for choreographic material and "authentic" sources, it is useful to review briefly the role of dance there. Since the thirties, all arts in the Soviet Union have developed under

the doctrine of "Socialist Realism." Its application to the dance has been succinctly stated by I. Moiseyev:

At present new choreographic themes are coming into existence among the peoples of the U.S.S.R., who are building a Communist society. The Soviet dance artists are endeavouring to create new dances on this basis.

The amateur folk art groups are the most important centres for cultivation of new dances. The members of such groups are ordinary Soviet people, who must be portrayed in the new dances—the new man, with his new world outlook and new relationships to all that surrounds him.

The art of the dance, like all other Soviet art, is national in form and socialist in content.<sup>27</sup>

The formation of Moiseyev's dance troupe in 1937 greatly affected Soviet folk dance. During the late forties almost every village in Ukraine had its own amateur dance group, usually with leaders who conscientiously applied the norms of the new socialist art to dance. Village groups concerned to preserve and perform their own local dances had to "freeze" them, modifying and imbuing them with the required socialist spirit to create a form that could be exhibited at large regional folk festivals and competitions. Such dances no longer served their original function but, as in Canada, existed largely as a performing art.

Very little serious work had been done to collect and describe original Ukrainian folk dances since Vasyl Mykolaiovych Verkhovynets produced *Teoriia ukrainskoho narodnoho tantsiu* (Theory of Ukrainian Folk Dance) in 1919. With the growing popularity of dance, pressure to produce "new" dances led amateur and professional choreographers to create dances that distorted their fundamental character. As the old-village dances gave way to stage-created dances, the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences sounded the alarm in the late fifties and folklorists descended on villages with cameras and tape recorders, fighting time and lamenting the failure to document earlier the original folk dances.

As a result, much ethnographic material was collected and published, some of which reached Canada. In more recent Soviet dance publications, especially those intended for children, contemporary dance creations abound. Supposedly choreographed on the basis of ethnographic material, they distort the original, being patterned after the dictates of Soviet "Socialist Realism":

...choreographers of Soviet dance ensembles, in obeisance to the dictates of the Communist regime, have been knowingly distorting the original folk form and national characteristics of the Ukrainian folk dance through excessive stylization, acrobatics, pantomime, and introduction of foreign elements borrowed from the dances of other nationalities of the Soviet Union. In doing so they have been intentionally accelerating the process of alienation of the

Ukrainian folk dances from their original form and national artistic truth. With this purely political objective in mind, Soviet choreographers are themselves creating a new Soviet folklore, characterized mainly by themes on the life of the working people and portrayals of the "happy" life of Soviet man.<sup>28</sup>

### *Today's Issues*

Despite its popularity, Ukrainian dance in Canada is at a crossroads. On the one hand, there are great numbers of young people willing to dedicate much time, energy and effort to dance activity; seminars and workshops are available to provide technical training; private and government financing is available for performance and travel; and a large, appreciative audience exists. On the other, most choreographers and directors lack knowledge of traditional Ukrainian folk culture and the ability to judge the appropriateness of available dance material.

A prime concern is the Soviet influence on future development. While Ukrainian intellectuals and artists who identify with the historic roots of their culture are persecuted, the Soviets "graciously assist" Canadians interested in propagating their cultural heritage. In recent years, historically reliable resource materials have been replaced by materials distorted by Soviet contemporization. Subsequent Soviet workshops have reinforced the materials—taking full advantage of naive Ukrainian Canadian youth, unfamiliar with the fundamentals of Ukrainian culture and history. To dispel the ignorance, needed are resource materials in English, a Ukrainian dance syllabus, choreography that authentically represents Ukraine's various regions, sheet music and tapes, costume drawings and patterns and curriculum standards in community dance schools. Yet how will the cultural and educational institutions fund such enlightenment?

The Ukrainian folk dance tradition, once removed from its purely folkloric idiom, can be expressed in one of two ways. Its regional dances can be staged as authentic representations of folk culture, where the greatest care is taken to present the full diversity of regional tradition with accuracy and integrity. Or it can resort to character dance or dance theatre where choreographers express themselves liberally to create narrative representations of Ukrainian cultural tradition. In many ways this is the more vital and interesting form, provided sufficient authenticity of style and regional character is maintained to retain credibility along with the inevitable artistic license.

For Ukrainian dance to survive in Canada, it must develop as a living, growing and artistically valid fine-art form—flourishing not only because it is Ukrainian, but because it is also good dance. Looking beyond one's



borders for direction and inspiration is fine as long as it helps to create dances that not only reflect the Ukrainian heritage but also express the Canadian reality in beautiful dance that is uniquely Ukrainian Canadian.

On 6 May 1981 Vasyl Avramenko died in New York with a reality and a dream he carried all his life: that Ukrainians are a vital people who will appreciate and develop their cultural traditions wherever they might be. One has to lament the passing of the great man and hope that Ukrainians do not soon lament the passing of his dream.

## NOTES

1. "Gay Cossack Dances and Songs of the Steppe—Newcomers From the Ukraine Charmed Admiring Fellow-Canadians," *The Evening Telegram* (Toronto), 29 Aug. 1924.
2. "Avramenko v Kanadi" (Avramenko in Canada), *Iliustrovanyi kaliendar "Kanadiiskoho ukraintsia"* (Illustrated Calendar of the Canadian Ukrainian) (Winnipeg 1928), 109.
3. V. Avramenko, *Ukrainski natsionalni tanky, muzyka i strii* (Ukrainian National Dances, Music and Dress), 2d ed. (Hollywood/New York/Winnipeg/Lviv/Kiev 1947), 8.
4. V. Avramenko, "Ukrainskyi tanets" (Ukrainian Dance), in *Iliustrovanyi kaliendar "Kanadiiskoho ukraintsia"* (Winnipeg 1927), 41.
5. A. Bridle, "Ukrainian Ballet Brilliant Ensemble," *The Toronto Daily Star*, 26 Feb. 1926.
6. For details, see A. Pritz, "Ukrainian Cultural Traditions in Canada: Theatre, Choral Music and Dance, 1891–1967" (M.A. thesis, University of Ottawa, 1978), Appendix 4, 217–19.
7. *Almanakh tovarystva ukrainskyi robitnycho-farmerskyi dim v Kanadi i bratnikh orhanizatsii 1918–1929* (Almanac of the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association in Canada and Affiliated Organizations 1918–1929) (Winnipeg 1930), 68; and B. Yakimchuk, "The Kobzar Dancers in Review," *Ukrainian Canadian* (Toronto), Oct. 1977, 26.
8. For details, see P. Migus, "Ukrainian Canadian Youth: A History of Organizational Life in Canada (1907–1953)" (M.A. thesis, University of Ottawa, 1975), 137.
9. Archives of the Educational Summer Courses, Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre (Oseredok), Winnipeg.
10. Several have performed in Europe: Kalyna Dance Ensemble (1972), Rusalka Dance Ensemble (1973), Ukrainian Cheremosh Dancers (1977) and Yevshan Ukrainian Folk Ballet Ensemble (1979) in England; Rusalka Dance Ensemble (1973) in Scotland; Yevshan Ukrainian Folk Ballet Ensemble (1979) in Sweden; and Shevchenko Musical Ensemble (1970), Poltava Dance Ensemble (1981) and Hopak Dancers (1981) in Ukraine. Ukrainian Canadian dance groups have also visited Asia: Ukrainian Shumka Dancers performed in Japan in 1974, 1976 and 1977 and in Korea in 1975; and Dnipro Ensemble performed in the Phillipines in 1979. The Dnipro Ensemble toured Australia in 1979 and the Kalyna Dance Ensemble gave concerts in Argentina in 1971.



In addition, numerous Ukrainian dance ensembles from Canada have performed in the United States, and the Rusalka Dance Ensemble performed in Mexico in 1972.

11. The sum quoted is the 1981 operating budget of the Ukrainian Cheremosh Society. (Ukrainian Dance in Canada: A Survey, 1981.) The Dnipro Ukrainian Ensemble tour of Australia, the Phillipines and Hawaii, 2–25 August 1979, cost \$225,603. The federal government provided \$18,500, the Alberta provincial government \$27,730 and the municipal government \$2,000. Local Ukrainian organizations donated \$10,140, the 103 performers paid \$61,800 and the twenty-seven support staff and family members who accompanied the tour contributed \$45,900. The rest of the money was raised by the ensemble. (Information provided by Mykola Pritz, president of the Dnipro Ukrainian Ensemble during the tour.)
12. M. A. Herman, "Vasyl Avramenko—As I Knew Him," in *Ukrainian Folk Dance: A Symposium* (Toronto 1961), 18.
13. Avramenko, "Ukrainskyi tanets," 41. Avramenko was also responsible for choreographing several striking solo dances based on Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian historical themes: "Chumak" (Salt Trader), "Honta" and "Plach Izrailia" (Cry of Israel). These dances, which went beyond the bounds of folk into the realm of character dance and mime, were performed by Avramenko at larger dance concerts. He also created the ballets "Za Ukrainu" (For Ukraine), "Krymski chumaky" (Crimean Salt Traders), "Sich Ivana Sirka" (Fortress of Ivan Sirka) and the Jewish ballet "Plach Izrailia."
14. R. Crum, "The Ukrainian Folk Dance in North America," in *Ukrainian Folk Dance: A Symposium*, 12.
15. Avramenko's *Ukrainski natsionalni tanky, muzyka i strii* provided choreographic notes for his dance repertoire but in listing only the names of the various steps (without a description of movements), it was useful only to those who had attended his dance courses.
16. I. Moiseyev, "Folk Dances of the Soviet Union," in *Folk Dances of the U.S.S.R.* (Toronto 1956), 3.
17. Souvenir programme booklet of the fifth anniversary concert of Chaika, Ukrainian Folk Dance Ensemble of Hamilton, 1962.
18. Two Ukrainian folk ballets were also choreographed by Yevshan members in the sixties—"March of the Cossacks," 1968 and "Ievshan zillia" (Legend of the Yevshan Zillia), 1969. In the seventies, Yevshan presented the following folk ballets: "Dovbush" by Bohdan Zerebecky and Helen Polishchuk, 1975, based on the life of the legendary hero Oleksa Dovbush; Bohdan E. Wowk's "Vesna" (Spring), 1975, which portrayed the struggle between spring and winter; B. Zerebecky's "Dumy moi" (Thoughts of Mine), 1977, based on the life of Taras Shevchenko; and B. Zerebecky's "Slava" (Glory), 1977, set in eighteenth-century Ukraine and inspired by A. Kashchenko's novel *Zaporozhshka slava* (Zaporozhian Glory).
19. The work was set to the "Ukrainian Suite" by Quincy Porter and consisted of six movements—The Voyage, The New Land, Thanksgiving and Rosemarie, Fun, Love, and Our Home. The première performance was given by the Yevshan Ukrainian Folk Ballet Ensemble at the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto on 9 June 1966. The sets for the production were designed by William Kurelek.
20. The Poltava Ensemble organized the first Ukrainian Dance Seminar with Ukraina Society providing the dance instructors. The Saskatchewan Arts Board was not officially involved in the 1975 seminar, although it provided facilities and accommodation. The seminars consist of two consecutive years in Canada with the third year in Ukraine. (Letter from Alex Lapchuk to the author, 12 Oct. 1981.)

21. The 1975 seminar was directed by Kim Vasylenko, noted Ukrainian dance authority and head of the Department of Choreography, Kiev State Korniychuk Institute of Culture. He was assisted by Volodymyr Kamin and Vadym Avramenko. The Ukrainian Dance Seminar '76, also held in Fort Qu'Appelle, was headed by Klara Balog, expert on dances of western Ukraine and balletmaster of the State Honoured Transcarpathian Folk Choir from Uzhorod. She was assisted by Volodymyr Danylchenko and Liubov Kamina-Sobchenko. The Ukrainian Dance Seminar '77, held in Kiev, was again directed by Vasylenko, with the assistance of Marko Plyatt and Natasha Huba. In 1978 the seminar returned to Canada and was again led by Balog, this time with Danylchenko and V. Kamin. The 1979 and 1980 Ukrainian dance seminars, both in Canada, were directed by Myroslav Vantukh with Mykola Mylov and Danylchenko with V. Kamin respectively. In 1981 there were several three-week seminars in Kiev for Canadian dancers and teachers: L. and V. Kamin conducted a seminar for participants from Toronto, Sudbury, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver; Vasylenko and Danylchenko conducted a seminar for twenty-seven members of the Ukrainian Cheremosh Society of Edmonton; and Balog, Danylchenko and Nikolai Apukhtin held a seminar for the Kobzar Dancers of Vancouver. In addition, a four-day rehearsal-seminar was conducted by Balog and Sasha Tolok for the Poltava Dancers of Regina.
22. Since the 1940s, various instructors from AUUC-affiliated ensembles have been sent to Kiev to study Ukrainian dance, several for periods of three years. Myron Shatulsky and Walter Balay were the first Canadian students to study dance in Soviet Ukraine. (Yakimchuk, "The Kobzar Dancers in Review," 26.) Throughout the seventies the AUUC regularly awarded dance scholarships for study in Ukraine.
23. Between 1975 and 1977 Wadim Sulyma also taught at the Ukrainian dance workshops. In 1978 Pryma was assisted by Paul Taras Semchuk and in 1979 and 1980 by Mykola Zhukovin.
24. Several other women had earlier been involved in evolving new Ukrainian dance forms: Anna Zavarichine, a famous ballerina of the thirties and forties, operated the Appollon Ukrainian Ballet Studio in Toronto from 1953 to the mid-sixties; Olenka Gerdan-Zaklynska, a dancer trained in modern dance, operated a dancing school in Winnipeg in the forties and in Toronto in the fifties, and also choreographed many female solo dances; and Daria Nyzhankivska-Snihurowycz, another well-known ballerina, conducted a ballet school in Winnipeg during the fifties and also created many stylized Ukrainian dances.
25. Among active Ukrainian Canadian choreographers are Natalka Dobrolige (Dnipro Ukrainian Ensemble, Edmonton), Orest Semchuk (Ukrainian Shumka Dancers, Edmonton), Lecia Pritz (Luna Ukrainian Ensemble, Vancouver), Bohdan Zerebecky and Bohdan E. Wowk (Yevshan Ukrainian Folk Ballet Ensemble, Saskatoon) and Lusia Pavlychenko (Pavlychenko Folklorique Ensemble, Saskatoon).
26. Crum, 12.
27. I. Moiseyev, *Tänze der Völker der Sowjetunion* (Berlin 1951), 14, quoted in *ibid.*, 14.
28. M. Pasternakova, "The Folk and Art Dance," in *Ukraine: A Concise Encyclopedia*, edited by V. Kubijovyc (Toronto 1971), 609.

## Dance Interpretation and Performance

Irka Balan

Twenty years ago, while speaking at a Ukrainian Folk Dance Symposium in Toronto, Richard Crum, a noted authority, asked, "What will be the state of the Ukrainian dance fifty years hence?" and, more importantly, "What will be the role of choreographers and dancers in contributing to the overall state of dance at that time?" Both continue to be valid questions.

The first immigrants brought dances that were alive in Ukraine. With Vasyl Avramenko, they were "frozen" into specific stage arrangements to fulfill his sense of patriotic duty. To him, they were works of art in a museum, permanent relics of Ukrainian culture. The *hopak*, *arkan* and *kolomyika* had a set routine, not to be changed. Today this concept of "frozen" choreography has been much modified to allow for stylized pieces.

Over the years, as Ukrainian dance developed on stage, the natural and spontaneous activity common in the village was sacrificed to professionalism, precision and complex entertainment extravaganzas. In the process, Ukrainian dance entered a new era of formal auditions, ballet warm-ups, contracts, casinos and trips to get children started earlier. Today government grants have largely replaced fund-raising drives, and children from non-Ukrainian and Ukrainian backgrounds attend. But the questions remain: How meaningful is Ukrainian dance as an art form in relation to Ukraine's rich culture? It can be a lot of fun and an elaborate vehicle for skilled technicians. But is it anything more?

As an instructor and choreographer for ten years, and earlier a performer, it is possible to weigh the strengths and weaknesses of

instructors and choreographers. When assisting Manitoba's Cultural Affairs Branch to develop a curriculum to transform dancers into instructors and choreographers, the intensity of the whole dance field came to the fore. Sooner or later, outstanding dancers become instructors, as if teaching steps was all that dancing involved. In backtracking to discover the basics of dance, one began to wonder how it was possible to dance *zaporozhetz* with feeling and not know anything about the background and life style of the Zaporozhian Cossacks. Lyrical dances such as *verba*, *maryna* and *podolianochka* portray feelings, but they are often danced to show only interesting and intricate patterns.

After co-ordinating seminars for the last four years, it is possible to divide the most common attitudes that shape the performing style of dance groups into 1) the Avramenko syndrome, 2) the big-top syndrome, 3) the Sasha syndrome and 4) the trendy syndrome. In the first, Avramenko's era is worshipped as a sacred and timeless experience. Groups develop an unwavering commitment to maintain the purity of the traditional dance form in the actual steps, costume and music. Because of the many dance schools established by Avramenko, this syndrome was once very prevalent, and where it continues, it bars progress in choreography.

In the big-top syndrome performing groups submit to audience demands for circus acrobatics and Las Vegas glitter. Living in North America, they experience the pressures of "making it" in big concert halls, high-cost productions, TV exposure and annual cross-country or international tours. Success merely generates more pressure to please the audiences. For that, much money, constant variety in repertoire and strict group discipline are needed. A common feature of high-calibre ensembles is their emphasis on technical excellence and chorus-line precision. However, it is very difficult to work with such groups because their style appears only to crave sensationalism.

The Sasha syndrome is the result of cultural exchanges with Ukraine. With the heavy reliance on imported choreography, some groups reject homegrown choreographers who create works that reflect Ukrainian Canadian experiences. With the Ukrainian Canadian community heavily third generation, most are not familiar with the dialect, regional costumes and dance styles of the Veryovka, Virsky and Moiseyev dance ensembles. Many find good country polkas and comical *kolomyiky* much more meaningful. Those who participate in cultural exchanges with Ukraine should demand more than techniques and skill development in learning steps. There is no better place to study the history of dance, its regional flavour and its musical richness than in the country of origin.

The trendy syndrome redefines dance traditions in contemporary ballet and jazz forms. But where does traditional dance stop and contemporary dance begin? To be innovative, a healthy tension between the two is

valuable, but it is well to remember that all is built on a foundation of traditional elements.

There is more to dance than complicated routines, technical precision and dazzling colour. Earlier perceptions that dance can be a vehicle for carrying specific messages are still valid. Dance can transmit culture, values and the collective Ukrainian Canadian experience, where dance companies incorporate the multimedia concept of theatre and song with plot development and characterization. Efforts directed mainly to Ukrainian audiences should embrace also non-Ukrainians, other ethnic groups and the school systems, using dance as a tool both to educate and to share.

First and foremost, however, instructors must be trained. Young and inexperienced dance instructors, without a knowledge of children and with the annual concert as the sole objective, cannot provide formalized programmes that deal with dance in general, cultural awareness, music theory, choreographic techniques, staging and costuming. Fortunately, steps are gradually being taken on the prairies to bring dancers from urban and rural centres together to exchange ideas and work toward common goals.

With a separate dance magazine difficult to sustain, it would help greatly to have Ukrainian dance discussed and reviewed not only in the Ukrainian press but in the general dance media. Such reports would help end the distrust and competition that leads to hoarding choreography and guarding costumes. The criticism of all groups but one's own should also end. Mature dancers are open minded and communicate with one another. Intercultural dance exchanges, both national and international, are also needed. Insular ethnic ghettos that shut out the world will never appreciate that dance numbers performed by others can be as exciting as the most popular Ukrainian *hopak*.

## Some Personal Impressions

Lusia Pavlychenko

Over the past forty years, I have very fortunately been exposed to some of the finest influences both in Ukrainian culture and in ballet, which is my profession. In the early stages it was my parents who naturally influenced me most. My mother introduced me to dance and music; my father to poetry, art and history. From my mother I learned delightful songs and dances and the basic steps: *pokhid skladnyi* or *bihunets*, *uhynania*, *vypad*, *dorizhka*; the nuances of head and arm movements, patterns, deportment and expression. At the age of six, I was introduced to two other forms of dance—Tap and Scottish. I grew to appreciate the thought and care needed in costuming, the work required to attain a presentable performance level, the fear of performing and the satisfaction of a job well done.

Later as a member of the Ukrainian National Federation (UNO), the *ridna shkola*, choir, dancing, plays and orchestra became part of my Ukrainian education. Among the personalities who contributed to my development in workshops and summer schools was Vasyl Avramenko, a stimulating teacher, with whom one could spend hours discussing and arguing the specifics of dance. Other influences were Peter Hladun—strict, frightening, productive; Olya Zaklynska—a tiny lady and an accomplished ballerina before she fled her native Ukraine, whose words and instructions on the Lemko-Boyko region are especially vivid; Tetiana Koshetz, a walking encyclopedia on music and the origins of Ukrainian costuming; Dr. Pavlo Macenko and Yakiv Bubniuk—two musical giants; and Dr. Alexander Granowsky and his wonderful stories. Along with my



father and mother, these people may be termed "The Purists." Two other deep influences were the Pavlo Virsky Company and later, in 1967, the exchange of ideas with dancers from Ukraine. These were the early discovery years.

Although Ukrainian dance is my first love, there is also "another world"—ballet. I was fortunate to have had as teachers Mme. Karsavina, Winnifred Edwards (who danced with Pavlova), Ruth French (who danced with the original Ballet Russe), Kathleen Oliver (one of the original founders of the Royal Academy of Dancing in London), Celia Franca (founder of the National Ballet Company), Betty Oliphant (founder of the National Ballet School), Gwenth Lloyd (founder of the Royal Winnipeg Company) and Arnold Spohr and Brian MacDonald. My ballet school is now in its twenty-eighth year and my students have performed in such major companies as the Alberta Ballet Company, Royal Winnipeg Company, Les Feux Follets, Le Compaigne de Eddie Toussant, Winnipeg Contemporary Dancers Company, Nice Opera Ballet Company (France) and Covent Garden Opera Ballet. During these years, I ran the first professional dance company in Saskatchewan encompassing ballet, modern and jazz. It has been a fascinating life.

Since the Second World War, Ukrainian dance has left the bouncy, enthusiastic, "everybody-participate" era and taken on the sophisticated demeanour of a true art form. The late fifties and early sixties witnessed a dance renaissance, especially under the auspices of UNO, though my own troupe shunned political and religious ties, with Ukrainian origin and the love of dance being the sole criteria for membership.

With time, some of Ukraine's finest groups became an important influence through film, television, personal appearances and the opportunities for study with leading exponents. Individual artists benefited greatly, but the contacts were not without their difficulties. The view was common that Ukrainian dance had been Russified since 1928, but to judge one had to know what was and was not Ukrainian, and therein lay the problem. Ukraine, like Canada, has many regions, and within the Ukrainian Canadian community very few could define or detect regional steps, leaving politicians to determine authenticity.

Also frustrating has been the sight of nicely disciplined troupes assuming that by simply changing costumes it is possible to perform in the vocabulary of another region. Every region has its own style and cardiovascular pulse, which the dance must reflect. The steppes being flat and spacious, the steps must be expansive—long—free—continually moving. The Carpathian or Hutsul region being mountainous, the movement must be restricted, contrite, up-and-down. Imagine taking a great leap forward and landing some 300 feet below! The Transcarpathian region with its lumber and vineyards requires movement that is *sur place*

or on-the-spot, with many movements in a small space, akin to balancing on a log in water. Related to movement is apparel or costume and the restrictions imposed on arm and head movements and on the footwear worn. Very few troupes appear to understand the subtleties of such basics. And when inappropriate music is added, the difficulty is compounded.

For many dance troupes, the vogue is exposure to some form of balletic training. Ballet—probably the most disciplined of dance forms—is a very good training ground, but it does not give the male the needed strength in the plié position or, in what is more familiar to Ukrainians, the *prysiadka* position. Lack of anatomical knowledge has unnecessarily injured boys' knees, the most vulnerable of all joints. Correct alignment is crucial when dealing with the stamina and training of boys. Ballet is the science of a body that has been honed to a specific perfection and purpose and then moulded to classical music (usually). The beauty of a body well-trained on ballet is that it can adapt to any movement because the person has the freedom of discipline and therefore direction. Ukrainian troupes that inject too much ballet hazard losing the Ukrainian flavour. It is fine to observe such professional companies as Virsky, Veryovka, and Danylchenko, but it is well to remember the base from which they draw their particular styles. There are some 17,000 amateur dance collectives in Ukraine, some as spectacular as themselves. The Canadian situation is obviously very different.

In terms of performance, the macho image in most Ukrainian troupes caters to male steps. Yet few boys can actually dance. They can do multi-*prysiadky* but few other movements. The female segment, in turn, becomes only cosmetic. Males should perform all steps, not just their own. It is a total misconception that only males have difficult steps. The *prysiadka* in itself is not difficult; only when it is done in a continual series, does it become a feat. Likewise, the overuse of arms is deplorable. Ukrainian arm movements are simple because for each there is a reason. The origin of second positions in leg movements is a mystery. Female costumes are unsuited to them, and too often they are offensive to watch. Acrobatics too can be excessive, although of all Slavic forms of dance, the Ukrainian is the most elastic and ariel. The proverbial *hopak* has become exhausting and boring. Surely, there are more challenging options!

On the plus side, groups in the past decade have become cleaner in appearance, more versed in theatre protocol and more sophisticated in presentation. It is good to hear live music done well, but it is a luxury that few can afford unfortunately. Very commendable also is the greater attention to research, at least in costuming. In the future beware of heads that get large quickly from too little exposure, and especially beware of instant experts.

## The Contemporary Dance Scene

Demjan Hohol

This account—the views and observations of a performer and instructor who is neither an expert nor a scholar—discusses some major reasons for the existence of Ukrainian dance, its main problems and those aspects which hold out the greatest promise.

Ukrainian dance in Canada is first and foremost a manifestation of Ukrainian nationalism. As such, it is an open challenge to anyone who would propose a single WASPish “Canadian” culture. Hence the disdain and bitterness of “Peasants Under Glass,” the review in *Maclean’s* magazine (21 September 1981) of the Veryovka Ensemble’s concert. Ukrainian dance is performed primarily because it is Ukrainian. Ukrainians participate because it is their own form of dance. Vasyl Avramenko called what he taught “Ukrainian national dance.” In the context of Ukrainian dance, if not necessarily elsewhere, Ukrainians are still very nationalistic.

Ukrainian folk dance also exists because it is a viable and creative art form. Through successive adaptations, it has moved from village squares and living rooms onto the stage. Yet this very improvisation and almost limitless creative potential has created numerous problems, the most serious being that the character of Ukrainian dance may be destroyed. Already the stage has overemphasized the Ukrainian male’s macho image and developed a “*hopak* mentality” in Canadian audiences. In the search for schlock and Hollywood-like appeal, male acrobatics tend to overshadow folkloric authenticity. Hutsul dancing infiltrates the Poltavsky *hopak*, and Poltavsky dancing is done in Hutsul costumes because Canadian dancers

are unfamiliar with Ukrainian culture. Over time the basic Poltava and Hutsul steps that Avramenko taught have lost the true character particular to both regions, as the Soviet school of Ukrainian dance and the New York dance workshops sponsored by the Ukrainian Workingmen's Association have shown.

But it is in choreography that the ignorance of Canadian dancers has been most harmful. Major ensembles buy their choreography from the Soviet Union or New York, rather than creating their own works of art. Also, too often children are taught dances unsuited to their body capabilities, size and age. Boys especially embark on advanced *prysiadky* and solo variations with no knowledge of basic steps. With instructors unaware of regional variations, their dances appear the same despite costume changes. Themes also are overused because they are part of the repertoire of groups in which the instructors themselves develop. Yet neither the parish or community dance schools nor the major ensembles furnish that knowledge of Ukrainian history or contemporary social and political realities, costuming, music, dance and literature that choreographers require.

A second major problem is the pseudo-democratic organization of most dance ensembles. Too often well-known social leaders rather than choreographers and dancers are elected to lead Ukrainian dancers, resulting in weak organizational systems whose hassles, petty-politicking and social cliques alienate talented artists. Younger, more knowledgeable and better-trained members then have a difficult time hurdling such elders into positions of artistic and organizational leadership.

A further problem relates to touring, where dance ensembles become preoccupied with glamour and world fame before establishing their reputations in Canada. It is almost as if Canadian audiences, familiar with Ukrainian dance and more capable of constructive criticism, were feared. Before seeking audiences outside Canada, Kalyna should come to Edmonton, Cheremshyna to Montreal, Rusalka to Calgary and Yevshan to Ottawa.

On the positive side, the quality of much Ukrainian Canadian dancing is encouraging. More dancers are receiving training in ballet, jazz and modern techniques, and experiencing the dances of other ethnic groups. Higher dance standards and better dance schools are the result. Instructors and ensembles are recognizing the need for standardization in methods and content. Over 5,000 children are registered in some sixty schools in Alberta, and the next step is the development of a syllabus. With the introduction of Ukrainian dance in the Edmonton School of Ballet and the Cathy Hauptman School of Dance, the goal is probably nearer.

The reawakening of Ukrainian awareness and identity in Canada is largely an outgrowth of the "Back-to-the-Earth" movement of the sixties.

It was integrated into the Ukrainian Canadian community by the Selo movement of the Ukrainian Canadian Youth Association (SUMK). To Selo, acknowledging a Ukrainian origin implies responsibility to act on it, which, in turn, requires a knowledge of Ukrainian culture to choose better one's field of competence and specialization. In Edmonton a major criticism of the Soviet Veryovka dancers was their apparent lack of emotional involvement. A performer's enthusiasm exhibits the soul, a point Selo has always emphasized.

Another optimistic note is the accumulation of creative dance works. Some are almost ingenious: in Edmonton, Shumka's story-line format reached a high point in the 1979 creation "Rivalry and the Spirit"; in Vancouver, Cheremshyna fused jazz and Ukrainian dance in "Mriji" (Dreams); Winnipeg witnessed a triple manifestation—Orlan's jazz-Ukrainian tribute to Volodymyr Ivasiuk, dances by Leslie Richlowski and Myron Tarasiuk's "Ukrainian Country Hoedown"; and in New York Mykola Zhukovyn created the "Ukrainian Boxer Who Missed the 1980 Moscow Olympics." The degree of choreographic maturity displayed placed Ukrainian dance well beyond the category of "cute-ethnic."

Finally, the growth in the study of Ukrainian dance by individuals like Bohdan Zerebecky, Andrij Nahachewsky and Lecia Pritz is notable. Others are educated by conferences like "Visible Symbols," Nahachewsky's presentation at SUSK'S 1981 congress and "Kolumn-eyka," the dance forum in *Student*, the Ukrainian university students' newspaper.

## Discussion

*Manoly Lupul:* How can one account for the fact that, despite the great interest in dance, Ukrainians in Canada have been unable to form a national dance company?

*Alexandra Pritz:* This is mainly because there is no one in Canada to direct such a company. The Festival Ukrainian Dance Company in Toronto had some ambitions to become a pre-professional company, but a few months ago it fired its director, Mykola Zhukovyn. Ukrainians simply are not ready for a professional company.

*Demjan Hohol:* What probably is lacking is courage—that one person or a group of people really interested in establishing a professional company. In Edmonton one man, twenty-six years old, decided to form a professional choir and, despite opposition from the Edmonton Opera Association and other choral groups, he has succeeded. In the first year the singers sang without pay; the next year they received twenty-five dollars for a three-hour rehearsal and ninety dollars for a concert. With time, they will receive more. Ukrainian dance needs the same kind of courageous approach, rather than the free rides from businessmen's associations and others, from whom dancers expect almost automatic support.

*Lusia Pavlychenko:* In Montreal there is a professional group, Kalyinka, that performs Russian, Ukrainian and Gypsy dances.



*Natalia Pylypiuk:* I have two questions. Is there any Ukrainian dancer in the Canadian dance world whose name is as familiar as Evelyn Hart's in Winnipeg? The other question requires a brief preface. With the boundaries of Ukrainian culture steadily narrowing, there is an unfortunate tendency to see Ukrainian culture in terms of nineteenth-century folk culture. The result is today's tension between tradition and innovation. Moreover, while it is good to see the interregional interest in dance forms, historically reliable materials are first needed; these will result from the studies of social anthropologists and other scholars. Only then will directors and choreographers have something on which to base their creations. And, of course, what they create will not be folk anymore. The moment something goes on stage it ceases to be folk. And so the question remains: Can Ukrainian dance in Canada move beyond the chronological limits and social stratum of the nineteenth-century folk culture and discover dance prior to the nineteenth century as it was practiced by other social classes?

*Lusia Pavlychenko:* It is certainly true that a folk dance on stage is no longer folk unless it actually reproduces a village folk dance. People concerned to expand beyond the horizons of the traditional are eager to detect "the Canadian element." The influences, however, are there whether one is aware of them or not, and when one creates something, it is automatically Canadian Ukrainian.

*Natalia Pylypiuk:* But what is disturbing is the apparent inability to draw from other strata of Ukrainian society—the court dances of the nobility, for example.

*Alexandra Pritz:* The problem again is the unavailability of sources. Ukrainian Canadians have been unable to study the ethnography of Ukraine, and even Soviet Ukraine did not really get around to collecting ethnographic material on Ukrainian dance until Vasyl Mykolaiovych Verkhovynets produced his first work in 1919. A great gap followed until Humeniuk sounded the alarm in 1957 before the Ukrainian Academy of Arts on the rapid demise of the folk dance. I personally have never seen or been referred to any work on Ukrainian court dancing.

*Natalia Pylypiuk:* In the Soviet Union there is a tendency to identify Ukrainian culture with the folk dimension. The professionalism of Soviet groups is very commendable, but unlike groups in Canada, they are not free to experiment and develop in every direction. And while historical sources are certainly a problem, Canadian dance groups on exchange in Ukraine could still raise these questions. But they cannot very well do so if

their own models are only folk. It is they themselves therefore who must first reach out to other models.

*Demjan Hohol:* When Veryovka was in Edmonton, a few of the performers were asked what they thought of Canadian dance groups like Cheremosh, Rusalka and the Communist groups they had seen. All they said, very politely, was that Ukrainian Canadians have talented artists. When pressed about choreographers, they only repeated, "Vy maiete zdbni artysty."

On the subject of medieval and court dances, I believe a Detroit-Windsor group did some a few years ago, though I do not know what sources they used. Andrij Nahachewsky might know.

One Ukrainian dancer successful in the ballet world is Taras Semchuk, director of the Extemporary Dancers, a major British group in London. Margaret Slota in the Royal Winnipeg Ballet is also of Ukrainian background and Neil Prokop is in the Stuttgart Ballet in Germany.

*Participant:* Will not professionalism in Ukrainian dance, with its stress on stage, performance, prima donnas and macho men, kill dance at the grassroots level?

*Demjan Hohol:* The Selo movement tries to reach the grassroots. It does not emphasize the ballet-like warm-up. Those who study dance at Selo take its approach back to their own dance schools. Unfortunately, there is little transfer to the social dance because today's social dances are polkas, waltzes and punk rock, not folk dances. At a dance sponsored by Hromada in Edmonton a few weeks ago, I was asked to teach a folk dance. Everyone had a great time doing the one simple dance. But that is as far as it went because people were thirsty and wanted to get back to their tables. A great grassroots movement is not very likely.

*Participant:* But if performance is so central, do dance schools not suffer as *schools*? Is their purpose just to produce performers?

*Demjan Hohol:* No, and they do not. The participants in *kolomyiky* at weddings and socials are not always just the best dancers. At the national SUSK convention in Edmonton last August [1981] the *kolomyika* went on for half an hour because everybody participated. It did not matter whether solos or anything else was repeated. There were fifteen different groups of guys swinging girls. To them, it was not a performance; they did it because they wanted to, because it was fun. On stage, too, people are becoming bored with *kolomyiky* and *hopaky*—and it is about time! In the future, there will be changes on stage and at weddings and social functions.

*Participant:* We have programmes for the gifted in music and mathematics in the public schools. Could we not have similar programmes for dance, some being Ukrainian?

*Demjan Hohol:* More Ukrainian dance is reaching the mainstream. The Edmonton School of Ballet, the Cathy Hauptman School of Dance and the Alberta School of Dance have all introduced Ukrainian dance programmes. Because of the competition for students, the schools will try harder to attract others. In fact they might just be the first to develop a dance syllabus, since it is highly unlikely that the major dance ensembles will get together to do so.

*Participant:* Is it possible to develop Ukrainian dance to a fine-art form and still leave in the folk dimension?

*Alexandra Pritz:* The fine-art form is possible, but it would not be folk dance anymore. It would be something like Alvin Ailey's City Center Dance Theater in New York, whose roots are black American. Although not folk dance, it is very much fine-art.

*Participant:* But would it be possible to pick out Ukrainian folk in the dance?

*Alexandra Pritz:* No, at that point the costuming would be adapted to the movement and one would have to develop a new dance vocabulary. Its inspiration would be Ukrainian, but one could not call it Ukrainian folk dancing anymore.

*Lusia Pavlychenko:* I do not think it is folk even now. The minute you put something on stage and stylize it to make it presentable and enjoyable, you take the folk out.

*Jars Balan:* Ukrainian dance should incorporate more Canadian historical settings. Ukrainians have swung a lot of pick-axes in Canada, and there is no reason why that, like the harvest dance movements, could not be portrayed in dance. When, however, did dance in Ukraine move from its folk form to stage presentation? Was it about the time that Avramenko emerged in Canada?

*Demjan Hohol:* It came as a result of Sadowsky's dramatic troupes. Avramenko, a Siberian exile, returned to Ukraine and got involved in Sadowsky's drama ensemble.

*Alexandra Pritz:* Vasyl Mykolaiovych Verkhovynets, who did the first research and collected the first materials, was the ballet master for Sadowsky's troupe and Avramenko studied with Verkhovynets for a year.



**PART V**

**IN SEARCH OF UKRAINIAN CANADIAN  
SYMBOLS**





## **Symbols and Ukrainian Canadian Identity: Their Meaning and Significance**

**Wsevolod W. Isajiw**

Ethnic identity is a socio-psychological process through which individuals subjectively include themselves in a community of alleged ancestors or predecessors who share a distinct culture. What makes the process specifically ethnic is: 1) relationship to an ancestral past and 2) relationship to a distinct culture. The first gives a time dimension to the self-definition. It provides the idea and feeling of roots which helps psychologically to overcome the temporariness of existence. It provides a legacy for self-definition—the feeling of inheriting something valuable and of a mission to transmit it to future generations. Psychologically, the feeling contributes to one's sense of personal importance and helps one to rise above the everyday threat of individual insignificance.

The relation to a distinct culture is to an experience of a community which has become objectified and institutionalized into a way of life which is (or was) typical to the members of the community, but is distinct from any non-ancestral community and is therefore unique. Psychologically, the result is simultaneously a feeling of belonging and of social uniqueness.

Because of the uniqueness, one's relation to a distinct culture is of central importance to ethnic identity. The essence of culture is symbolizing. Culture is a faleric made up of symbols. The symbols are of a group's experience, in particular the stable aspects of that experience. Thus in its central sense culture is the symbolic pattern of a way of life of a community of people. That is, it is not the way of life in all its experiential concreteness. Rather, it is a way of life in its idealized form, idealized

through symbolizing, which gives the concrete experience meaning and value. More will be said about symbols in culture later. It should be noted, however, that culture includes not only direct symbols of group experience but also the symbols of symbols of group experience. Culture develops as symbolizing turns in on itself.

The symbols contained in culture can be of at least two types, external and internal; in other words, visible and invisible. External symbols refer to behaviour patterns or products of behaviour patterns that are intended for others to perceive. Among them are dances, community gatherings, pictorial presentations, linguistic presentations (books or drama), art objects and the like. Although internal symbols are usually communicated by means of external symbols, they are intended to be intellectually or intuitively understood and appreciated rather than simply observed. They include beliefs, values, feelings and ideas, for example, religious beliefs; political or social values such as the value of democracy; legends, mythology or the history of a specific group and the feelings of group commitment.

Retention of ethnic identity from one generation to another does not necessarily mean retention of all symbols contained in a culture. In fact the ubiquity of culture does not mean that all the symbols contained in it are equally meaningful or are accepted by all members or sectors of a community. Cultural symbols are always employed selectively. This is especially so in regard to the various ethnic generations who live in a culturally different society. A member of the third generation may subjectively identify with his ethnic group without having knowledge of the ethnic language, without practising ethnic traditions or participating in ethnic organizations.

Two questions therefore arise in regard to generational retention of ethnic symbols: 1) what cultural symbols are retained longest and most often, and 2) how can one explain why the specific symbols retained are retained rather than others. Which *Ukrainian* cultural symbols, then, are retained longest and most often in Canada? Since the topic at hand is visible symbols, only the external symbols will be considered. To answer this question, results of a survey will be used (Breton, *et al.*, 1981; Isajiw, 1981; Isajiw and Mahabe, 1982). The survey was a random sample of men and women aged 18–65, who were either in the labour force or students at the time of the interview. They represented eight ethnic groups: English, German, Italian, Jewish, Ukrainian, Chinese, Portuguese and West Indian, plus a combined Anglo-Celtic group called Majority Canadians. A total number of 2,338 respondents were interviewed. For the first five groups, three generations were represented, with 150 respondents for the first generation and 100 respondents each for the second and third generations. For analysis, all the data were weighted to reflect the relative size of each

group in the Toronto labour force.

In this paper the data on Ukrainians will be extracted from the rest of the sample, but some comparisons with selected other ethnic groups will be made.

The following were used as indicators of retention of external aspects of ethnic identity. All refer to external or visible cultural symbols:

1. Knowledge of the Ukrainian language as mother tongue;
2. Knowledge of the language by those whose mother tongue is English;
3. Ability to read Ukrainian;
4. Ability to write in Ukrainian;
5. Frequency of use of the Ukrainian language;
6. Having close Ukrainian friends;
7. Frequency of participation in Ukrainian functions;
8. Use of Ukrainian recreational facilities;
9. Reading Ukrainian newspapers.

Which external cultural symbols, then, are retained most and which least by the third generation?

We can divide components retained most by the third generation into three categories:

a) Those retained by more or close to 50 per cent in the third generation. These are

1. Eating Ukrainian food on every-day basis (81.0 per cent)
2. Eating Ukrainian food on calendar holidays (or special events) (67.1)
3. Possession of Ukrainian ornamental or artistic articles (46.0)

b) Those retained by approximately one-third in the third generation:

1. Speaking Ukrainian to children (36.2)
2. Practising Ukrainian customs (36.0)
3. Participating in Ukrainian community functions (36.0)

c) Those retained by approximately one-quarter in the third generation:

1. Having close Ukrainian friends (26.3)
2. Speaking Ukrainian to parents (23.0)
3. Some knowledge of the Ukrainian language (21.0)

What does retention of these items mean? Obviously the single most highly retained symbol is ethnic food, followed by artistic objects. Is Ukrainian ethnicity for the third generation, then, simply a matter of food and some collectibles? Retention of ethnic foodstuffs is also the most highly retained item in the third generation of the other ethnic groups.

The figures suggest a certain typology of forms of external ethnic identity. Three may be given: an identity revolving around concrete objects as symbols, an identity revolving around the practice of customs and community participation and an identity revolving around the language itself. This is not to say that the same person may not share elements in all three forms, but in specific cases one form may gain primacy over the others.

What is particularly interesting is that for second-generation Ukrainians (unlike that for all other ethnic groups), the highest retained item by far is language, both as language spoken by parents and children and as known at least in general by respondents. For all, the percentages are in the nineties and 20 or more per cent higher than that for foodstuffs or articles. Thus the most predominant form of external ethnic identity for second-generation Ukrainians revolves around language. This likely reflects the character of the second generation of the postwar immigration, among whom the retention of language as a symbol of Ukrainian identity has been especially important.

It should be noted, however, that for both the second- and third-generation Ukrainians language still is much more important than it is for all the other ethnic groups. In the second generation, 71 per cent of Ukrainians reported Ukrainian as their mother tongue, compared to 63 per cent for Italians, 59 per cent for Germans and 25 per cent for Jews. In the third generation, practically nobody in the other groups reported their ethnic language as their mother tongue, whereas among the Ukrainians, about 18 per cent did. Thus the data confirms the hypothesis that for Ukrainians, more than for most other groups, language is an important focus of ethnic identity.

When we shift attention to the external identity items retained least by the third generation, those most readily lost, in order, are:

1. Reading Ukrainian newspapers (1.5 per cent)
2. Using Ukrainian recreational facilities (1.8)
3. Using Ukrainian language in talking to others (3.1)
4. Listening or watching Ukrainian radio or TV programmes (4.0)
5. Writing Ukrainian (6.3)
6. Reading Ukrainian (8.2)

For the third generation of all other groups, except the Jews, the percentages are rather low, not exceeding 15 per cent on any one item. Although claiming a significant percentage who regard Ukrainian as a mother tongue, the Ukrainian third generation uses it, reads it and writes it less than does the Italian and Jewish third generation. Jews in this regard are exceptional. Over 57 per cent of the third generation read Hebrew and 23 per cent write it. Only 8.5 per cent use it, but it is more than double the Ukrainian percentage. About 52 per cent of the Jewish third generation read Jewish newspapers. The percentage for Ukrainians is 1.5. This may be explained by the place which Hebrew holds in religious services, but the traditional Jewish emphasis on intellectual pursuits may also be a factor.

Although language is an important focus of Ukrainian identity retention, particularly for the Ukrainian second generation, on closer examination, it is neither the knowledge nor use of the language that is really the symbol of identity. In the third generation, in particular, Ukrainian language is retained only as mother tongue, which is the language first learned in childhood and still understood. Mother tongue therefore refers to learning the language in childhood. Since children have no choice about the language they are taught, the real symbolic meaning of mother tongue is the idea of teaching the language to children. The symbols retained therefore are not the knowledge or use of Ukrainian, but the pattern of mothers teaching it to their children.

In sum, the results of the survey show that three types of visible symbols of identity are retained longest and most often by successive generations of Ukrainians in Canada: Ukrainian food, Ukrainian artistic articles (*pysanky*, embroidery, paintings) and teaching Ukrainian language to children.

Why, then, are these three types of symbols retained longest? To answer this question meaningfully, one must resort to a theory of symbols. First, all symbols that are accepted or shared by a community or a sector of a community refer to group or community experience. All structured symbols are symbols of group experience, even if they are invented by individuals. Even such ostensibly simple symbols as a dance step, a *pysanka* design, a traditional meal represent a group's experience of going about the life cycle, its way of seeing the world, handling it and getting a hold on it. Thus a study of symbols in an indirect way is a study of the past experience of the group.

Secondly, it is important to distinguish between *primary* and *secondary* symbols. A primary symbol relates to universal values (good vs. evil, the life cycle, beauty and ugliness) and provides a *unique* expression of such values. Thus the design on the *pysanka* called *bez konechnyk* (line without end) indicates that life is not an easy straight-line path, that it is made up



of both good and evil, but one can, as it were, walk on one side of the winding line and thus keep the evil away. This statement about life has its parallel in the symbolism involved in the *kryvy tanets* (crooked folk dance), and in many other primary Ukrainian symbols.

A secondary symbol is a result of reflection on how a primary symbol is accepted or practised by the community and is thus a result of reflection on the community itself. Thus Taras Shevchenko and St. Vladimir the Great can be said to be secondary symbols. So also are the story of Ukraine's baptism or the *dumy*. It is the process of reflection on the primary symbols and a further reflection on the secondary symbols themselves, which accounts for the development of culture.

Furthermore, we should distinguish between *synoptic* symbols and *descriptive-analytical* symbols. A synoptic symbol is one in which the visible sign brings together a whole set of meanings, thus implicitly relating a series of group experiences. Taras Shevchenko stands for the persecution of Ukraine, for attempts to free its culture from foreign domination and for teaching and learning Ukrainian. Similarly, the *bezkonachnyk* brings together a variety of meanings. What is peculiar about the synoptic symbol is that it is at once not very specific—it does not spell out any meaning explicitly—yet it is highly inclusive in meaning—a small sign tells a big story. There is, thus, always something mythical about synoptic symbols that refers to the group's experience in a cryptic way. This is possibly also the reason why the meaning of such symbols may often be lost to many, even as the symbol becomes part of a tradition.

A descriptive or analytical symbol is one which explicitly tells a story. The story stands for the group's experience, not by bringing together a variety of the group's experiences, but by being a sample of the group's experience. Thus, "Slovo o polku Ihorevim" refers to one real episode of the Ukrainian ancestors' experience, as do the *dumy* and other similar pieces of Ukrainian culture. But they have become symbols of Ukrainian identity, because the stories told are seen as samples of the Ukrainian community's past. Literary pieces often become such symbols, but some type of other art forms do also—for example, the painting of Khmelnytsky's entry into Kiev or that of the Cossacks writing a letter to the sultan. A descriptive symbol, however, may contain within it synoptic symbols and in the latter example the Cossacks are such a synoptic symbol. Thus descriptive symbols often are compounded symbols.

This four-fold typology of symbols makes possible a cross-classification. We have synoptic primary symbols and synoptic secondary symbols and we have descriptive primary and descriptive secondary symbols. Embroidery, Easter egg symbolism and food are synoptic primary symbols; Shevchenko, the Cossacks, the trident, the thatched house are synoptic secondary symbols. Many of the religious doctrines are descriptive primary symbols.

The story of Adam and Eve and the story of Christmas are descriptive primary symbols. The *dumy*, "Slovo o polku Ihorevim" and Khmelnytsky's entry are descriptive secondary symbols.

The data produced by the research suggests several propositions for a theory of symbol retention. Thus there is loss of ethnic identity, with those symbols which are synoptic and primary being retained longer than those which are descriptive and secondary. Likewise, when ethnic rediscovery takes place, especially among the third generation, the first symbols rediscovered are primary and synoptic.

In our survey ethnic food and ethnic artistic objects, the symbols retained longest, are all primary and synoptic. So also is the kind of ethnic language that is retained longest. Language that is an instrument of communication is a descriptive symbol of identity, since it makes the everyday experience of the group possible. But this is not the type of language retained. What is retained, especially by the third generation, refers to things that are synoptic and primary symbols themselves, words which refer to ethnic food, simple greetings, specific objects such as *pysanky*, dances and historical names. In other words, the language retained has been symbolically primarized and synoptitized.

It can be argued that the above is the result of class factors. Those primary and synoptic symbols that are retained are retained because most Ukrainians in North America are descended from peasants and the world of peasants revolves more around the primary and synoptic symbols than does the world of the more educated. While true generally, this provides only a partial explanation, since not only are ethnic food and artistic objects the items most retained by all ethnic groups regardless of class, but ethnic groups without a peasant background, like the Jews, retain ethnic food and artistic objects as much, or even more than, Ukrainians. The nature of the symbol itself has much to do with its retention.

Synoptic primary symbols, therefore, can be said to be stronger symbols of ethnic identity than the descriptive secondary symbols because they implicitly contain more information about the unique experience of the group. Moreover, the kind of information contained provides a better link with the roots of the group, that is, its remote origins. Food, in particular, is a very strong symbol of ethnic identity for a number of other reasons. Food is a very familiar symbol for all people as one of the earliest, if not the earliest, symbols of goodness or badness that a person learns in the process of personality formation. It comes to be associated with early childhood and hence with motherhood and with the family doing things together. Thus as a symbol, food is especially equipped to provide a link between the past and the present.

Furthermore, food is a symbol (though not the only one) that conveys information *via* all the human senses: taste, smell, touch, sight, sound. It

can thus symbolically relate to a much wider range of experiences than most other symbols. Since food represents a regular activity, it relates to the entire life cycle of individuals, families and, by extension, communities. Implicitly, it is a symbol of continuity and persistence of social units as well as the stability of one's personality.

In assessing symbols, attention must be paid to form, context and meaning. The basic question is whether a specific ethnic symbol has a form, context and meaning that is unique or one that is common to all or many groups. Thus a symbol may have a unique form, a unique context and a unique meaning, or it may have a common form, a common context but a unique meaning, or a common form but a unique context and a unique meaning. For example, Taras Shevchenko is a symbol that has a unique form, unique context and a unique meaning in North America. The form of the symbol is the figure of a poet-national awakener, a form not common in North America. Similarly, neither the context—linguistic and cultural oppression by state authorities—nor the meaning—national independence to permit freedom of cultural and linguistic expression—are common. A *pysanka*, however, is a symbol with a common form, a relatively common context, but a unique meaning, since an egg is a common object and the custom of exchanging decorated eggs at Easter is also fairly common. The meaning of *pysanka*, however, as its designs indicate, is culturally unique. Hence its distinctiveness as a symbol of identity for Ukrainians. Ethnic food falls into the same category. An embroidered shirt is also a symbol with a common form but a relatively unique context and a unique meaning.

A second theoretical proposition is that in a multiethnic society the symbols of identity retained longest are those that have a common form, a common context but a unique meaning, whereas those unique in all three—form, context and meaning—are retained least. However, the three aspects, especially the context, may shift scope from one period to another or the scope may vary from one multiethnic country to another or from one region of the country to another, as indicated by Jewish yarmulka, anti-establishment ethnic music and ethnic languages in Canada and the United States. The shift often depends on the cultural politics of ethnic groups.

A final question arises. Since it is the third generation that most retains symbols of Ukrainian food, artistic objects, teaching Ukrainian to children and knowing a few Ukrainian words, do those few symbols represent the essence of Ukrainian identity—the essence of Ukrainianism or Ukrainianness for most Ukrainians in Canada? One is led to conclude that this is so.

But to answer this question properly, one needs to ask a more basic question: What is meant by the true essence of any particular ethnic identity? No answer can hold for all times and for all sectors of the ethnic

group because the essence of the uniqueness of one's ethnicity consists of the sum total of all the concrete, historical experiences of the group as a group (or a set of groups). For these experiences to be understood, they must be summarized and interpreted and transmitted through time. Thus the specific essence of one's distinct ethnicity is the experiences of a group of people recorded for future generations. And cultural symbols are the things through which the "recording" is made. They objectify concrete historical experiences, making them appear as an entity in themselves, that is, the culture of the people. Culture thus is something like an onion: an entity made up of many layers. To understand it and the people it represents, one must unravel the layers of cultural symbols one by one.

Culture, however, becomes an entity only when the experiences of the group at various periods of its history and the experiences of its various subgroups (regional communities, status groups, religious communities, generational units, etc.) are meaningfully tied together so that all the experiences, and not just some, come symbolically to make up the essence of the group's identity. This, in fact, has continuously been a problem of Ukrainian identity: a tendency to exclude rather than to include the experiences and identities of the different sectors of the Ukrainian population.

Since there are always new group experiences, no culture is ever complete because new symbols can always be created. But unless the new experiences are reflected in new cultural symbols, they will have little meaning to the group's members as experiences of the group *per se*. Likewise, unless the old experiences of the group are symbolically reinterpreted so as to be aligned with the new experiences, they too will have little meaning to the new generations. The meaning they had for the older generations will become lost. In the absence of and search for this "alignment," the new generation will always have to go back to the symbolism of the original experiences of the group, in our case—the peasant Ukraine.

In Canada and the United States there simply has not been enough creation of new symbols, especially of synoptic primary symbols, to reflect the Ukrainian Canadian or Ukrainian American experience. Ukrainian Canadian food refers to the original *pyrohy* and *borshch*, because no unique Ukrainian Canadian food, like pizza for the Italians, has been invented. Similarly, there have been too few paintings, writings or any other symbols reflecting the Ukrainian Canadian experience in a unique way. There are practically no Ukrainian Canadian novels, no original classical music and very few painters like William Kurelek who have interpreted the Canadian experience. Very little effort has been made to present the conflict of generations as an experience of good and evil, the conflict of identities of the urban Ukrainian Canadian experience and the

like. The cultural interpretations of these experiences that do exist are recent. Until a substantial body of such symbols is created in Canada or wherever Ukrainians have settled, the "essence" of Ukrainian identity for most Ukrainians will always have to turn back to the basic primary experience of food, embroidery and the teaching of a few words in Ukrainian.

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# **Ukrainian Cultural and Political Symbols in Canada: An Anthropological Selection**

**Zenon Pohorecky**

All ethnic symbols have cultural and political aspects. In this paper, the point is first illustrated by noting opposite views of a recent cultural exchange between Canada and Ukraine. Then selected symbols are placed in historical perspective to give them substantive meaning, with emphasis on the first of three Ukrainian immigrations to Canada.

## ***A Cultural Exchange***

A recent cultural exchange featured Veryovka, a Kiev-based company of one hundred singers and dancers which Ontario promoters organized into a three-week, ten-city Canadian tour. Although Veryovka is world-famous for its authentic re-creation of Ukrainian folk arts, Toronto's *Globe and Mail* (3 September 1981) described it as "the first performing group from the Eastern Bloc to tour Canada since the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan." *Maclean's* (21 September 1981), in turn, dismissed Veryovka as "empty-headed, turnip-digging and ethnic drag" under the scurrilous title "Peasants Under Glass." The political thrust was again evident in its first two sentences, which mentioned Afghanistan twice. When a reader complained (26 October 1981) about the insult to Ukrainian culture, the editors repeated the slur under the group's photo and published a note which lauded the reviewer for being "right on target" politically. Even though the Soviets were then playing Team Canada in



Canada, *Maclean's* sportswriters did not dismiss the highly publicized hockey series (which Canada lost) as Soviet propaganda.

In Winnipeg *The Sun* (8 September 1981), however, asked pointedly whether Veryovka was promoting Ukrainian culture or Soviet propaganda. To sensationalize the confrontation, it pitted a Ukrainian political spokesman against a choir conductor. Because in 1977 the Koshetz Choir had worked with Veryovka's artistic director for four weeks in Manitoba, and in 1978 had toured Ukraine, its hosting of Veryovka in 1981 was part of an official cultural exchange, but to the *Sun* the visit was an excuse to attack the Soviet regime for violating human rights in Ukraine. Young Ukrainian critics, on the other hand, applauded Veryovka in *Student*. One observer (October 1981) was grateful that it had not been boycotted. Another (November 1981) saw the Soviet system as irrelevant to an objective review of Veryovka. Older people were less enthusiastic, and some even joined those who would use any excuse to reject Ukrainian culture as politically tainted, if not racially bad.

### *Ukrainian Symbols*

Some Ukrainian symbols in the marketplace are jokes: blue-yellow pens and kitschy calendars. More serious are the vulgar Nestor Pistor records of Romanian Don Ast and the crude Metro ads of Yugoslav Les Pavlik. They cash in on the laugh-value of ethnic slurs, as does German-brushcut Hunky Bill, in a beggar-your-neighbour backlash against "social-climbing bohunks."<sup>1</sup>

Uppity Ukrainians deplore the popular country style of Mickey and Bunny and such high decibal groups as Rushnychok, sparked by Ivasiuk's "Chervona ruta" (The Red Rue). They want opera made in Canada. All art in Ukraine is seen as mindless and state-programmed. Even folk art becomes a political pacifier, nurtured by Russian kitsch. They insist that the Ukrainian spirit be shown oppressed politically, though neither Soviet nor Canadian influences occur in Ukrainian choral music.

Such lofty Ukrainians needlessly polarize fellow adults into snobs and slobs. They do not realize that everybody from cradle to grave can be involved in the teaching-learning process—enculturation—centred around the most universal ethnic symbol—the hearth in the home. The kitchen is where children sit on mother's lap and learn of spiritual values often associated with special foods whose symbolic power can identify an ethnic group in the most favourable light, letting it shine in the eyes of others. Ethnic food, a unifying force, transcends ethnic boundaries, appeals far beyond the group and touches its children and marginal members as well as outsiders.



Fig. 31. Symbols frequently associated with the first Ukrainian immigration to Canada include a) bannerheads of early Ukrainian newspapers; b) early Manitoba post marks bearing Ukrainian names; c) Jakiv Majdanek's cartoons of Vuyko Shteef (Uncle Stefan) working on the railway; d) portrait of Joseph Oleskiw; e) William Kurelek's painting of Ukrainian immigrants arriving at prairie destinations in CPR freight cars; f) Ukrainian men in overalls working on the CPR "extra gang"; g) the shift from "Ruthenian" to "Ukrainian" in bannerheads of Ukrainian newspapers; h) covers of the Manitoba Ruthenian-English bilingual readers burned on the Legislative Grounds in 1916; i) Majdanek's cartoon of "Nasha meri" (Our Mary) as a dishwasher in a Chinese cafe in the city during the day and as a *femme fatale* in the evening; k) formal photo of a Ukrainian self-help organization; l) interned Ukrainians during the First World War; m) Ukrainian drama group in costume named after Ivan Kotliarevsky.

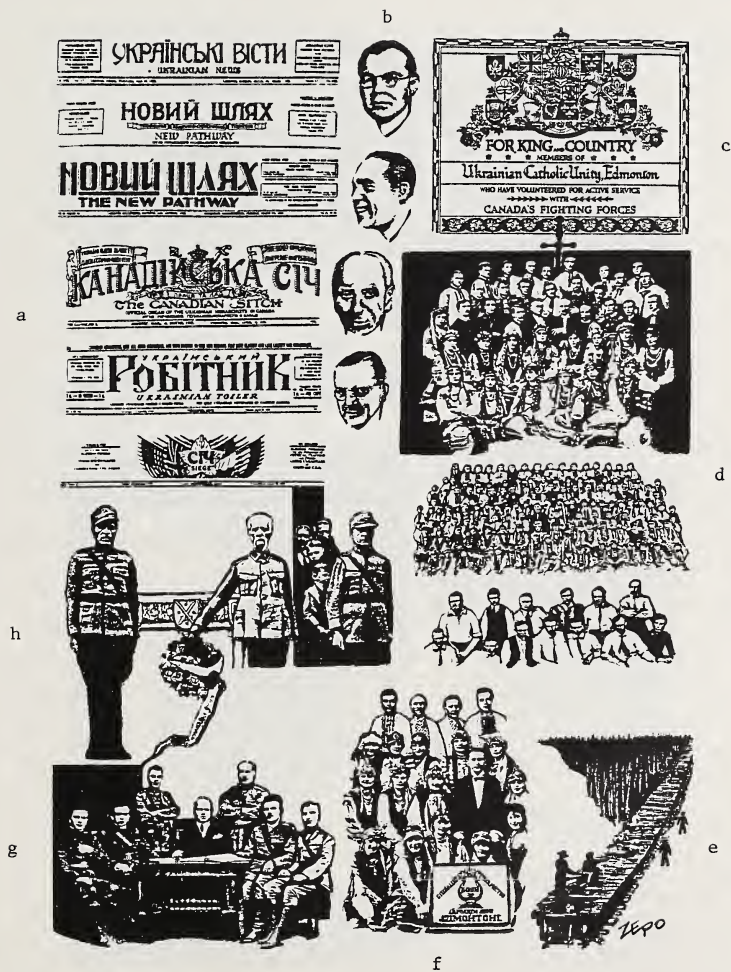


Fig. 32 Second-Wave Symbols.

Fig. 32. Symbols frequently associated with the second Ukrainian immigration include a) bannerheads of nationalist newspapers; b) such Ukrainian nationalist leaders as (top to bottom): Anthony Hlynka, Michael Pohorecky, Wasyl Kossar, George Dragan; c) Ukrainian Catholic Unity certificate in Edmonton for Second World War volunteers; d) photos of drama, choral and teachers' groups; e) remote parts of northern Ontario which provided little outlet for ethnic activities; f) photo of Edmonton group in costume; g) *striltsi* in military uniform; h) *striltsi* wreath-laying ceremony.





Fig. 33 Symbols Since the Second World War.



Fig. 33. Symbols frequently associated with the third, postwar wave of Ukrainian immigrants and their era include a) the revival of interest in the pioneer ("Greater than Kings") years; b) such politicians and celebrities as (clockwise): Fred Zaplitny, MP, Senators William Wall (Wolochatiuk) and Paul Yuzyk, sculptor Leo Mol (Lev Molodozhanyan), cartoonist Peter Kuch, painter William Kurelek, John Yaremko and Nicholas Hryhorczuk, MLAs, and entertainers Juliette (née Sysak), Ed Evanko and Joan Karasevich; c) Prime Minister John Diefenbaker unveiling Shevchenko monument on Manitoba Legislative Grounds; d) Prime Minister Lester Pearson addressing Plast (Ukrainian scouts) in Ottawa; e) anti-Soviet march by Displaced Persons (DPs) in Germany; f) cartoon in *Student*, the Ukrainian university students' newspaper, on modernizing Ukrainian traditions in which the Kobza rock group and Shevchenko's Kobzar are juxtaposed; g) commemorative publication by Edmonton organization on sixty years of Ukrainian work in Canada; h) DP barracks in Germany.

Ukrainian soul food has sacramental quality and political thrust, reflecting the struggle for ethnic survival and integrity. Among seven cultural categories, Ukrainian food ranks first in order-of-importance to Ukrainians and outsiders alike. Outsiders then rank the others: dance, song, wedding, art, religion and language. Ukrainians reverse this order, letting symbols in language, religion and art virtually define their ethnic identity.

Symbols in song, dance and wedding may have less perceived political potential for Ukrainians, but many powerful symbols in these categories have had the widest appeal and political impact beyond the group. In any case, Ukrainian symbols in all seven categories reflect a mingling of generations and milieus in Canada since 1892. Many have some strong political basis in the past, but endure as myths in a growing Ukrainian folklore.

### *Good and Evil*

Lviv economist Joseph Oleskiw (Fig. 31) was a good guy after 1895, when he introduced 160-acre homesteads in Canada to Ukrainians with only a few acres in their homeland. Impoverished by wealthy landlords, Ukrainians in Bukovyna and Galicia saw Oleskiw as Moses, but his saviour's halo faded once Ukrainians were forced to slave at white-nigger jobs in western Canada.

On arrival in Canada, half the Ukrainian families had no money, and the rest had less than \$500.<sup>2</sup> The government put them near proposed branch lines to exploit their coolie labour, and railway companies liked to hire them because poverty made them "obedient and industrious."<sup>3</sup> They were soon the most numerous ethnic group in railway construction.<sup>4</sup>

Between 1900 and 1918, rail mileage grew from 18,000 to 38,000,<sup>5</sup> railway accidents injured 52,555 persons and killed 8,557, and railway construction killed another 3,667 and injured 41,274 more.<sup>6</sup> Casualty lists were published in every issue of every Ukrainian newspaper in Canada during this time.<sup>7</sup> Workmen were abused and railway camp conditions were called "forms of serfdom."<sup>8</sup>

CPR initials could stand for Corporate Public Relations, because the railway eluded a bad-guy label for its carnage of workmen. Instead, time has upgraded the degrading status of the CPR work gang, changing the Latter-Day Serfs into Men of Brawn who died for their railway (now being abandoned). Today Ukrainians are called Canada's true nation builders. Thus a black page in history is brightened by dead heroes and patriots, while the railway's land-grab is overlooked.

Also resurrected is Oleskiw as a pied piper whose reports of a prairie summer drew 200,000 Ukrainians into western Canada's winters. Oleskiw

sits beside two other long-neglected pioneers, Wasyl Eleniak and Ivan Pillipiw, who pose like ghostly pilgrim fathers, affirming the familiar eulogy that Ukrainians were first to overwhelm western Canada with settlers. Such revisions of British colonial history for political (not romantic) reasons are part of the current trend.

### *Politics in Paradise*

Sir Clifford Sifton became a folk hero to his Men in Sheepskin Coats just for letting them in, though his compatriots used the "bohunk foreigners" as targets for their nativist hostility.<sup>9</sup> Old Settlers kept Slavic Newcomers out of provincial politics,<sup>10</sup> though Oleskiw had noted Ukrainians could run.<sup>11</sup> A Ukrainian, Andrew Shandro, finally ran in Whitford, Alberta, and was elected in 1913. Two years later Taras Ferley was elected in Gimli, Manitoba, but Saskatchewan had to wait twenty more years for its first Ukrainian MLA, George Dragan. These symbolic firsts in provincial politics were all Liberals; the Tories did nothing for Ukrainians until Prime Minister John Diefenbaker (a later symbol) delivered his "free Ukraine" speech at the United Nations in 1960.

As symbols, politicians come and go; paradise, however, lasts forever. Thus splashy posters and ads about the Last Best West in Canada induced many Ukrainians to uproot their families. Almost everything the peasant owned was needed to buy a *shif carta* (steamship ticket), the passport to heaven. William Kurelek painted such immigrants on ship-decks, sighting the New World's far-away shore. The scene now arouses middle-class nostalgia, though for some it can also proclaim cultural and linguistic rights that, despite the years, are still insecure.

Kurelek also showed the first immigrants arriving at their prairie destinations by railway and wagon. And the most lasting symbols are land and wheat, already established in Ukrainian cosmology as ancient fertility symbols. There is little (if any) political content in such pastoral symbols to be changed or discarded.

### *XATA Sweet XATA*

Kurelek depicted regional variants of the traditional Ukrainian house (XATA, pronounced *khata*), which the first immigrants built. Suited to the climate and resources of the parkland belt, the XATA was a common sight for decades. Most now lie in ruins on the Yellowhead route or survive in museums like the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village near Edmonton. They are popular symbols in a region with the world's largest Ukrainian Easter egg, towering in a Vegreville park.

The XATA sheltered many throughout western Canada until the 1920s, despite efforts by lumber merchants to convert it into a "Canadian"-style

house, with flimsy wood-plank siding and other costly materials that offered no advantage in plumbing, electricity or gas and oil heating. The XATA needed no capital. All labour and building materials were available in abundance at no cost: timber, clay, sand, dung, grass, family and neighbours.

Well-built and cost-efficient, the XATA also did not waste energy. Its thick log-and-clay walls, its tightly thatched roof, its wattled clay ceiling and its deliberately small doors and windows provided excellent insulation. Windows faced south to capture the sun's warm low rays in winter, with a roof-overhang just long enough to shade the high mid-day sun in summer.

Every XATA also had a *pich* (clay oven), whose mass replicates that in new solar homes. The *pich* was the centrepiece in the largest (west) room, covering an entire wall. Its own walls were two feet thick, retaining the stove's heat and releasing it slowly after the fire went out. The *pich* had a baking oven, a metal cooking plate and a large flat top that served as a warm bed at night. This immense hearth in the home symbolized everything Ukrainian.

Still, the XATA lacked prestige, so many buckled to social pressure and abandoned these monuments to clear-headed peasant technology for poorly insulated, badly designed, shoddily constructed and more costly "modern" houses. Ironically, people now appreciate the wisdom of the XATA, developed in the world's earliest civilization (Trypillian) in Ukraine over 6,000 years ago,<sup>12</sup> and some even lament the loss of this most fundamental symbol to museums. They envy the pioneers who wisely never weighed down their future with cumbersome mortgage payments and escalating interest rates.

### *Symbols of Status*

The railroad hotel was Cinderella's castle for the day-dreaming Ukrainian farm girl. Her downfall occurred there, where Prince Charming was just another salesman. Other status symbols were a new house far from barn smells, women without babushkas, men without moustaches, children without Ukrainian and the old without respect. Linking parents to poverty, some left home, took Anglo names to get jobs and bought instant status. With the second generation unable to give its children what it had lost, grandparents became the symbols of ethnic survival for children eager to recall what the parents had wanted to forget.

Why recall a 1913 recession when Ukrainians were the first to lose jobs? Some were jailed for eating out of garbage cans, while others asked to be jailed to avoid starvation.<sup>13</sup> Jobless Ukrainians in Winnipeg who marched with shovels in 1914, demanding work or bread, were told not to take jobs from others. With the war, they were eventually told not to

refuse work, because strikes were Bolshevik. And an anti-loafing law in 1918 *ordered* all men to have jobs.<sup>14</sup>

Small wonder that poolrooms became symbols of resistance, when Ukrainians had to report to the police monthly, and when most of the 5,954 interned as Austro-Hungarians in twenty-four camps were Ukrainians.<sup>15</sup> Eight hundred were jailed near Brandon, another 500 at Kapuskasing and 800 at Spirit Lake, where one was killed trying to escape.<sup>16</sup> Canada offered Ukrainians no culture but that of the *chorna hromada* (black community), which loitered illegally in poolrooms, mixing with criminals and idolizing bank robbers like Kid Krawchenko, instead of reading Shevchenko at home.

Ukrainian publications, monitored by the Press Censorship Board since 1915, were finally suppressed in 1918 by an order-in-council. The War Sedition Act threatened Ukrainians with deportation until 1930. Ukrainians even lost their right to vote (through the War-time Elections Act in 1917) and their citizenship (if naturalized after 1902). Tory Prime Minister Borden also tried in 1920 to keep Ukrainians from recovering their citizenship until 1928.

Still, over 10,000 Ukrainians enlisted during the Great War. Two Alberta battalions were mainly Ukrainian and Corporal Philip (Filip) Konowal of the 77th Battalion even won the Victoria Cross, the highest symbol of valour that the British Empire could bestow. He then worked as a janitor in the House of Commons.

### *Burning Books and Crosses*

High-minded leaders like the Reverend Edmund H. Oliver wanted schools in Saskatchewan to produce patriots. They also made it clear that patriots spoke English. Because of an agreement between Laurier and Greenway in 1897 that allowed pupils in Manitoba to be taught bilingually in English and in their own language, Ukrainians wanted bilingual teachers that were properly qualified. As a result, the Ruthenian Training School opened in Winnipeg in 1905. Graduates, who acquired third-class normal school diplomas after three years, called it a Ukrainian Teachers' Seminary. Selfless idealists, they helped Ukrainians realize hopes that education held the key to prosperity and would train leaders who could heal the ills of the *hromada*. As community and cultural models, the teachers, to Ukrainians, became living symbols of liberation. To the patriots, however, they were symbols of subversion.

A similar school in Regina, established in 1909, was named the Training School for Teachers for Foreign Speaking Communities. To the students, it was again the Ukrainian Teachers' Seminary. Principal John Greer provoked a strike by excluding Ukrainian from the curriculum until

1914, by which time Alberta had finally opened its own English School for Foreigners in Vegreville. Like the others, it was attended mainly by Ukrainians. After completing nine grades, students went on to normal school. Even though bilingual teachers were scarce, those from Manitoba or Saskatchewan were fired on the pretext that they were not qualified by Alberta standards.

In Manitoba, meanwhile, the patriots had their press fan the war hysteria into a frontal attack on the bilingual schools during the provincial election of 1915. The campaign culminated in a historic bonfire on the grounds of the Manitoba Legislature, where in 1916, Liberal Premier Norris, keeping an election promise, had the bilingual books burned on the lawn near a statue of Queen Victoria. In Saskatchewan a decade later the blazing symbol was reinforced by patriots burning crosses in Ku Klux Klan regalia.

Premier Norris also rammed through the law which abolished all languages but English from Manitoba classrooms, and by 1919 bilingual schools were also banned in Saskatchewan and Alberta. To Ukrainians, the one-room school became a symbol for robbing children of their heritage, without necessarily providing equal opportunities in the economic and social worlds.

### *Relics of Rebellion*

Anticipating the closure of bilingual schools, Ukrainians founded the Petro Mohyla Ukrainian Institute in 1916 in Saskatoon to develop defenders of the faith. The institute also split conservative Catholics away from the radicals, who went on to form the Orthodox Church. The religious rebellion, abetted by zealous clergy, saw some churches burned. Mohyla, the hotbed of the 1920s, is today what it was always meant to be—a refuge for upwardly mobile farm boys and girls to cushion culture shock in the big city.

Throughout, the church was a constant symbol of Ukrainian ritual rather than morality. It played no role in any rebellion against injustice. Never a progressive or effective organization, only a necessary one, its basements were frequently classrooms for fired bilingual teachers. Such rebels literally went underground to transmit Ukrainian literacy and culture to children on Saturday mornings, while overhead the priest conducted another funeral. Then as now, the onion-domed churches on the prairies were among the most visible symbols of Ukrainian bloc settlements.

A more open symbol of rebellion was the *narodnyi dim*, where the righteous and the intelligentsia went, when not in church. A haven for threatened traditions and a forum for news affecting Ukrainians, the



*narodnyi dim* became a sore point when it hardened into the mainstay of huddled ghettos. For village youth, however, it was just a place where one held social dances until the Elks built their own hall in town.

But symbols of rebellion have not always degenerated or left architectural remains. Postmarks with Ukrainian names still defy Anglicization and signify early Ukrainian settlements. Politically, they continue to remind everybody of the self-sacrifice endured by Ukrainian pioneers. Similarly, early self-help organizations now symbolize Ukrainian self-reliance, though originally they also signified credit unions for members who could not get loans from banks.

A less tangible symbol was the three-month summer strike of 1901, which won union recognition for the mainly Ukrainian Brotherhood of Railway Workers and encouraged more Ukrainians to support militant unions.<sup>17</sup> It was the first rebellion against industrial managers who reaped the advantages of hiring workers divided along ethnic lines. A mine manager noted it was useful to hire "a mixture of races which included illiterates who are first-class workers. They are the strength of the employer, and the weakness of the union."<sup>18</sup>

### *Utopian Symbols*

Utopia was socialist in 1897 for Cyril (Kyrylo) Genik, the federal government's first immigration officer of Ukrainian background. Friend of Ivan Franko, who founded the Ukrainian Radical Party, Genik opened his Winnipeg home to sons of small landowners. There Myroslaw Stechishin and Taras Ferley met as Franko's party split—with the National Democratic Party (opposed to collectivization) counselling the peasants to act free of the clergy, and the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party vowing solidarity with Polish and Jewish workers.

In 1902 Stechishin and Ferley began to work the sixty-acre California farm of exiled priest Ahapii Honcharenko. "One saw the commune as Tolstoy's Christian life, another as the Zaporozhian Sich, a third as an agrarian union, a fourth as a co-op, and a fifth as a colony of select neighbours."<sup>19</sup> Back in Winnipeg in 1905 Stechishin and Ferley joined the Shevchenko Educational Society, content to read the poetry of Shevchenko, the novellas of Stefanyk, the pamphlets of Drahomanov and the works of Marx.

After Genik published the first Ukrainian weekly in Canada, *Kanadyiskyi farmer* (Canadian Farmer), with Liberal Party funds, fellow-Liberal Ferley left Stechishin and Paul Crath (Pavlo Krat), who had formed Ukrainian branches of the Socialist Party of Canada (SPC) in 1907. Crath edited *Chervonyi prapor* (Red Flag) and Stechishin edited its successor *Robochyi narod* (Working People) in 1909, when ten socialist

groups formed the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party of Canada (FUSDC).

Stechishin's FUSDC was a founding member of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) in 1910, more symbolic than substantive, because Roman Kremar of Calgary published *Nova hromada* (New Community) for the "Ukrainian Social Democrats of America"<sup>20</sup> and for his own Federation of Ukrainian Socialists, which joined the SPC. The rift ruined the SDP and FUSDC federal election campaigns. In 1912 Kremar started his new Ukrainian National Organization's *Novyny* (The News) in Edmonton with Conservative Party funds.

Middle-class liberals, called *narodovtsi* (populists) or *samostiinyky* (independents), founded *Ukrainskyi holos* (Ukrainian Voice), arguing that most Ukrainians were businessmen, not workers. The church echoed their view that Ukrainians train to compete for better jobs, and in its own bland way resumed publishing after the freedom of the press had allowed some early newspapers to become such fiery symbols of socialism that the Conservative Prime Minister Borden was moved to ban all Ukrainian publications in 1918.

### *Symbolic Days*

The second and third waves of Ukrainians to Canada brought symbols of a new socialist Ukraine, freed finally from tsarist Russia on 22 January 1918. It was called Bolshevik by Russian nobles, whose lands were taken to give peasants eighty-one-acre family farms. Stalin called it bourgeois. After a coup d'état by the nobles and the German military made Pavlo Skoropadsky hetman of a police state on 19 April 1918, he returned the land to the nobles, who were then to be paid well for estates parcelled into sixty-seven-acre peasant-lots.

When the hetman united with a future Russia on 1 November 1918, Ukrainians in Kiev formed a Directory, as Western Ukraine freed itself from Austro-Hungary. The Germans left Kiev on 18 December and the hetman fled to Germany two days later. The Ukrainian National Republic, re-established on 24 December, united with Western Ukraine on 22 January 1919. Ukrainian became the official language on 19 February.

Beseiged on all sides, Ukraine was invaded from the north by Bolsheviks who had formed a Soviet government for Ukraine in Moscow on 17 November 1918. Planning his own coup d'état, one Ukrainian commander (Oskilko) helped the Bolsheviks, as did anarchist Nestor Makhno. When Soviet Ukraine's constitution made Russian the official language on 10 March 1919, revolutionaries like Rychtytsky tried to form an independent Soviet republic in which the official language would be Ukrainian.

To the south, Serhii Ostapenko tried to work with a French force, which aimed to restore the tsar, by forming a government on 13 February 1919 to fight the Bolsheviks. It lasted five weeks. A pact on 16 November with General Denikin's White Russians made Ukrainians part of his tsarist army to fight the Bolsheviks. To the west, Poles used Austro-Hungary's weapons to begin occupying Western Ukraine in December 1918. The Poles' armistice in June 1919 left the Ukrainians to fight the Bolsheviks. On 22 April 1920 Poland recognized the Ukrainian National Republic through the Warsaw Pact, which allowed Poland to use Ukrainian divisions to fight the Bolsheviks around Kiev, while it disarmed and interned Ukrainian units in Western Ukraine.

A Polish armistice with the Bolsheviks on 18 March 1921 led to a treaty at Riga, where Poland recognized a Soviet Ukraine, excluding those parts of Western Ukraine that it kept for itself. On this note of betrayal, Ukraine's bitter war of independence ended on 21 November 1921, when the Bolsheviks executed 359 Ukrainian soldiers at Bazar. The shots, however, did not kill the dreams of freedom which subsequent waves of Ukrainian refugees brought to Canada.

### *Second-Wave Symbols*

Sir John's son blamed Ruthenian Bolshevik ideas for the Winnipeg General Strike in 1919.<sup>21</sup> Tory Judge Hugh Macdonald had not seen the two million soldiers led by socialists Petliura and Hrushevsky to fight the Bolsheviks in Ukraine. Nor could he legally deport socialists, though a 1919 law was used to keep Ukrainians out of Canada.<sup>22</sup> The second wave had to await a Liberal open-door policy in 1925, opposed by 40,000 patriots in Saskatchewan's Ku Klux Klan.

Klan attitudes were to blame for Ukrainians killing Ukrainians at Wakaw in the 1920s. The interwar refugees brought with them new enemies, Joseph Stalin and the Polish Eagle, seen in every pro-Soviet labour temple or Polish hall in Canada. Bed sheets worn by bigots and hats worn by Soviet or Polish infantry were countered by *striltsi* (riflemen) military uniforms and Cossack outfits worn by angry Ukrainian men.

With Ukrainians finally showing enough political clout to stop being Bohunks, Michael Luchkovich was elected in 1926 as the first Ukrainian MP. The *striltsi* stopped the press from printing the ethnic origin of felons, but their own press insisted that Ukrainians not assimilate while Ukraine was not free. Miners isolated around Sudbury, Canada's Siberia, symbolized ethnic loss (Fig. 32).

A few well-organized Communists active among city workers during the Great Depression accused the *striltsi* of flirting with fascism in their massive parades. Vasyl Avramenko's thriving dance school released

enormous energy to the lively beat of Ukrainian wedding and comedy music. Drama and choral groups showed that all was well with Ukrainian culture, whose rituals were used to politicize youth, as in the annual Shevchenko concerts in March when almost everybody got on stage.

Youth sensed that the 22nd of January was as sacred as the Rebirth of Christ when to the usual Easter greeting *Khrystos voskres* (Christ is Risen), elders added *Voskresne Ukraina* (Ukraine will arise). By size, large cathedrals and community halls signified that Ukrainians were here to stay, if only in ghettos. Grandparents were idolized in Illia Kiriak's *Sons of the Soil* and Vera Lysenko's *Men in Sheepskin Coats*. Pioneer items in disuse were revered as icons.

Those who had called Ukrainians garlic-eaters were called *koko-kolnyky* and *porky-bynzyky*, as Ukrainian food became almost holy. During the Second World War, many symbols of Canadian patriotism were swiftly adopted (for the political record) by Ukrainians who kept track of all the 40,000 Ukrainians who enlisted. By coincidence, 40,000 Ukrainians came to Canada as displaced persons after the Second World War.

### *Third-Wave Symbols*

By 1949, the third wave of Ukrainians was allowed into Canada from the DP barracks in Germany, where they had staged anti-Soviet marches. Called *novo-prybuli* (newcomers, New DP or NDP, not to be confused with The NDP), they fought red stars and hammers-and-sickles with tridents and blue-and-yellow flags. A trident on a building or on a maple leaf is about as traditional as a split *pysanka*, mounted and sold for thirty dollars. Dissidents like Moroz and Pliushch have had more impact as political symbols, provoking serious analysis and debate on specific issues.

The use of prime ministers to affirm the raised political status of Ukrainians began in 1961 when Diefenbaker unveiled Shevchenko's statue on the same legislative grounds where Ukrainian textbooks had been burned forty-five years earlier. In 1967 Pearson addressed 1,500 young Ukrainians in Plast (scout) uniforms in Ottawa. Trudeau announced Canada's multicultural policy in 1971 at a Ukrainian congress, showing who had spearheaded the drive for a new cultural era in Canada.

Good fun was evident in such pop art as T-shirts showing Campbell's borshch or gag-buttons, but what of embroidered ceramics or embroidered buildings? A recent *Student* cartoon poked fun at the modern synthesizing of traditional forms to make money (Fig. 33). Museums, sprouting everywhere, signify a real concern for preserving authentic forms before they are updated beyond recognition.

Better taste occurs in the revival of Trypillian antiquity in today's ceramics. Encyclopedias and history books now compete with trips to Ukraine as symbols of the new quest for ethnic roots. A jazzed-up paganism is emerging with the growth of festivals like Malanka, Obzhynky and Vesna, while dance groups flourish. Young singers, cutting excellent records, search for quality, while instruments from Soviet Ukraine signify desire for genuine cultural products.

Books and films about Ukrainians and their culture in the English language signify that many who feel Ukrainian but cannot use the language are not being abandoned. Still, the future lies most securely in the Ukrainian textbooks and workbooks being produced in Canada to teach youngsters their ancestral language, always the best gateway to the rich Ukrainian heritage. A renewed revival of the pioneer era, with focus on the wrongs endured to lay guilt where it properly belongs, remains politically vital for developing Ukrainian culture in Canada.

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22. "An Act to Amend an Act of Our Present Session Entitled an Act to Amend the Immigration Act," *Statutes of Canada*, Geo. V, c. 25, ss. 3–41 (1919).



# **Ukrainian Canadian Cultural-Experience-As-Text: Toward a New Strategy**

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In human life there must always be place for love of the good and love of one's own. Love of the good is man's highest end, but it is of the nature of things that we come to know and to love what is good by first meeting it in that which is our own. (George Grant)

The "visible symbols" of a culture are all phenomena—material, social, experimental, historical—that appear as objects, practices and objectifications that represent that culture to itself and to others. Visible *Ukrainian* symbols pertain to that historical group's inscription of its experience onto the external landscape. In turn, these objects, practices and objectifications point to an internal landscape—a mindscape, if you will, of received, created and re-created commonly shared cultural meanings.

In order to think cultural experience—at various times called "heritage," "ethnocultural" affiliation or "ethnicity"—the metaphor *Text* is used in this paper. This metaphor is useful for analytic purposes; it enables us to move from the reverential to the referential.

The intent is to discuss the historical and social experience of a people as it has become codified into a meaningful whole. This meaningful whole, or *Text*, includes not only visible symbols, but more importantly, it includes modes of being in the world—the knowing, remembering,

planning, articulating and working that *grounds* the visible symbols. A statue of a moustached man is just another statue of a moustached man unless one knows that the statue represents Taras Shevchenko. Depending on the relationship one has with the Ukrainian *text*, the statue can be resonant with meaning or it can just remain a statue, undifferentiated from all others except by its aesthetic characteristics. One's knowledge enables that statue to speak; it gives that object language. The language that one gives a particular object stems from one's experience with a particular text.

In this paper culture is *not* discussed as something *merely given*; as a something-that-falls-from-the-sky. Nor are the human subjects who are producers and recipients of culture reduced to merely sign-emitting things. Whatever meaning a culture has is *given to it* by human subjects. It has no meaning outside of that. Text is handed down, learned, lived, suffered, constituted, created and re-created. It is a socio-historically constructed reality.

The metaphor *Text* implies language. But it is language that is congealed, handed down. Text as language consists of ways of speaking interpretations of the world through a collective and historical experience. The form of this speaking acquires a specific style. That style—the relationships between constituents, components and forms—differentiates one cultural text from another.

To speak of being a Ukrainian Canadian is to speak outward from within a relationship to cultural-experience-as-*text*. It is to speak from out of one's own.

### A. Text Devalued

We must devise a strategy to rediscover the content of the Ukrainian *text*—to rediscover that in which the specific forms of the Ukrainian cultural experience are grounded. If a concerted effort is not made by the Ukrainian community in Canada to engage the *text* in a dialogue (exchange of meanings), then the reduction of the *text* through trivialization and cartoon in North America (and in Soviet Ukraine) will render it irrelevant.

The trivialization of any text through external suppression and internal repression contributes to a state in which form and the conditions of access to form command all of the attention and concern. Meaning which grounds form is ignored and allowed to die in memory; it is forgotten. One is then asked by various institutions and organizations to swear allegiance to, and to act out, countless contentless and meaningless forms that cannot claim relevance or command commitment or even a desire for dialogue. Being silent, the text does not enter into the "global" discourse and it does not contribute.

In the struggle over value and significance, over access to the "global" discourse, and, most importantly, over the conditions of access to the particular Ukrainian *text*, it is crucial therefore that one rediscover the content that shapes the cultural forms. The content is that irreducible subject matter that informs Cossack Baroque architecture, the folk song, the written egg, Skoryk's music, *Sviat vechir*, Dovzhenko's film, the Ukrainian Canadian Committee (UCC/KYK), Skovoroda's thought and so on.

In a world rife with forms, if the content of the above cannot be identified, why then should anyone bother? In our society one is bombarded by a great many "consumable" forms. What of value differentiates the Ukrainian *text* from all others? Why commitment to the Ukrainian *text* in the face of others?

The rediscovery of meanings is primary and all else is secondary, because without content the strategies adopted can only bring diminishing returns. Under current conditions, three strategies can be identified. The first is reverential, the second political and the third existential or experiential.

In the first strategy text appears as a configurational artifact (text-as-meaning). It is related to the second strategy (access-to-text). In both cases the metaphor expands to include the book—the text-as-book. The book is read and then preserved in museums (in the first strategy) and struggled over and pointed to (in the second strategy). The third strategy (text-as-dialogue) requires a more experiential relationship: the text's meanings are exchanged; the text is spoken; it is engaged.

i. *Text-as-meaning*: In this strategy the text is read, either silently or aloud, and meaning is pointed to by an engagement with the forms. The relationship is all one-way. One takes, receives, perhaps even experiences meaning. But that meaning (content) is rigidly defined by forms that are set-down with equal rigidity. It is written and one reads. One refers or is referred toward something. Much of current "cultural" activity among Ukrainian Canadians takes this form. Much of the demands on allegiance to the *text* that come from Ukrainian institutions are grounded in this relationship and strategy. "Ethnicity" is defined by allegiance to the *text*.

One is reminded of the graduate student, who having written a first draft of his thesis, was reproached by his adviser: "There is nothing in this thesis that indicates to the reader why it should be read. Nothing in your work tells me why I should be interested in your work, why I should read it." Without pondering the professor's comments, the graduate student replied: "You have to read it, it's your job!" Allegiance or commitment to cultural experience is no one's "job" or "duty" in a society stocked with a great many consumable forms, texts and discourses.

ii. *Access-to-text*: In this strategy the demand for access is based on "our-right-to." The right, however, is unproven, and the strategy often engenders paper tigers—"withholding taxes unless the CBC does such-and-such" and "ethnic-as-radical." To be sure, the strategy at times can yield laudible results: the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Alberta and the bilingual programme in the prairie schools are two examples. But unless the question of "why this particular text" can be answered, the strategy is short-lived. As assimilation increases, the strategy increasingly acquires a paper-tiger cast, because it is easy to argue that outlays of government funds are not justified by an "ethnic" community's small size. While a "political" strategy is needed, it is *entirely* dependent on the degree to which the content of the text is understood, felt and experienced as being relevant—on the degree to which the text informs the community about meaning.

iii. *Text-as-dialogue*: In this strategy the text that has been internalized as a historically and socially constituted "given" is now uttered, continued and elaborated. As meanings are exchanged one draws out and puts back in. The text is re-created, reconstituted.

There are, of course, dangers inherent in "speaking" the text. Speaking implies three things: first, that the content, being internalized, is known; secondly, that the manner of articulation is mediated by the actual social and historical conditions of the present; and thirdly, that the text, being internalized and articulated in the present, will deviate from the norms set down in the "text-as-book." Deviation implies departure from some approved exegesis. Cultural-experience-as-a-book that is articulated, recited or repeated in total conformity with a received rigidity is no cultural experience at all. It is a museum artifact. The spoken text, on the other hand, is a living text. It must subscribe to adaptations in forms. The content engenders form but the concrete conditions mediate the articulation or expression. As "spoken *text*" one can point to Shostak's recent prairie scenes, Zuk's architecture, the Canadian Ukrainian Youth Association's Cultural Immersion Programme "Selo," Ted Galley's theatre and so on. When speaking or uttering (literally "outring") the text, the text is created in a reciprocal relationship: the strategy is situated in the present and it points to the future while drawing on the past.<sup>1</sup>

The third strategy alone poses the question of content, which, once spoken, gives relevance to the other two strategies. Without the first strategy (historical reverence), the text's spoken dimension is unrecoverable. Without the second (political) strategy, concrete social conditions can (and do) militate against the open articulation of the text. But both the first and the second are *entirely* dependent on the third strategy, which provides the content or the substantive basis for the existence of both.

## B. The Text and the North American Context

Before elaborating the strategy of the “spoken text” or the text-as-dialogue, it is important to consider the concrete social and historical conditions in which the Ukrainian-cultural-experience-as-text must be formulated and implemented. If the *text* were isolated, we could proceed directly. But it is not (and has never been) isolated and to try to isolate it would amount to mystification.

The Ukrainian-cultural-experience-as-text, as a product of a *people* in a *history*, has been developed in relation to other texts, agendas, intentions and wills. The *text* is thick with relationships. Isolation is stasis. The *text* is not static. Even now as it moves into the trivial and the banal, it is not static. In fact, the metaphor—Ukrainian-cultural-experience-as-text—itself arises out of these social and historical relationships.

The experience of the Ukrainian *text* as cultural/historical meaning, either read or spoken, is at once three things: an experience of history (the past) that is both redeemed from silence by the present (the body) and extrapolated (if we are indeed experiencing *meaning/content*) into the future. This strategy is powerfully mediated, if not determined, by the North American context. The effect of the meanings and their forms are greatly influenced by current material conditions, by what is “now” “*here*” in North America. Discussion of current conditions in Soviet Ukraine are peripheral and enter only insofar as they affect conditions of access to the *text* in North America. The *text* developed in Soviet Ukraine is different from that in North America. Although both share a common root, they are different—differentiated by history (time) and place (space). Whenever textual strategies and indeed the *text* itself are influenced by conditions in Soviet Ukraine, it is more a question of history and the arts than life-world strategies—Avramenko’s style of Ukrainian dance would still be the Ukrainian norm were it not for Moiseyev and Virsky.

The relationship to the Ukrainian *text* in North America is shaped much more by conditions here, by the fact that Ukrainians are, by someone else’s estimation, viewed as “ethnics,” as Others. Ukrainians are profoundly influenced by typifications in North America that are presented separately, indeed independently, of their volition, contribution, action. The mainstream culture, the dominant discourse, chooses and imposes typification. Here, then, is the heart of the matter: *As long as Ukrainians persist in an articulated relationship to the Ukrainian text, they acquire the typification of “Other” and stand outside the mainstream of “relevant,” “significant” discourse.* To understand and cope with this situation fully, it is necessary to disentangle two relationships:



1. The Ukrainian relationship to the dominant discourse, to the general cultural milieu of industrialized, mass-consumption-oriented North America, where a plurality of forms are subsumed within an ideological context: We and others, or We as Other.
2. The relationships of Ukrainians among themselves, the manner in which Ukrainians are associated in a *hromada*, community, tribe, collectivity, club: We and ourselves, or We as Ourselves.

### C. Otherness and Trivialization

Mainstream North America is entirely indifferent to Ukrainianness. The indifference is not passive; it is not "just there" in the way that mountains and rivers are there. The indifference is a position or posture of mind that is intentional. It says: "You are of no consequence." It is therefore a denial of its object's value. The indifference is directed denial. And it is critical to recognize that it is socially constituted.

But the indifference is more than just denial, it is the most devaluing form of tolerance. Tolerance is that state of affairs where competing ideas or texts are contained *within* a dominant discourse. To contain these competing texts is to set limits on them—to say that within a certain horizon such-and-such saying-knowing-doing will be allowed—tolerated. Tolerance acknowledges the *possibility*, if not the actuality, of other content. It admits the possibility of equivalence. It says: "I'm big enough to define the game in my terms, and if you play by the rules—it's O.K." But indifference acquires another posture, which says: "No matter what you do—it is irrelevant—of no consequence." The cultural mainstream, the dominant discourse, takes this posture toward "ethnicity." This is a form of imperialism.

Consider the total indifference of the mainstream to the Artificial Famine of 1932–3 in Ukraine. Who cares? Of what consequence is it to the dominant discourse? None. But what does this really say?

1. At least five million (or was it ten million—who cares!) of the writer's historical predecessors were slaughtered in an abominable way.
2. This means that the dead, their historical experience, their suffering, were of *no value*.
3. If within the general discourse their suffering, their experiences are of no value, then all who are part of the general discourse *yet* have an identity informed by that terrible, valueless experience are also of no value.



4. What is of no value is undesirable, it is hateful. I am hateful, and I hate myself and the experience that makes this so. As long as I continue to identify with this experience I will remain devalued and hateful.
5. Therefore, in order to enter the sphere of value I must flee the conditions, the knowledge, the experience, the history, the *text* that devalues me.

This is the way of indifference. It denies value to experiences and thereby denies their human“ness.” The dominant discourse, implementing indifference, seeks to deny, to prevent, to diffuse what it most fears: Otherness. Indifference, it should be clear, is not some “disembodied thing”—it is a posture, a position taken by *someone*. In this case, it is the position of the dominant discourse: the social and cultural mainstream.

Otherness scandalizes the dominant discourse. It points to difference as opposed to a homogeneous mass culture. This difference, locked into the historical experience (content) of another culture (form) dislocates, in effect disintegrates, the claims of the dominant discourse to exclusion and relevance. The mainstream with its own agenda—its own content—cannot tolerate *other content*. Other form is perfectly acceptable, indeed desirable, providing that it offers colour, entertainment and diversion; providing it can be subsumed within the dominant discourse’s content. The content of the dominant discourse is market-oriented: things are bought and sold, things are consumed, and the ordering principles are “comfort, convenience and passive, pleasant reception of the world”—which itself is made to appear passive and pleasant, something “out there” to be consumed.<sup>2</sup> Suffering, struggle, responsible relations among subjects, communities and with the world at large—with Nature—are excluded from this schema. Otherness, particularly Otherness whose own schema of differences, struggle or suffering imposes difference on the mainstream, threatening thereby the spuriously defined cultural, historical and experiential homogeneous “reality”—such Otherness must be excluded from the dominant discourse at all costs.

Such Otherness must be excluded because it might invite identification and sympathy. Sympathy, especially if the Other’s agenda does contain suffering, demands explanation. If suffering and struggle are part of the Other’s experience, and if there is identification, then there is the possibility of engagement. If there are identification and engagement, then questions might be asked as to the causes, the purpose and the future of the Other’s suffering and struggle. Identification and engagement point to unease, to possible displeasure and to demands for resolution: *they fracture claims to universal plenitude*. Not being part of the dominant discourse’s content, Otherness must be denied its human“ness.” At best, it is subjected

to toleration or indifference. Under extreme conditions it can be the target of hostility and violence. But in liberal democracies, violence contradicts the articulated agenda, so Otherness is given a safe image: Other is reduced to a cartoon, Other is trivialized, Other is banalized and Otherness becomes a banal image, an "ethnic" joke, a Hunky-cum-perogie-pusher. The mainstream fearing access to the experience of Other by association, devalues Otherness through indifference or reduces it to comic status through its articulative apparatus—mainly the mass media and the educational system.

Under pressure the mainstream does accept certain aspects of Otherness when they can be accommodated within the range of acceptable contents of a dominant discourse. This is containment yielding its harvest. Forms inherent to other texts, forms that have been engendered to articulate specific social and historical experiences, once emptied of their specific content and subsumed into the range of meanings defined as desirable by the dominant discourse, are accepted. Thus "ethnic" food as a consumable is always welcome within the content repertoire of the dominant discourse. Colourful folk dance, especially if it reaffirms the mainstream's sexual politic, is also gladly received. "Ethnicity" as entertainment and diversion is happily incorporated into the dominant discourse. Ethnicity in forms that are not a threat but reflect the real relations of dominant and subservient; ethnicity in entertainment forms provided by the subservient for the pleasure of the dominant is always acceptable.

This leads one to inquire what makes Other what Other is? What is it that constitutes this Otherness? Is it form alone? Certainly form is there. After all, each culture is what has been experienced, then codified through history and made formulaic.<sup>3</sup> Cultures are forms by which we perceive, interpret, understand and act upon the world. But forms are engendered by a specific content. If form follows function, then function is content. Content, historically and socially constituted by real experience, is what answers the question: "Why this particular form?"

If we understand form to be an arbitrary aesthetic—the way in which we beautify, give meaningful externality to the essence of something, a way of acting, of expressing emotion—then the question becomes: "Why this particular aesthetic?" What was the essence and the ways of interpretation (meaning) that inspired this particular aesthetic?

Perhaps we can attribute form to style or to a component of style. Style is an assemblage of various elements, whose structure, order and sequence is informed by ordering principles. The relationship of all elements to each other—the each to all others (colours, stitches, motifs)—comprises a structure that is meaningful. But when we inquire as to why certain particular arrangements, why certain particular relationships, why certain particular meaningful structures, we return again to content.

Other, then, is a category created by a social formation to designate those who, informed by a certain Other content, insist on engagement with and through forms grounded in that content. This is most pronounced with "invisible ethnics." Other, as a category, can and does pertain *de facto* to visible minorities—by their appearance alone. Otherness can also pertain to an enemy, as any study of any wartime propaganda will bear out. Here, however, our concern is with the way in which Otherness as a category functions in designating *invisible* minorities, and specifically the Ukrainians in Canada. Otherness is not only a category constructed by the mainstream; it is also a reality experienced by the designating and designated, and "contained" by a dominant discourse.

Such others as the Ukrainians in Canada belong to a community. The Other participates and is obviously sustained by a "tribe," a "herd," a *hromada*, a community, which is the second aspect of our context. The community is the place where the *text* is sustained, where it is accessible, where it is relevant, where it is the informing principle (the *text-as-meaning* strategy). To a great extent, the *text* is the glue that keeps the association together. The *text* is the common link. Under certain conditions, the *text* is the community and the community is the *text*. The *text* is the most irreducible constituent of the community.

Briefly, some signs and symbols that constitute the Ukrainian *text* are borshch, Lysenko, *Sviat vechir*, *bandura*, January 22nd, Saskatoon 1919, *narodnyi dim*, Mickey and Bunny, "Bulo kolus' na Ukraïni revily . . .," L. Dychko, blessing Pascal loaves on the church grounds on Easter morning, Makhno, *selo*, Liatoshynsky, Fiala, *ridna shkola*. All of these—and a great many more—form a structure of signs and symbols.

Experiences of meaning referred to by sign and symbol are learned, either from childhood or later in social and educational institutions. Interpretation is learned from an engagement with the *text*. The most resonant entry<sup>4</sup> into the *text* is language, in this case, Ukrainian. In the community today, however, the language is no longer Ukrainian. The Ukrainian language has now become an exclusive code. Even in the realm of the performing arts, all too often singers sing without understanding the words being sung. Lyricism, passion, joy and suffering are relegated to melodic articulation—the words carry no meaning. Nor do they transmit meaning. Language learning becomes a symbolic act. It acquires the role of an index of commitment to the *text*; it is not an exercise in learning a language.

In the past the community was characterized by two features: it was linguistic and it was insular. Today it is neither. The community was homogeneous. Today the community is intermarried and its membership increasingly heterogeneous. Each of the three immigrations brought with

them their commonly shared experiences—common Ukrainianness—which made for a continuous, commonly understood, symbolic and significant *text*. Today that *text* grows increasingly discontinuous: on the one hand, the various symbolic languages are differentiated by distance and historical politico-regional particularities, and, on the other, they are only formally differentiated as more and more of the *text* is relegated to libraries in Slavic studies and to museums.

The temporal distance between experience, and then interpretation and articulation, followed by acts and gestures of reconstitution points to the core of an immigrant cultural configuration. This is why the metaphor *Text* has been chosen. The lives that are lived are grounded in modern mass-culture North American reality. The commitment to an earlier experience that was felt by the older is no longer shared by their children, for whom commitment is not to an experience but to a received and unexplicated *text*. Things are done because “that’s the way that we’ve always done them.” Interpretation is replaced by loyalty to form (the *text-as-meaning*), which itself is very subtly manipulated by the dominant discourse. What is shown and articulated is only that which the mainstream will “buy.”

Association is focused on Ukrainian *text-as-meaning* and on access-to-Ukrainian *text*, not on the meaning *in/from* the Ukrainian *text* (*text-as-dialogue*). This is particularly clear in the performing arts. Ukrainian dance in North America is bankrupt, as is choral, liturgical and popularly recorded music. The exceptions are rare. The Ukrainian arts persevere in re-articulation of form without inquiry into meaning or content. As a result, they are static, unable to articulate the lived experience of a contemporary ethnic Ukrainianness. They state and restate the formal particularities of past generations. The performing arts are oblivious to the dynamics that engendered them.

Educational programmes are no less bankrupt. A degree in Slavics or Ukrainian studies today only introduces the student to the most rudimentary forms that comprise an introduction to the surfaces of the *text*. Content is rarely addressed. The graduates then focus their attention on the training of young minds in the grammars of the formal particularities of the *text*. Again the stress is on form. But until the question of content/meaning in the *text* is addressed, why should anyone choose Ukrainian forms over the unlimited repertoire of forms readily available in a formally pluralistic society? Why *arkan* when you can go aerobic? Why a SUMK or Plast and not EST or the Young Conservatives?

It is difficult to ignore the bankruptcy, for what has the organized community accomplished over the last decade that has made the dominant

discourse sit up and take notice? What of the Ukrainian press? What of the churches whose main agenda seems to be buildings and material acquisitions rather than the spirit? What of the stasis in the *bandura* repertoire? Where is the Ukrainian theatre, the popular Ukrainian theatre? What of the banalité of all the Ukrainian electronic media programmes? What of the monuments that articulate an image of the Ukrainian pioneer woman more as we would like to imagine her than as she really was?

For all that, still, a community continues to exist. And even though inquiry into meanings, content and form is neglected, strong emotional ties are manifested to the *text*. Although mystified and reverential, they are nonetheless real. And in a sense this identification with the *text* is a form of resistance to the dominant discourse.<sup>5</sup> It is a *choice* from among alternatives, in which there is a glimmer of resistance to meanings and contents prescribed by dominant discourse. However inadequate the preoccupation with formal particularities, each is an access point, a point of entry into the *text*'s meaning—content which stands in *opposition* to the content of the dominant discourse, to the mainstream mass culture of individual competitiveness, vicarious consumption, reification, isolation and alienation. There is, at least, some reason to hope, then, that should concern over access and conditions of access to *text* become secondary, the present trivialization by the dominant discourse of the Ukrainian-cultural-experience-as-*text* can at least be arrested if not reversed altogether. But in saying so, it is well to remember that the Ukrainian *text*, for all its desire and claims at participation in the cultural mainstream of western Europe and its most recent manifestation in the cultural hegemony of anglophonic North America, has, in fact, more in common with the textual/cultural conditions of the "Third World." The Ukrainian *text* is outside the "universal, inclusive world culture." As a generalized discourse, it shares with Borneo, Malaysia, Afghanistan, Namibia, the Basques, the Bretons and the Lapps.<sup>6</sup> All are situated in the cultural third world. As a result, textual/cultural strategy necessarily becomes an articulation of resistance to the cultural/linguistic imperialisms of dominant discourses—to their apparatus and to their hegemony—whether these be American, British or Soviet.

In resisting formal plurality, *all form must be accounted for*. No accounting of form can proceed, however, without a prior recognition and then revitalization, revalorization and reaffirmation of the particular content that grounds a particular text. For Ukrainian Canadians, that demands a new inflection in the range of strategies.



### *D. The Text Engaged: Counteracting Trivialization.*

Two earlier strategies—text-as-meaning and access-to-text—have been discussed as entry points into a text. The third strategy—text-engaged or speaking-through-text—requires development. This strategy seeks a relationship to a text that is reciprocal, one which brings a text into interpretation and simultaneously reconstitutes a text into a lived experience.

When a text is engaged, one inquires into its contents and into the meanings that constitute its forms—one enters into a dialogue with the text, into interpretation. Access to meaning and form leads to a re-evaluation of both in the light of existing circumstances. Formal shifts are achieved; and if the new meanings and forms respond to both the content/meaning and to the current conditions, the formal shifts reconstitute the text—they extend it and sustain it. A dialogue is achieved. The relationship is reciprocal.

Dialogue implies specific experiential/existential conditions and understandings. To be in dialogue with a text—to move text into experience and discourse—involves the following:

1. Experience of history and traditions—the past. Historical, aesthetic and political discourses are redeemed from the forgotten (from death); they are articulated into the present. The struggles and battles of history are fought again. The dead, who (following Walter Benjamin) are not safe from the enemy even in death, are redeemed in spite of all current disguised truths or imperialisms. A multiplicity of relationships with pleasure and pain, with suffering and joy, with modes and means of production, with ways of understanding, knowing, acting and being in the world are reconsidered. Relationships with the world as Nature, with the world as humanly constructed, with the world as transcendent reality, with the world as symbol are re-explored.
2. Dialogue with textual forms—the present. The present is enriched by the possibilities and actualities of the past. The present is experienced as an aesthetic experience, as art that is situated (as the present always is) in the human body. The body moves from vicarious consumption into dialogue—into a re-creation of meanings, contexts and discourses. Rather than being a body upon which contexts and discourses act, the body itself acts. It becomes the locus of possibility and action.
3. Meaning as dynamic—the future. Because dialogue is grounded on the intention to illicit response (when response ends so does dialogue), engagement with text leads to experience of the future



as an intention, as a recipient and medium for the actualization of possibility. The future becomes meaningful. Behaviour and conduct are rejected as viable ways of being. They are replaced with the will to action, the will to meaning and actualization.

How is one to enter upon this dialogue? What are the actual dynamics of this strategy? The first step lies in the willingness to listen in the text to whatever the dominant discourse seeks to trivialize, to those articulations in the text that are viewed dimly by the dominant cultural/ideological milieu. *We must listen for the intimations of deprivation<sup>7</sup> that are in, and implied by, the text.* We must listen for the suffering, for the displeasure, for the torment and for the will to persevere—for the will to resist in the face of domination.

Listening for the intimations of deprivation points toward a deprivation of some *good*, some meaning that was essential to humanity *as humanity*; some meaning that informed the “ness” in humanness.

Listening for the intimations of deprivation is the *refusal* to look at history as just the story of the victors, the winners. Listening for the intimations of deprivation points to inquiry into the experience of the losers, the subjugated, the dominated. It causes us to re-experience lived and suffered history; history as denial of one's own history.

But listening for the intimations of deprivation is not just an inquiry into the agonies of history and social experience. It is also listening for all the articulations and expressions of joy, pleasure, desire, fulfillment and celebration that form any social and human experience. It is listening for all the gladness that has also gone the way of deprivation and of which we are now deprived. To recognize what it was, even if it was celebration and joy, is to enter a consciousness of the *trenos* (lament) over what was and might have been. It is a dynamic for what might be.

Suffering and deprivation are denied by the dominant discourse. In North America they are either hidden from view or trivialized and banalized, made into cardboard figures. Consider the treatment of the Hunky-Bill issue in the mass media. Konyk's “inalienable right” to engage in business and to call himself whatever he chooses is hotly defended by a variety of columnists, analysts and pundits. But what of the testimony that reconstituted the cat-on-nine tails that rained down on the garlic-snapper's, bohunk's, hunky's, bloody Galician's back in Canada barely a generation ago? Where in all the press-generated verbiage is *that* content?<sup>8</sup> Was it that Konyk “elegantly” played into a categorization that existed as a socially constructed *a priori* in the dominant discourse articulated by the press?

Ukrainian dancers for the Queen are fine, but millions churned into mud for fertilizer following an artificially induced and orchestrated

Famine do not dance for the Queen; they are silent. Until very recently they had no place in language. Images of perogies are acceptable, images of *pysanky* and colourful costumes are magnificent, but thousands, hands tied behind their backs with chicken wire, shot in the nape of the neck with .22 calibre pistols are too grisly to contemplate. Vinnytsia, Mordovia, Kolyma—these are past history and not of *this* social formation. And what of children left to freeze and starve on the Canadian prairies because some immigration official feared the possibility of contagious diseases that did not exist? What of internment camps for the bohunks? The question is not of *one* oppressed and suffering people, but of the *generalized oppression and torment of people, any people*. We are shown Auschwitz; we are shown Buchenwald. We are not shown Kolyma; we are not shown Mordovia; we do not hear millions of Armenians; we do not see the smallpox imported on trade-blankets for native Indians. We are not told the *whole* truth.

When we listen for the intimations of deprival in the text, and when we hear the affirmations of life within it, then we have entered upon a new textual strategy. Then we have no alternative but to reject the category "ethnic." Having recognized this category for what it is—the banalization and trivialization of Otherness—and having rejected it, we embrace the human dignity that arises out of the text, in spite of the human suffering that fills it. We become attentive to what dominant discourses seek to disguise. When we articulate, we no longer articulate the particular, but rather we articulate another dimension of the universal through another set of particular forms. We redeem the text.

Deprival does not only encompass history but the scope of human experience. Not only is suffering on the agenda of things that are rejected by dominant discourses; contemplation and celebration of being and life are also removed from the sphere of relevance. Here the textual contents that engender particular festivities, rites of passage, apprehensions of the total human ecological relationship to the community and the surrounding world insist on content that resists de-humanization, reification and translation of the great and varied human potential into monotonous, repetitive functioning.

Engagement with the text leads to realization of the deprival of contemplation, of celebration, of action. Engagement reveals an inventory of human experiences that overcome the world in laughter, and experiences that contribute to wisdom when the world overcomes us and we weep. All those dimensions of human experience that have either been abdicated, lost, deprived, sold, taken or been reduced by the dominant discourse into forms filled with an ideological content are brought into sharp focus by an engaged text—by the *act*, by the sheer *will* to engage.

How is this inflected strategy to be implemented? How are we to proceed? First, we must be aware that we are quickly losing the content that has grounded the forms. We have to go beyond the excuses often offered when the question is posed: "Why do we do this or that?" This is to assume a critical posture toward all our textual articulations. Particularly, it is to take a critical posture toward all claims on articulation of content. We may bring in a new critique of culture-as-text-as-resistance.

The effect of this is to acquire distance. We distance ourselves from the claims on articulation of content, and we distance ourselves from the forms in order to re-enter a dialogue with the Ukrainian *text*. This is a posture both critical and reflective/reflexive.

To recognize that we are losing the content that grounds form is to know our own personal loss of content grounding. What is the meaning of *Sviat vechir*? What is the meaning of Ukrainian dance? The answer we arrive at immediately after the question is posed is not an answer, it is an excuse. What is the meaning of *Sviato knyzhki* (celebration of the book)—both at its inception and in the present? What is the meaning of January 22nd today? What is the meaning of the *pysanka* sign/symbol or that of *berehynia* (she-of-the-river-banks)?

Let us take the Ukrainian dance: a form by which Ukrainians as a community are often represented to themselves and to others; a form with which this social formation (Canada) states or presents itself to the world. Ukrainian dance can be thought of first as a subjective and personal experience. One can think of how one learned its lexicon and grammar, from whom one learned them and what both were like. One can see oneself for the first time in full costume, then on stage and all the emotions and experiences that that engendered. One can reflect on how learning and performing Ukrainian dance affected one's social life: the people one met and with whom one grew to feel a unity, the tours one may have taken and all the events that were part of them.

But to reflect on Ukrainian dance is also to invoke history. The development of dance in Canada might lead us to recall the conditions under which Avramenko first taught dance, his motivations and the "fruits" of his labours. Moiseyev, Virsky and Veryovka might also come to mind, and we might inquire into the impact of their performances on the new lexiographic figures and grammatical gestures they introduced into Ukrainian dance in Canada.

Such inquiry into the meaning of dance might lead into its representation on film. We might think of Dovzhenko in *Zemlia* and compare his treatment of dance to Wheeler's *Teach Me to Dance*.<sup>9</sup> Were both representations socially contextualized? What did they say about the dance and the people who danced?

In engaging the representations of dance, one might consider dance as articulated in art. Soroka's grotesque figures come to mind, Kozak's gestures of colour and form, Iakotovych's *arkan* frozen against boiling clouds at the very moment when the *arkan* resumes its motion. What do images of dancing troupes in countless photographs on posters, in pamphlets, in the press and on television share with these articulations?

Dance can also point us to the experience of sixteenth-to eighteenth-century Ukraine, the Cossack experience. We might be directed to consider that it was dance and games (*haivky*, *vesnianky* and *khorovody*) that ushered in the various seasons of the year. Such reflections could direct our attention to references in early ecclesiastical admonitions against "clapping and leaping," and how the dance nevertheless continued.

We might take under consideration Mountain High Dance Company's adaptation of Ukrainian dance to their Golden Slippers. We might even conjure the countless *kolomyiky* danced on countless occasions in countless halls on the Canadian prairies. The question might emerge: Why is the *arkan* no longer danced except on stage? Why has the stage dominated dance in Canada?

These comprise just part of the possible entry points into a dialogue with dance as a specific form, sign and symbol. But none of the referents are meaning/content; none are what dance means. They only contribute to the constitution of meaning. All contain clues. All either articulate meaning or comment on it, but they are not the whole meaning. And, of course, not all questions lead to pleasant meanings. But such is the result of listening to the intimations of deprivation.

Engagement with forms in this way implies alienation from the plenitude promised by any cultural experience. One may conclude that there is little plenitude left in the forms that comprise the text. But the very act of inquiry reinstates meaning into emptied forms. It rediscovers, recreates and recalls the meaning/content. And where only excuses grounded action, now there can be answers.

The answers, in turn, become the categories with which to begin counteracting the trivialization of text. With them, one can challenge the text's reduction to irrelevance as well as the agencies, bodies and institutions that claim to re-present reality and banalize the text to irrelevant status. The mass media, the generalized arts and the educational system all choose, construct, systematize and articulate the images and discourses by which we in our social formation come to know and interpret the world. Informed by the content *within* the text, by the meanings that shape the forms, we can better judge the actual content of the representations articulated by those agencies as to their meaning.

Ukrainians and other "ethnics" in Canada live in a social context characterized by a plurality of forms. All forms that are bona fide with/in the dominant discourse are constituted by ideological intention. The textual particularities and grounding contents of the various cultural-experiences-as-texts that sustain these "ethnicities" offer alternative perspectives on human experience and making in the world. That is why these "ethnicities" are contained, and then either tolerated or treated with indifference. That is also why each of the various texts have a contribution to make to truly generalized, universal and inclusive discourse. But this cannot be accomplished with a trivialized text, or by individuals or collectivities who are made to feel trivialized by their allegiance to a socially trivialized text.

Perhaps once Ukrainians in Canada come to know the meanings in their particular *text*, they will bring forth a more effective charge against the dominant discourse. *In place of discrimination, they might more properly formulate the new charge of trivialization.* And they might even have the courage to demand equal time within the framework. It is the trivialization that must be counteracted. That is the most important inflection in the new Ukrainian textual strategy, one with which to begin reaffirming and reconstituting meaningfully the visible symbols of Ukrainians in Canada.

### *E. Summary: Concealed Speech*

Anyone concerned to isolate the attributes of a healthy Ukrainian culture in Canada—dynamic not static—in the arts and in material culture is really concerned with a counter-culture, not ethnicity—with a cultural experience informed by something other than the immediate North American reality. It is a meta-reality,<sup>10</sup> something beyond the immediate preoccupation with mortgages and toasters. The meta-reality of Ukrainian Canadians is potentially very rich. It is full of symbols expressed through the many Ukrainian arts and crafts and experiential loci that a culture produces and which, in turn, produce the culture and in the end constitute it. To the extent, then, that serious individuals are engaged in a search for Ukrainian symbols, the search ought to be called off, because for Ukrainians there is no shortage of symbols. In fact, in a special sense their whole experience could be considered a particular kind of symbol. The trick is to open ourselves to it, to the dialogue with its symbols; to rediscover and interpret them in an active way.

Let us take any of the rituals, the Christian ones, for example, that are the product of blending Christian experience with pre-Christian world views. The rituals have certain very important common elements that are articulated through the symbols that, in turn, are part of the traditions. Such symbols as *kutia* or *uzvar* or *didukh* or *pysanka* or *kolach* or the



bread-and-salt Ukrainians give as greetings—all suggest three things. They suggest the celebration of community and family, they all resonate the continuity of human experience through the divine or the shared (the one in the many and the many in one), and they all suggest the givenness of the human environment—that not only did we not create the world in which we live, but we are responsible for it because we are part of it. And in an age that is hell bent on self-destruction, the latter form of consciousness, the fact that all of us are part of this world and responsible for it, seems like a pretty sane proposition. Even in a Christian perspective, Ukrainians are informed that this was all created, that they were put into it and given the position of vicar of this place. They are responsible for it.

The celebration and the assumption of responsibility for their environment is reflected in the way Ukrainians elevate the mundane in their seasonal rituals. They use the mundane to focus on the transcendence of the world around them.<sup>11</sup>

In an age of mass culture where the mass is dominant, where the immediacy of experience, the immediacy of the temporary, the passing nature of everything is a bias, the celebration of continuity is also a pretty sane proposition. Ukrainians set places for the dead. They do this because the dead are present, and the living, at that moment, resonate with the past. And, at that moment, many others do that too—all over the world. Through the reunion which their ritualistic symbols provide, they overcome both time and space.

But many of these symbols, one might say, are agrarian. They share little with urban experience, and the question that arises is what symbols that come from the urban environment or the industrial revolution can be identified as specifically Ukrainian? Embroidered pottery and embroidered buildings—that is part of the industrialized experience! What the urban experience gives primarily is whatever is international and is generalized. Most large cities that set the pace are international. Symbolism developed in such environments does not answer the questions put to us as a social ontology—the questions of our being or existence as a group. Current urban symbols encourage homogeneity and mass culture, a culture of production, consumption, success and isolation. This is not to deny bottled milk, tomatoes in January nor the Bauhaus or Martha Graham, Twila Tharp, Picasso, Hindemith, Nietzsche or Husserl. Nor is it necessarily to advocate communes or going back to ploughing with two curly-horned oxen or returning to oral culture or to the village dances of the eighteenth century. It is to say that any one bias is the way to blindness.<sup>12</sup> The symbols of Ukrainians provide a balance to offset the bias of the particular mass culture, whether in the Soviet Union or in North America. The symbols affect the visual with the oral, the industrial with the agrarian, the material with the spiritual. They lead into a wholeness of human



experience, but wholeness not without a struggle and reintegration not without fragmentation; and perhaps even to some extent a sense of schizophrenia, a sense of living in two worlds. Symbols provide Ukrainians with biases to offset the dominant biases of the culture in which they live, and it is not necessary to be on a particular side of any political spectrum to see that certain elements in our urban, industrialized social experience are harmful to human beings and to living things generally.

Ukrainians have produced music, dance, literature, material crafts or art either from or through conflict with their ancient symbols, as did Bartók, as did Archipenko, as did the Gothic architects and builders of the cathedrals of France, Italy and Germany. Ukrainian Canadians must respond to the present. They cannot live in the past or in a totally cut-off, isolated meta-reality. They must reach out to the immediate, dominant environment around them. But at the same time they have to have biases to offset the dominant biases, perhaps to keep themselves sane not just as a community necessarily, but as individuals as well. This buffer their symbols can provide. They need only to open themselves to them and to what they mean, and to share them in a community which can, and must speak.

## NOTES

1. For a valuable introduction to the relationship between speech and dialogue as elements of orality and cultural production, remembering and forgetting, see W. J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy* (London 1982).
2. For a structured analysis of Other as scandal to a dominant discourse, see R. Barthes, *Mythologies* (New York 1957), 151–2.
3. For a more complete discussion of the process whereby experience is transformed into a repressive sign, see D. MacCannel and J. F. MacCannel, *The Time of the Sign: A Semiotic Interpretation of Modern Culture* (Bloomington, Ind. 1982) 27–35. For another treatment of cultural production as related to sedimentation, see P. L. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City, N.Y. 1967), 67–72.
4. Things, experiences, narratives, discourses and events perceived to be rich in meanings are resonant—our response to them is multi-valent. As a psychodynamic, resonance is a convergence of meaningful recollections, reflections, images and interpretations into a configuration in response to some event or perception in the outer world.
5. For a useful introduction to resistance to and refusal of dominant discourse by means of subculture (counter-culture) in the British context, see D. Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (London 1979), 10–17, 118–36.
6. With one significant difference—the latter are all situated on “their land.” Ukrainian Canadian *text* is similar to the experience of “history-as-denial-of-one’s-own-history,” but at present the *text* is in its secondary moment: immigration and the need to adapt to it.

7. For intimations of deprival as an entry into lost maps of meaning, particularly in a postindustrial, information-rich context, see "A Platitude," in G. Grant, *Technology and Empire: Perspectives on North America* (Toronto 1969).
8. Given the media debacle that centred around Hunky Bill, perhaps those who were the "spokespeople" for the Ukrainian community might have met with more success had they heeded Nietzsche's observation that laughter is a more effective weapon than wrath.
9. A screenplay by Myrna Kostash, directed by Anne Wheeler for the National Film Board of Canada in 1978.
10. The term meta-reality is used to designate one reality among many other possible ones. For a fuller elaboration of multiple realities, see A. Schutz, "On Multiple Realities," in *Collected Papers*, vol 1, edited by M. Natanson, 3rd ed. (The Hague 1971).
11. For a full development of transcendence as a category, see A. Schutz, "Symbol, Reality and Society," in *ibid*.
12. For an important inquiry into history and society as informed by biases grounded in communications media, see H. A. Innis, *Bias of Communications* (Toronto 1951) and *Empire and Communications* (Toronto 1972).

## **The Search for Symbols: Some Observations**

**Jars Balan**

Sex symbols, status symbols, symbols of authority, symbols of success—our environment is cluttered with symbols competing to influence our needs, desires and even dreams.

As these symbols encompass both the spiritual and secular dimensions, no aspect of human experience can escape their omnipresent reality. However, some signs figure more prominently than others. The Cross, the swastika, the dollar sign and the Star of David are among the small handful that are immediately recognizable to most in the Western world. They do not, of course, inspire the same feelings in all people, but few can completely ignore them.

Equally omnipresent are symbols that identify national and ideological groupings. Flags and anthems have the power to evoke strong feelings of loyalty (often uncritical) in the hearts of millions of people. The maple leaf and the beaver are perhaps the best known of Canadian emblems, but the parliamentary mace—symbolizing the violence and force upon which the authority of even “democratic” states ultimately rests—is another more sinister example from our native heraldry. And then there are the colours and stylized designs of the three major political parties, which inundate us whenever we enact that ritual of “going to the polls.” Especially familiar are the corporate logos used to identify consumer products, service enterprises and private property. That some companies are willing to spend large sums of money for a design to represent them in the market place indicates just how much importance is attached to projecting the right image.

But many symbols in our environment are not as obvious or as widely recognized. The symbols in poetry and the symbolic gestures in religion are only understood by the initiated. Other symbols are less apparent because we do not consciously think of them as having a metaphysical dimension. Individuals, for instance, can become larger-than-life figures of emulation or villification. Whereas Terry Fox represents hope and courage in the struggle against cancer, Adolf Hitler (and his most recent incarnation, General Khadafy) is instantly recognized as standing for the forces of evil. But there are even more striking examples of commonplace symbols that we seldom think of as having emblematic value.

Street signs, mathematical signs and the signs of the zodiac all express concepts and ideas one step removed from reality. Similarly, paper currency and coins represent in concrete form labour power and value. Indeed, words—whether written or spoken—are merely symbolic abstractions of objects and ideas. When one writes or speaks the word “door,” it cannot be opened, shut or festooned with a wreath, yet everyone with the gift of language can perceive the essence of “dooriness.”

Regardless of the many forms that symbols take, all have certain qualities in common. Essentially, they are meaningful *gestalts* that summarize, simplify, stylize and communicate complex and often elusive ideas. This synthetic ability is what gives symbols almost talismanic power, and why civilizations have used them effectively to inspire and manipulate groups of people.

The Greek origins of the word “symbol” provide some insights into its meaning. It is a derivative of *symballein*, “to put together,” and the related noun “symbolon,” meaning “mark,” “token” or “sign.” The latter (initially used to describe the half-coin carried away by each of two parties to an agreement) referred to a joining or combining and to something so joined as *standing for* or *representing* the entire complex. This translates into the more manageable formula, “a symbol is always greater than the sum of its parts.”

Symbols have tremendous unifying power and the ability to impress themselves, through repeated use, on every level of popular consciousness. As symbols can liberate or oppress individuals (depending on the values they represent and the ideologies that use them), they should be used with caution as paradigms of enlightenment, rather than as objects of fear or mystification.

Ukrainians, like other peoples, have a stock of distinctly identifiable symbols. Bread-and-salt, the *didukh*, *soniashnyk*, a toast with *horilka*—all carry symbolic meanings understood by anyone with a trace of Ukrainian consciousness. Ukrainians also have a pantheon of representative heroes who embody the essence of Ukrainian national character, with Taras Shevchenko, Ivan Franko and Lesia Ukrainka the most obvious examples

of personality symbols. But because Ukraine's history has been one of national oppression and exile, the symbolic vocabulary of Ukrainians is schizophrenically split into different "dialects," including Soviet Ukrainian, émigré nationalist Ukrainian and Ukrainian Canadian. A fourth category, consisting of the Ukrainian symbols mentioned above, may be described as the ethnographic dialect of Ukrainians, the common language they all speak because it is politically neutral.

In the Soviet Ukrainian group are the hammer-and-sickle, the red-and-blue flag and the self-sacrificing hero-worker romantically portrayed in Soviet literature and art. Among émigré nationalist equivalents are the *tryzub*, the blue-and-yellow flag and the partisans of yore marching to battle against Bolshevism. And in the emerging Ukrainian Canadian category are such symbols as the mounted *pysanka*, the embroidered Canadian flag and the long-suffering pioneer clearing the prairie wilderness. Initially, Ukrainian symbols in Canada were simply imported wholesale from Ukraine. Thus, in common with the people of Ukraine are such mutually accessible folkloric symbols as *barvinok*, the Cossack *bulava*, the *bandura* and black bread. At the same time, Ukrainian symbols in Canada mirror the ideological split between the émigré Christian nationalist camp and the Soviet atheist socialist camp. The 'sign language' Ukrainians speak therefore reflects their fractured ethnic identity. But a more fundamental distinction has to be made concerning the specific function of particular symbols. For essentially, symbols serve either to *unite* or *represent* a body of people, depending on one's point of view.

It is interesting to note that many symbols of the first, internal type are becoming increasingly irrelevant for a growing number of Ukrainian Canadians. Indeed, a lot appear to be headed for extinction. In particular, ideological symbols such as the blue-and-yellow flag, the anthem "Ukraine is not dead" and ikons of Petliura, Bandera and other heroes in nationalist halls are becoming as meaningless to children of postwar displaced persons as the hammer-and-sickle is to cynical young people in the pro-Soviet camp. Even the *tryzub*, the ancient symbol of Kievan Rus', seems to have lost its potency, though it is still too early to predict exactly which signs will be discarded by the next generation. Some will, of course, lament the passing of such venerable expressions of Ukrainian political culture, but their demise is not entirely unwelcome in instances where they have begun to inhibit the flow of fresh ideas. A clean slate and a new vocabulary of signs is needed that is meaningful to second-, third-, fourth- and fifth-generation Ukrainians in Canada.

While some symbols may be starting to wane, others are only beginning to establish a presence. In the midst of such enduring trade marks as the embroidered towel, the toast with vodka and the ritual meal at Christmas

(eaten now by pagans, agnostics, atheists and Christians alike) is the recent elevation of the late painter William Kurelek to the status of a major success symbol. Others who have gone the first step toward similar recognition are Juliette, Leo Mol, Mike Bossy, Luba Goy, Roy Romanow, Joan Karasevich and Myrna Kostash. One recognizes immediately the important symbolic role such people play when one hears it said, usually in a loud whisper, that someone is "*nash*" or "*ours*." In a parallel way the sheepskin coat has become emblematic of the Ukrainian pioneer, thanks to Clifford Sifton's remark, Vera Lysenko's book, photographs in the public archives and Peter Shostak's well-known painting.

These symbols may eventually win wider recognition in mainstream Canadian society, and one can easily identify those that have already achieved this status by asking non-Ukrainian friends which of the following comes to mind when the word "Ukrainian" is heard:

1. borshch, *kovbasa*, perogies (*pyrohy*), *holubtsi*, garlic, "*Na zdorovia!*" or "*Dai Bozhe!*";
2. William Kurelek, George Ryga, Terry Sawchuk, the "Uke" line, Michael Starr, Ted Woloshyn or Mickey and Bunny;
3. the *baba* of *All of Baba's Children*, *Baba's Cookbook* and Baba's Village restaurant;
4. Shumka Dancers, embroidered blouses, homebrew whiskey, thatched-roof houses, Ukrainian Easter eggs, "onion-domed churches on the Canadian prairies."

The last two symbols probably have at this moment the widest recognition in Canada, and are especially interesting because they reveal the irony that sometimes characterizes the process of symbolization. Typically, for most "painters" of today's *pysanky*, the symbols on the egg have lost all spiritual meaning at exactly the same time that the egg itself has attained symbolic stature in the context of Canadian culture. Similarly, the distinct onion domes of Ukrainian Byzantine churches are beginning to deteriorate just when they have become as familiar a part of the prairie landscape as grain elevators, Red River carts, John Deere tractors and W. O. Mitchell.

Clearly, the process by which something or someone becomes a symbol is complicated and fraught with peril. To begin with, representational symbols are often foisted upon the Ukrainian community by the perceptions that outsiders have of Ukrainians. The latter are therefore to some extent responsible for the Frankensteins they create. The Vegreville Easter egg is a good example of this "boomerang" effect, for its existence must largely be attributed to the zealous promotion of the art by Ukrainians. Fortunately, most symbols do not last forever and must constantly be reinterpreted in order to survive. A symbol that cannot retain



its meaning in a changing world becomes a brittle and oppressive relic, and ultimately must be shed like an old skin or at least discarded in a museum.

Finally, it is important to recognize that symbols are both appropriated and consciously created, and that no group is simply a passive inheritor of its vocabulary of signs. Just as graphic artists can create logos for corporations and political movements can champion their martyrs in history, so, too, the Ukrainian Canadian community can consciously develop a system of identifying and unifying symbols. This, of course, is never easy, as competition can be expected from within as well as without. But whoever is successful in this struggle—between populists and elitists, conservatives and socialists, Christians and secular humanists—will surely gain significantly in the larger battle for the leadership of the Ukrainian Canadian community.

Speaking personally, I intend to do all that is possible to promote coherent and effective Ukrainian Canadian symbols drawn from the rich radical tradition of Ukrainian populism. For I believe that in that legacy lies the Ukrainian hope for survival, if not salvation. To those who think otherwise, I can only say, "See you at the *yarmarok* or at the barricades," where such matters are usually ultimately decided.



Fig. 34 *Display of Ukrainian Canadian Success Symbols*, Ukrainian Heritage Museum of Canada, Casa Loma, Toronto.

Fig. 34. Shown (l. to r.) are John Yaremko (Ontario cabinet minister), Paul Yuzyk (senator), William Kurelek (painter), Juliette (née Sysak, singer), Wasyl Eleniak (one of the first two pioneer settlers), Roxolana Roslak (singer), Walt Tkaczuk (hockey player), Ed Evanko (singer), Terry Evenshen (football player).



Fig. 35. The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, founded in July 1976, is the only state-supported Ukrainian research institute in the Western world. *Visible Symbols* is its thirtieth publication.

## Discussion

*Radoslav Zuk:* The papers are all very disturbing. They are excellent and very objective, and their very objectivity indicates where the Ukrainian community, as expressed through symbols, stands. Symbols represent something—an attitude, a sense of existence. As a Christian, I believe we live in the world to earn eternity. As a member of the human race, I believe also that we live to share in and contribute to the experiences of the rest of the world. We do so as persons who grow out of specific communities—a nation, a city, a village, an identifiable group. The cultural history of the world consists of contributions that build on what existed before. A contribution is something new. But from the papers one could conclude that the Ukrainian community and even Ukrainian individuals have contributed very little to the culture of Canada. In my paper I stressed urban culture because I think that historically urban cultures have contributed most to general cultural development.

What, then, is the identity question? Is it just a desperate attempt to preserve something, or is there some hope of growing, of making a positive contribution? Even in Kurelek's case, what in his work is symbolized as a Ukrainian contribution to world or Canadian culture? Professor Isajiw has hinted that it is in the works of art, philosophy or science that the experience of a group is symbolized and communicated. But the content and the form of that communication has to speak to the rest of the world if it is to be fully valuable. How can one expect critics and reviewers to see Ukrainians other than as peasants who dance and jump around, if



Ukrainians themselves do not put their folk culture in proper perspective—for purposes of cultural awareness and not as an end in itself.

I do not think that context, form and meaning can be separated in the drastic way that has been suggested. In all three—form, context and meaning—there must be the Ukrainian side and that of the rest of the world—otherwise Ukrainians will speak only to themselves. It is very significant that what is so prominent in the concept of Ukrainian “culture”—food and *pysanka*—are very private objects, and that there are no great Ukrainian restaurants in Canada. But one *can* express the Ukrainian essence, which is abstract and cannot be codified in an easily perceivable symbol, in any medium having to do with the existential aspects of life. Therefore that expression must incorporate urban culture; otherwise we have a real split. It might help to consider the following: When one speaks of German culture, of English culture, of French culture, what comes to mind? What are the symbols of these cultures that are recognized throughout the world?

*Ivan Kowaliw:* To continue where Professor Zuk left off, let us refer to Professor Isajiw’s visible and invisible symbols, for we have actually been doing something with the onion he introduced. Professor Isajiw, no doubt, is aware that the onion metaphor comes from Pierre Emmanuel, the French poet and critic, who declared that “We peel the onion to find the onion.” So far, in the first part of this conference, the onion was untouched, in the second part it was peeled a little, in the third we tried to sneak into it without peeling it, in the fourth we danced with it and in the fifth we are back where we began. In the sixth, it will probably be crushed completely, because we have no objective criteria for dealing with Professor Isajiw’s invisible or internal values. Yet they are the most important, and the next conference should undoubtedly focus on them. There are many aestheticians in German, French, American and English literature and philosophy like Ernst Cassirer, Susanne Langer, Gaston Bachelard, George Poulet, Pierre Richard and even Northrop Frye in Canada, who can help us if we cared to pay attention.

*Robert Klymasz:* To carry the onion metaphor a bit farther, we could also note that as one peels an onion one tends to weep!

*Lydia Palij:* When considering symbols, one should also consider the social structure. Among non-Ukrainian Canadians, there are people who admire hockey players and folk singers, but there are also the intellectually inclined whose heroes are poets, scientists and artists. Perhaps we should divide our analysis horizontally; perhaps there really are two levels of Ukrainian symbols. In any case, what has been said is frightening. If our

heroes today are really hockey players, then something is dreadfully wrong. Culture, as Professor Zuk has indicated, is something different than peasant life. The Germans would not point to Tyrolean dancing or wiener schnitzel as their culture. When you talk about German culture you talk about Beethoven, you talk about Goethe. (Applause)

*Petro Davedovkhitva:* Food is an important part of culture, and it is time that the complexities of Ukrainian cuisine were recognized. Ukrainians are known for *varenyky*, *kovbasa* and *holubtsi*, but there is another Ukrainian cuisine: Steak Tartare Taras Bulba, which has been stolen from Ukrainians, and Chicken Kiev. There is also an extensive use of such things as caviar about which most are not aware. It is time that Ukrainians themselves become aware of their cuisine. It is time that people familiarized themselves with works like Savella Stechishin's cookbook. There are several Ukrainian chefs in Canada who are highly acclaimed. Ihor Zukor is the head of the culinary arts department at Humber. He was president of the Canadian Olympic Culinary Association that took Canada's team to Germany two years ago.

*Zenon Pohorecky:* That Ukrainian contributions to the culture of the world are not better known in Canada is the fault of our American neighbours. In my field, cultural anthropology, almost all the textbooks come from the United States and deal first with American technology, then with technology around the world and near the end, in a sort of postscript, are art, music and language, which must be included. That kind of bias has done much harm to all cultures. Whoever controls technology and the mass media affects the identity question. In Canada our big neighbour to the south greatly influences and confuses the identity of everyone and everything. Even within its own boundaries, a lot of Americans have been looking to their identity and roots.

*Jars Balan:* What must be remembered is that most world cultures are like national languages. If a national language is just a dialect with an army behind it, a world culture is just a culture with an empire to disseminate it. Ukrainians have nothing to be ashamed of in the world arena. It is just a kind of class mentality that makes certain people feel inferior about Ukrainian culture.

*Participant:* If Ukrainian symbols in Canada are so easily identifiable, so unique, so clear and so visible, why then does the Canadian public and the world generally continue to identify Ukrainians as Russians? For Canadians generally, Ukrainian symbols still appear to be a Slavic blur.

*Jars Balan:* The problem of confusing Ukrainians with Russians is rooted in Ukraine, not Canada. Because Ukraine is not free and Moscow deliberately confuses Ukrainian and Russian culture, the task in Canada is very much more difficult. While Ukrainian Canadians have a role to play, they will be unable to play it fully until Ukraine breaks with Russian culture and starts reclaiming all those Ukrainians that the Russians have claimed for themselves—Bortniansky, the artist Malavich and legions of others.

*Andrij Makuch:* Both Jars Balan and Roman Onufrijchuk hinted at new elements in the Ukrainian Canadian cosmology. What do you see emerging in the next five or ten years?

*Jars Balan:* One area in which people will emerge as new Ukrainian symbols in Canada is the media, where historically Ukrainians have not been active, except at the lower levels. There is virtually a small, upwardly mobile, partisan Ukrainian army in various media that will start surfacing in the next five years. Another area is arts and literature. There is a very good reason why the great Ukrainian Canadian novel has not yet been written. For a long time doctors and lawyers, rather than artists, were considered to be the more important, and people like Kurelek and George Ryga (and one could name other artists who were actively discouraged by their parents) have had to struggle to be themselves. Today we are on the verge of some breakthroughs in the realm of the arts and literature.

*Roman Onufrijchuk:* It would be wrong to suggest that there is nothing in the urban experience that is worthwhile. But what is also abundantly clear is that technology and the urban experience can often be very dehumanizing and very alienating. And while agricultural cycles and symbols are no panacea, they are a bias to offset the bias of the urban, postindustrial experience. Technology does not have to be inhuman. It is like iron: one can make swords and one can make ploughshares, but the awareness of bias must come first.

As for hockey players being symbols, it seems that we have here a conflict between the *pan* and the *khlop*. We cannot legislate nor force symbols onto people. We are in a situation where the urban experience with its mass media dominates everything. Ukrainian Canadians have no access to it to present a different bias. In Edmonton recently the media hardly noticed the opera staged by a Ukrainian musical luminary, unknown outside the Ukrainian community. Mass communication is a function of empire, and ours is Anglo-American and monolithic. New symbolic images (and Ukrainian future identity), as Jars Balan has pointed out, will probably come from the media, and Ukrainians will have

to make their presence felt. It will be impossible, however, to legislate an entire construct of culture and symbol, for the media is always likely to be the main enemy. It is in the community therefore that symbols will have to be reaffirmed. There, with the Ukrainian *text* engaged, the symbols will have to be challenged, and through dialogue and conflict with them and through them the creation of culture will continue. With a bias against the bias under which we live, we can continue to create and contribute to the world. We need to do so, for we have a great deal to offer.

*Wsevolod Isajiw:* The crying as we peel this Ukrainian onion is a very good sign. First, we must understand that culture derives from the experiences of people from all walks of life, hockey players as well as professional artists. It would be sad indeed if there were only professional artists. If one views culture in the sociological or anthropological sense as encompassing all aspects of life in society, there is room for all types of symbols representing all sectors of society.

Secondly, from that point of view, the type of symbols generated will depend on the experience of the people who do the symbolizing. People who are urban at a certain level will create relevant symbols that reflect their experience. As several practising artists have indicated, honesty and integrity are all-important to art, and hence the symbol produced has to be relevant to one's experience; otherwise, it is imposed or artificial.

Thirdly, in my paper the class factor is present and it is important. The distinction between the culture of the hockey player and the culture of the professional artist has been conceptualized by such anthropologists as Robert Redfield as a distinction between the "little" and the "great" traditions, with the little tradition that of the unreflective many and the great tradition that of the reflective few. Sociologically, one can say that the "great" tradition is the culture of the elite, and the "little" tradition that of the peasants and the lower classes. Unfortunately, the distinction between the two traditions has often been judged to be one of "high" and "low" culture, implying superiority and inferiority. And, of course, one should always have more "high" culture than "low."

Such conclusions do not approach the issue; they dismiss it. The issue is much more complex for several reasons. First, one should not automatically assume that the products of the elite, that is, their culture, are necessarily universal and therefore better or truer than the culture of the "folk." In fact, such value judgments as better or worse, truer or more false, universal or particular when used to analyze and understand the social and cultural world tend to mislead precisely because they are value judgments. The moment one value-judges something one forestalls understanding it. All too often what is value-judged as high or true or good for everybody means no more than that it is true or good for those who so

define it, and in the case of elites, because the people who have power so deem it. Elites are people of power and influence, and truth or value are all too often "proven" by power.

The issue is also complex because distinctions made easily in theory are not necessarily so clear-cut in practice. Artists who produce the "great" tradition, that is, the painters, composers, writers, etc., may not necessarily sever themselves from the "little" tradition, but do the opposite. From new research, it is becoming clear that Bach, Mozart and Beethoven, for example, who unquestionably wrote great music, also used folk music rather generously to create their compositions. This is especially true for Bach. Thus creativity is not necessarily an attempt to remove oneself as far as possible from folk traditions, but may be a process of reflecting upon them, selecting aspects of them and developing or transforming them.

Let us return to the distinction between primary and secondary symbols. Secondary symbols are the reflective symbols, the result of reflecting upon the primary symbols. And that is what great artists (if you want to use that term) do; they reflect upon primary symbolism and produce a piece of secondary symbolism that incorporates the genuineness of the commentary on life that is included in the primary symbolism.

Finally, there are people who deliberately apply a layer of so-called great culture to the elements or symbols of folk culture, simply to twist the latter and make it look more professional. A case in point is some of the early discussion on dance where some Soviet Ukrainian interpretation or choreography was criticized for vitiating the original symbol. In observing this, it has bothered me to see the meaning of the original dance symbolism destroyed by artificially injecting ballet, for example. To twist things around through such superimposition just to make something look fancy is, in fact, an abuse of classical culture. The artist who would develop something bigger than the original primary symbol must first study the primary symbol. One has first to decipher the cryptology of the primary symbol—the meaning of good and bad included in the symbol and why it is there. One does not use the symbol itself but the precise meaning of the symbol to develop something new. And this is not an easy twist.

*Ivan Kowaliw:* In commenting upon what has just been said, let us begin with William Barrett, who complains about how out-of-date North America has been compared to Europe. For instance, when Kant died in 1804, the Kantians appeared four years later. It was just the same with Hegel and later with Nietzsche, and the latter's *Will to Power* was actually accomplished forty years after his death, that is, during the Second World War. In our time there have been new psychological and (particularly) philosophical developments, especially in what is called phenomenology. Many North American professors are aware of this, but



here too they have not been up-to-date. For example, Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* (Being and Time) was translated and published in the United States in 1962, approximately thirty-five years after it was published in German. It is the same with Jaspers' and Husserl's works. Thus idealism, and I am on the side of idealism philosophically and aesthetically, is completely out of public reach, even for students. Only now are some professors at the University of Toronto beginning to show an interest in the field.

Musicians must deal with certain questions. Yet it is very hard to discuss Beethoven with an audience in which only two or three know anything about music. One cannot discuss music seriously with people who do not play their instruments perfectly and who do not know aesthetics or composition. Yet music is humanity's highest form of art. Schopenhauer, one of the greatest idealists and pessimists, said that music is the thing in itself, the *ding an sich*, and the rest is only shadows, *nur schatten*. Beethoven may have been a product of his times, but he knew very well what was in the *luft* (air), as the Germans say, and he was on the side of disinterested aesthetics. The same was true of Schubert and the whole school of romantics. They did not eat potatoes; they composed music and they hungered. And it has been so with all great musicians. If out of 1,500 musicians, only one hundred were real geniuses, the ten greatest were held in complete contempt by society. Remember that Mozart died a pauper and that there was no money to bury him. Schubert's situation was similar. Yet today hundreds of orchestras in the world and thousands of people are employed to play compositions that they created without money. In such situations, where is your sociology, where is your behaviourism?

Today the greatest possibilities in the ideal sense are on the side of the poet. He is that man who creates reality, reality with a great R. Yet how many poets have been in accord with society? Take Joyce who fled England, take Ezra Pound who fled the United States, take the many poets who fled Ukraine, take all the French poets of the symbolic movement. Here again, where is your sociology, where is your behaviourism?

Art bases everything on the ideal against which life is contrasted. So the artist suffers and leaves his works, which are then used by society, by common men, by the masses.

*Lydia Palij:* Quite possibly, my last remarks were misunderstood. To have only high culture in a society is impossible. High and low culture are inevitable, with the latter much more important because it is the base on which high culture is built. But let us *have* high culture. From what has been said, Ukrainian Canadians seem to value only low culture. If that is so, throwing up one's hands is not good enough. Some resolution is needed, and it will only come from those who have the courage to speak.



*Roman Petryshyn:* Professor Isajiw spoke about ethnicity as a social-psychological process that is effective because it attempts to transcend the limits of one's own life or to set patterns that crystallize into a life style that goes beyond any one single living human being. This suggests that ethnicity is essentially symbolism. What seems to be missing from this kind of analysis is the problem of change. Since others have referred to the changing character of Ukrainian Canadian symbols, an explanation is needed for the change that occurs in symbols. We need to know not simply that it occurs and falls into various types, but why it occurs, what is its function. Food, for example, may have the many tactile, visual and symbolic elements described, but it also fills hungry stomachs. One has therefore to examine what function symbols fulfill in contemporary life and what it is about that contemporary life that causes change.

*Radoslav Zuk:* In his opera *Die Meistersinger*, Richard Wagner portrays a young knight who enters a singing contest run by "trade unions." Initially, his candidacy is challenged because he is a nobleman and the contest is only for tradesmen. He fails the contest because, as a nobleman, he does not know the rules and is too free in his interpretation. In the end he proves his worth in a public contest, encouraged by a shoemaker (a master craftsman), who is also recognized as a master singer. Awarded the prize, the knight rejects it, declaring that the old do not understand the young. This leads the shoemaker, in the climactic aria, to scold the young man for criticizing the old masters, because one who honours them will summon up good spirits. It may illustrate what Professor Isajiw was saying. We need great art that speaks universally of the people and *Die Meistersinger* is just that. But it is also German through and through: in its language, musical characteristics and subject matter. Great art must portray and communicate all cultural situations. The opera in question does not deal with the elite. Its heroes are the common people. While master craftsmen did not belong to the lowest strata of society, they also were not the nobility. Yet they not only could be the subject matter for excellence in art, but themselves aspire to artistic excellence.

Excellence must also characterize all our efforts, and it is not wise to divide art into that which is high and low. That was not the intention. Excellence can exist at all levels. Human beings, gifted at birth and assisted by their environment, are capable of achieving the highest intellectual and spiritual awareness. But the environment is crucially important. An environment that does not encourage people to aspire to greater things than those that are immediately available discourages true human development. And we ought to be most disturbed by what we have been hearing. If we confine our concept of culture to symbols that are visible, and symbols which, moreover, do not necessarily represent the total

Ukrainian environment or reality, then we will stifle any possible future development of Ukrainian life in Canada.

*Wsevolod Isajiw:* One source of the misunderstanding before us is the use of two different frames of references in the discussion. One frame—the frame of the sociologist—attempts to study and assess culture and symbol-making in terms of what is. Its purpose is to describe why something happens and the way it happens. Its purpose is not to say what the artists, the creators of symbols, ought to do when they create. For a number of respondents, however, the frame of reference has been to try to tell artists what they ought to be doing because Ukrainians in Canada have certain needs as a group. Theirs has been a kind of cultural politics—an aspect of cultural ideology as to what should be happening. Both frameworks are, of course, valid, but when one jumps back and forth, misunderstandings arise.

As a sociologist, I have been concerned to find out what is retained as distinctive Ukrainian symbolism (especially by the third generation) and especially whether, and how, uniqueness as Ukrainian Canadians in any generation enters into symbol-making. I have not said that what enters should or should not enter, but only that it does so enter. I am not deterministic either, and I would not maintain that it must enter every time. That is an empirical question, something which can be studied from cultural creator to cultural creator to determine the extent to which ethnicity is evident in what is produced. In moving to the other framework, I certainly agree that Ukrainians greatly need to develop “high” culture, or whatever one calls it, but what I want to know is what are the dynamics of somebody producing a “high” culture that contains distinct ethnic characteristics. And we are back to my original framework.

Some artists might try to create universal culture by extinguishing all traces of their ethnic background to get away from any possible folk motif. There are painters who do so consciously and deliberately. They do so according to a personal ideology of “I have to be like everybody else.” But what are they contributing if they are like everybody else? Perhaps they are selling their art and making a living. That is well and good, but are they contributing anything original? They are, after all, doing something that somebody else has already done, even when modified. What is their claim to uniqueness? They can, of course, establish a claim that is not ethnic. But they certainly are not going to establish it by merely saying that to create high culture or real or universal art, one has to extinguish from one’s background any trace of ethnic uniqueness. One has to be open about that. One has to be honest with oneself and produce art that somehow answers one’s own personal needs, and chances are that some (or even many) of the needs may be ethnic.

The process here is not simple. It is not one where just any ethnic elements are used or put together wholesale. It is a much more reflective process. A good artist has to decipher all of a symbol's possible meanings. An artist using the *bezkoniecznyk* from a *pysanka*—and the *pysanka* may still be the most unique Ukrainian symbol—must consider what that *bezkoniecznyk* means, what it connotes. It is necessary to go back historically, to try to link it and interpret it. Once its nature and meaning are clear, the artist may wish to come up with a different symbol, a symbol which may be consonant with the latest techniques in a profession or one corresponding to anybody's needs, but the meaning in the original of the particular statement about life must always be retained. Only through a deep, reflective process can one produce good art. And one does not necessarily have to reach out to one's ethnic symbols. But if one has the need to do so, one certainly should, and, upon reflection, create.

Turning to the individual creator and his society, and to the oblique reference to sociology, an individual may be a good creator even if society rejects him, or on account of it. That is very possible. But history does not really happen to individuals; others are always involved. History produces shared experiences, and even the artist is not alone but in some way part of the community. The fact that the community may reject him may be a very important part of his relationship to it, which may, in fact, enter into his art and creativity. Rejected by the community and feeling alone, an artist may be stimulated to think about the community and to interpret it. One could go into a sociology of this process of rejection, but this is not the place for that.

Finally, food is certainly there to fill the stomach, but it is amazing how very careful people can be in preparing it, even when they are starving. In India, for example, even the poorest will not touch the meat of cows because it is holy and sacred. They would rather starve than do that. Food does not fill the stomach directly; it always works through symbols.

*Jars Balan:* There is no such thing as a neutral definition of culture. Every definition is politically charged. My own approach is very much shaped by an attempt to define culture from a materialistic perspective. *Cultural Materialism* by Marvin Harris, a scholar at Columbia University, has been very important in influencing my understanding of culture. Essentially, Harris explains the evolution of culture in terms of economics, demographics, ecology and power relationships in society. High or elitist notions of culture are disturbing to me because I personally have no interest in creating a Ukrainian Canadian culture that will legitimize the aspirations of an emerging elite of Ukrainian professionals who want to impress their German and French friends by putting on a record by a Ukrainian Mozart. I am not really interested in producing *that* kind of

culture. Along with Roman Onufrijchuk, I see Ukrainian and all other folk cultures as potential counter-cultures, agents of resistance (even of subversion) within the mass culture or the current ruling definitions of culture. The fact that folk culture is so much more participant-oriented makes it my candidate, and it is its values that I am interested in advancing and championing in any new definition of Ukrainian culture in Canada.

*Roman Onufrijchuk:* I do not see counter-cultures subverting mass culture. My word was bias, and my major concern with agrarian symbology as a starting point for identity is that it provides an alternative bias to dominate cultural patterns. The bias of our civilization tends to be the eye. It is linear. It does not encourage participation, as Jars Balan has just indicated. The agricultural, preliterate, non-industrial or peasant culture (if that word does not cause too much of a rise!) offers values which are very much a part of that Ukrainian cultural experience which many want for their children. They strive for that in the *ridni shkoly*: "Shchob spivaly, shchob chytaly, shchob povidaly, shchob znaly movu" (So that they might sing, read, tell, know the language). These are all oral genres, not necessarily exclusively visual and literate ones.

I certainly do not mean to disparage the importance of world culture. However, Harold Adams Innis, one of the most important thinkers in communications, points to communications patterns and empires as having biases that become dominant. People in the sixties were looking for alternatives. They were creating communes, growing their hair long, being revolutionaries—all forms sought inorganically because they did not exist within culture. The forms had to be *invented*. What I am suggesting is that within the Ukrainian experience the forms already exist. I am not suggesting that Ukrainians revert to them, but just that they be aware of them as a point of origin that provides a healthy balance, a harmony between the forms of Ukrainian culture and mainstream North American or Western industrial culture. Nor am I suggesting, any more than Professor Isajiw did, that creativity begin with Ukrainian culture. I think a great many artists with Ukrainian names will reject that. Bohdan Achtemichuk, for example, has indicated that he does not want the community weighing him down. He prefers to create in the international mode. That is fine. And if there is anything that Ukrainian artists can contribute to mass culture, it is precisely to state that there is more than one bias available to artists generally. There are alternatives to perceiving the world, alternatives to articulating what we see in the world, alternatives to cultural development and growth.

There is a beautiful church near Winnipeg (on the way to Beausejour), which, to me, is distinctly Ukrainian. I cannot tell you why in architectural

terms, but I see it as a Ukrainian church. There is a *domivka* for Plast in the same city that is not even Bauhaus. It is a box, a *buda*. It does not articulate anything Ukrainian. It has no Ukrainian essence. Nor do I think we should thatch the roof to make it Ukrainian. But there are a multitude of symbols, artistic values and forms that could have been used (as in Professor Zuk's own work) that would have given something universal, eternal (something everyone could comprehend), and yet also contained something that reflected a distinct Ukrainian bias. I think Professor Zuk himself comes to his work with a bias. I think all Ukrainians come with particular biases to the creative process, if they feel themselves to be Ukrainian. Is the modern art in Ukraine itself distinctly Ukrainian? Why? What is Ukrainian about it? It is an alternative bias. Let us not go back to the village (*do sela*): "Ia ne khochu pratsiuvaty shchoby ia musiv umerty na zemli" (I do not want to work so that I might die on the land). No thank you. But I think we have to have the alternative bias to balance our experience in the here and now in this country.

*Zenon Pohorecky*: It has been about thirty years since I got my first master's in philosophy and the fine arts, and I love to hear about Kant. But I also love Durkheim, who distinguished between the sacred and profane, declaring the distinction basically social, not theological. As for the ideal and the real—the should and the what is—we should be reporting on the what is, leaving the should to others in terms of what *they* want.

Certainly, great men have been rejected by their own societies. William Kurelek was rejected by Ukrainians. Non-Ukrainians bought 80 per cent of his work; the rest disappeared after he made it with non-Ukrainians. He himself told me that when he first began painting, a Ukrainian women's organization asked him to paint something its members could buy. He failed because all the Ukrainian women he painted looked ugly. To the women, that was an important criterion; yet today his work is a big symbol regardless of how he portrayed women.

In discussing great modern artists, one thinks of Picasso, the international man, a Spaniard stealing African motifs in Paris! His Spanish ethnicity is very evident, and he died a multi-millionaire, not a pauper. Gauguin, on the other hand, did not care about money. He went to Tahiti, but everything he painted resembled French art. Artists cannot escape their ethnic feelings even if they want to.

The reference to high and low cultures suggests snobs and slobs, and one must choose. Yet most are neither; most are in the middle, which does not necessarily suggest mediocrity. In staging something or putting something into a gallery, one must meet the criteria of the world market place, or whoever or whatever defines standards and quality. But to sing a lullaby



to one's child is hardly to compete professionally. The two are so different that any reference to what is high and low is plain stupid. All one does is define enemies that do not exist.

Of course, excellence is needed. Ukrainians need it because they are now heavy into multiculturalism. I have a lot of friends who love Ukrainians. They love Ukrainian food, dancing and many other things. They want to participate in Ukrainian activities, but they want advice. Many public events staged by Ukrainians are awful. So, in staging, it would be nice to have standards, at least to assist our non-Ukrainian friends to enjoy Ukrainian culture.

*Sophia Matiasz:* Could Professor Pohorecky elaborate on his reference to women coming back to the kitchen?

*Zenon Pohorecky:* The reference was symbolic. Traditionally, the kitchen symbolizes the hearth, the home, good food and all that is most meaningful. With women's liberation, the symbol may signify the low status of women as drudges. I did not mean it that way. Women are not to be driven back to any sweatshops. However, in the home you can really educate children. People visit and there is access to all kinds of things which they really like, especially the food. In the home nothing is for sale. Things are given away to enrich others without impoverishing oneself. Things of the home—"the kitchen"—are not tagged with a price, and I think that is very important.





**PART VI**

**THE POLITICS OF UKRAINIAN  
CULTURE IN CANADA**



## Cultural Exchanges with Soviet Ukraine

Bohdan Krawchenko

This paper is concerned with an issue that was once much more controversial than it is today. It will examine how cultural exchanges with Ukraine can be improved. The exchanges, which began after Stalin's death in 1953, became serious only in the 1960s, with the rise of the dissident movement or an opposition in Ukraine. Cultural exchanges conducted in earnest and the rise of oppositional currents in Ukraine are therefore related. In cultural exchanges, it is well to remember that there are two Ukraines—the official and the unofficial Ukraine—and the profound exchange that occurs with the latter is the most interesting and perhaps even the more important of the two.

Since the early 1970s the exchange with unofficial Ukraine has been extremely important in literature and poetry, less so in the visual arts and even less still in music. In music it would have been much greater had the Ukrainian dissident milieu produced the Galichs and the Bulat Okudzhavas of the Russian opposition—the *chansonnières* and the songs so vital to any protest movement. Because the development of culture in Soviet Ukraine is carefully controlled, only the opposition in Soviet Russia has acquired any important international profile. Bulat Okudzhava has written songs that are popular in France and, of course, the late Galich is well known internationally.

In Ukraine there is evidence of some musical opposition, and it is certain that if the material ever reached the West, its impact in Canada would be considerable. Even the little *musique de contestation* (protest music) that has emerged has become important. One of the few

spontaneous cultural evenings organized by Ukrainian Canadian youth revolved around Volodymyr Ivasiuk, today a minor cult figure. Earlier there was Kobza, which SUSK claimed was banned in Ukraine, even though everyone knew it was not. Nevertheless, the ruse sold thousands of records.

Unfortunately, some very important aspects of this unofficial culture have not been publicized. Symonenko's diaries, for example, have not been translated into English, and the visual works of some oppositionists are still unknown in Canada. Not even a postcard or a poster exists of the stained-glass window dismantled by Kiev University authorities, with the rather dramatic image of Shevchenko.

Turning to official exchanges, it should be noted that in Ukraine there exists a cultural elite that is very interested in propagating its own influence and in giving Ukrainian culture international exposure. Performances before international audiences should obviously be endorsed and supported by Ukrainian Canadians. Access to the international public and to Ukrainians abroad is a demand as old as the Soviet regime. As early as 1920-1, Ukrainian cultural figures protested the hyper-centralization of cultural life in the USSR which presented Russian culture abroad as Soviet culture, without regard to the multinational character of the Soviet state.

The central authorities in Moscow are naturally largely disinterested in Ukrainian cultural exchanges. Their attitude is part of the well-known general cultural oppression, except that in Ukraine that oppression is very much worse. The *provyntsiina zhorstokist* (provincial ferocity) is positively staggering. The very good Taganka Theater in Moscow would not last more than three hours in Kiev. In Ukraine an Okudzhava or a Vysotsky is inconceivable.

Between the Ukrainian cultural elite and the central authorities in Moscow are organizations such as the Ukraina Society, to which the finer cultural aspects take a back seat to cultural exchanges as a political game. From *Visti z Ukrainy* (News from Ukraine), it is clear that cultural exchanges are based on an analysis of Ukrainian Canadian society that is very simplistic. On the one hand, there are nationalists who are hostile to the Soviet regime. Of no consequence ordinarily, they become interesting when they offer support to the opposition in Ukraine. And there can be little doubt that without the nationalists abroad, the opposition in Ukraine would be very much weaker. For it is the nationalists who publish *samvydav* works, smuggle them back in, send parcels to families of political prisoners and raise the issue of political prisoners in the international arena. This is why Moscow and the Ukraina Society pay attention to the nationalist community.

In *Visti z Ukrainy* one also reads about the Ukrainian Communists in Canada. The Soviet authorities have no illusions about their small numbers and significance. But in *Visti* there is constant reference also to a third, very large, apolitical group. Its members are not *zhovto blakytnyky* (supporters of a sovereign, independent Ukraine); they know nothing of Petliura, Konovalets or Bandera. That they like their culture and occasionally eat *pyrohy* or *varenyky* impresses the Soviets, who then seek to attract them by sending groups that dance better than the nationalists do. Whenever the Soviets have pushed cultural exchanges, it has been mainly to affect this community, despite the concerted effort a couple of years ago to split the nationalist community by winning away the *kulturnyky* (culture-mongers) who say, "Politics aside, they dance the *hopak* better in Ukraine, and the Soviet regime is therefore worth supporting." Even so, the Soviet interest in cultural exchanges has been largely geared to the so-called apolitical community in the hope of isolating it from the real devils, the nationalists. The political game could have important repercussions. If you dazzle before people the prospect of dancing schools, singing workshops and intensive *bandura* courses, they are not too likely to turn around next day and picket the visit of a Soviet ambassador or protest the imprisonment of a Ukrainian political dissident to jeopardize their music lessons in Kiev.

It is also important to recognize that cultural exchanges vary. On the one hand, there are tours by groups like Veryovka, which are like other concert tours and ought to be encouraged. On the other hand, there are the Ukraina Society's propaganda tours, which ought to be resisted. The latest on Shevchenko was a cultural travesty. It would also be good to arrange tours that involve federal and provincial granting agencies. Under the umbrella of multiculturalism, Ukrainians would be protected from the political intrigues that often emerge when groups come over. Moreover, the Ukrainian community could then participate in the selection of groups, rather than simply take what the Soviets send. There are some very good Ukrainian groups in eastern Europe. There is, for example, an excellent theatre in Prešov, Czechoslovakia, which should have toured long ago.

Finally, it is well to recall that the cultural impact of Ukraine has been most positive in developing Ukrainian Canadian ethnicity. Ukrainian Canadian cultural production has taken qualitative leaps: dance choreography is now more imaginative, choral repertoires have expanded and Ukrainian Canadian rock music has been much influenced by groups like Kobza. Much more cultural contact, however, is needed, especially as it also reinforces embattled cultural forces in Ukraine.



## Cultural Vision and the Fulfillment of Visible Symbols

Vasyl' Balan

This paper is neither philosophical nor partisan. In it, culture is understood as that sense of community and ethnicity which emerges when people adhere to specific values based on a common ancestry and language. It is concerned 1) to examine the nature of the *vision* and extent of commitment by the Ukrainian Canadian community to the major areas of cultural concern; and 2) to consider the *role* the Ukrainian community might play in affecting the future development of the policy of multiculturalism in Canada. Both are discussed from the background of a public servant who administers federal multicultural programmes in the Department of the Secretary of State in Manitoba.

In examining the vision and the extent of commitment, the focus will be on language (a visible symbol for Ukrainian Canadians) and especially on the amount of support language education receives from the Ukrainian community in Manitoba.

Today's system of teaching Ukrainian emerged when the overwhelming majority of Ukrainian families used Ukrainian in day-to-day discourse. After the Second World War, public schools offered Ukrainian as a language of study (grammar mainly) through core programmes of thirty minutes to two hours each week. At the same time, the supplementary schools or *ridni shkoly* furnished an academic and cultural curriculum to students who already spoke Ukrainian.

The past thirty years have seen a sharp decline in the use of Ukrainian in the home, church and community organizations. Since 1951 language

loss has been almost 45 per cent. Today (1981) about 40 per cent in the community claim Ukrainian as a mother tongue and for those under twenty-five the proportion is significantly less. If the trend continues, fewer than 20 per cent will be fluent in Ukrainian in twenty years time.

The language loss has seriously affected the schools offering Ukrainian-language programmes. In Manitoba, enrollment in the core programme in the public schools has decreased about 10 per cent annually, from a peak of 4,350 students in 1975-6 to about 2,000 today. This is three times greater than the average rate of decline in enrollment. In the *ridni shkoly* the enrollment has also dropped markedly. Fifteen years ago there were fifty-six schools in Manitoba with 2,500 students; in 1978-9 there were only nineteen schools with 1,200 students. Part of the overall decline can be attributed to factors in an urban and industrial society that promote conformity and encourage assimilation. However, there are other indicators that reflect on the quality of community leadership, especially when compared to other ethnocultural communities concerned to maintain their language and culture.

The German community, which includes the Mennonites and Hutterites, is a case in point. In 1971 there were 123,000 Germans and 114,500 Ukrainians in Manitoba, both indigenous Canadian ethnocultural groups who arrived before the turn of the century. In both also the churches have always played an important role in language maintenance. In 1978 the combined public, private and supplementary school enrollment in German language classes was 12,723, compared to 4,672 in Ukrainian. Moreover, for an enrollment that was *three* times greater, the German community's financial commitment was almost *ten* times larger. The German supplementary and private schools received \$1.7 million from community sources; the Ukrainian supplementary schools received only \$231,000 from the same sources. This translates into a per capita expenditure of \$13.72 for each German and \$2.02 for each Ukrainian living in the province. Although the differences are most revealing, a comparison with the Jewish community is even more startling. In 1978-9 the support for Jewish schools was almost \$2 million, with a per-capita expenditure of \$106.36 by 18,764 Jews for 1,765 students.

The federal government contributes to the language programmes sponsored by such communities through the Cultural Enrichment Program of the Multiculturalism Directorate. In 1978-9, the Ukrainian schools received \$20,000 in grants, the German \$6,000 and the Jewish \$3,000. Therefore, the government had an 8 per cent interest in the overall financing of Ukrainian-language schools and only a .01 per cent interest in German and a .001 per cent interest in Jewish schools. In addition, the federal government has responded in a very significant way to the development of Ukrainian bilingual classes in Manitoba. In 1978-9 a steering

committee received project grants and a commitment of sustaining grants to implement a three-year language animation programme. In total the parents' committee has received in cash and commitments almost \$150,000 from the Department of the Secretary of State, with the community contributing only \$10,000. Even though the bilingual programme has a good track record of developing language fluency in children, the Ukrainian community is giving it mere lip-service. Despite the prominence of the language question on the agenda of the Ukrainian community, it is clear that no clear vision on the subject has emerged. It would appear that, despite the emotion and strong resolutions, most have resigned themselves to the inevitable loss of language fluency.

The second part of this paper, the policy of multiculturalism as it enters its second decade, can be approached in two ways. One can examine the commitment and direction of politicians through financial allocations, the size of staff and the relative importance of programmes in departmental organization charts. One can also measure the ability of communities for whom the policy is intended not only to represent themselves in the political arena but to establish a working relationship with the bureaucrats who administer the policy. Most groups have experienced frustrations in working with the multicultural programmes. This is largely because the policy serves three distinct communities—new immigrants (through ESL and integration programmes), visible minorities (through anti-racist and anti-discrimination programmes) and the established ethnocultural communities (through language-and-culture retention programmes). Although the needs and aspirations in each area are different, the programmes appear to equate them—hence the frustration. Without being an apologist, much of the blame rests on the shoulders of the communities themselves. First, the groups have failed to develop intergroup coalitions to maintain a visible advisory presence vis-à-vis the government and to bring co-ordinated and unified pressures to bear. Secondly, community leaders appear incapable of understanding the workings of the department and how a *working* relationship with the bureaucrats can be established.

The communities have failed to grasp what is at the very heart of the policy of multiculturalism, namely, co-operative intercultural and intergroup relations. This need not detract from the importance of unicultural development and from the specific priorities held by individual communities. Some groups, however, perceive intercultural relations as leading to assimilation and actively oppose them. Such thinking breeds suspicions that become obstacles to achieving programme changes. The reality is that the ethnocultural groups are not in themselves a homogeneous element in society and all their diverse needs are covered by one policy and serviced by one directorate. They are similar to the native communities with their different nations, cultures and languages and three

distinct legal categories—treaty, non-treaty and Métis. But the native communities have learned the basic principles of survival in a pluralist society much better than have the ethnocultural groups. They have developed co-operative strategies among themselves to plan and set priorities. The irony is that the policy of multiculturalism has co-operation as a built-in principle, and most communities either refuse or do not know how to use it. But for ethnocultural communities to maximize the benefits from government programmes, they simply must learn to share information and strategies in areas of common concern.

The challenge to the Ukrainian community is therefore great. Ukrainians are perceived by most groups as the leaders of the multicultural movement in Canada. However, if they are to lead others, they must first set priorities and develop long-term plans for themselves. To that end, the following suggestions are offered:

1. A few years ago, the French communities outside Quebec did a comprehensive study entitled *The Heirs of Lord Durham*. It is an excellent model for examining where the community is at present and where it wants to go. It is a logical place to begin, and something which the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies could undertake.
2. Within the community numerous organizations and committees have emerged to serve special needs. The new groups generally do not fit into existing umbrella organizations along religious or ideological lines. Even so, there is a great need for personnel in museums, teachers in bilingual programmes, parents of children in the same programmes, dance teachers, choir directors and others to meet through structures of their own. This would enable each sector in the community to meet needs in a global sense and to establish community-wide strategies in dealing with governments and other ethnic groups.
3. With membership in the Ukrainian community harder to define in terms of either birth or language, the need for a community-wide English-language newspaper that would serve all sectors of Ukrainian life is crucial. Consideration should be given to *Student* as a possible foundation for an expanded paper meeting the needs of all Ukrainians in Canada.

In addition to such internal measures, the following concrete proposals are also proposed to strengthen the community's overall leadership role in the evolution of the multiculturalism policy and programmes:

1. Despite difficulties, the policy of multiculturalism is reaching out into new areas in mainstream culture. The goal is to create an

environment in which discrimination is confronted and differences are accepted. Such vehicles already in place as provincial *ad hoc* multicultural committees in education, race relations committees and citizenship councils should experience greater Ukrainian involvement and a more sincere Ukrainian identification.

2. During the past few years, political refugees from Southeast Asia have arrived in unprecedented numbers. When the government experimented with community sponsorship of refugees, most ethnocultural communities responded by organizing committees to oversee sponsorship. The Ukrainian community was the only large group not to participate. Have Ukrainians forgotten the history of their own immigration so quickly? With community sponsorship now a permanent feature of immigration policy, the need for co-ordinated Ukrainian participation on behalf of refugees from Asia, El Salvador or Poland is imperative.
3. Links must be established and ways found to begin meaningful dialogues with the native and francophone communities across Canada. The place to begin is at the local level. The native communities are the most likely to respond because, even though language-and-cultural issues are not their highest priorities, in urban centres they experience the same problems of cultural identification and language retention, and Ukrainians therefore have much to offer them. With time, the relationship would grow and affect other aspects of community life.

The political challenges before the Ukrainian community are neither philosophical, ideological nor partisan. But they are real and they are pressing. If Ukrainians continue to avoid them, they risk becoming a desolate island and strangers in their own land.

## A Viewpoint from the Community

Isydore Hlynka\*

This paper will approach the politics of culture from the viewpoint of the Ukrainian Canadian community. To illustrate the subtlety of perception possible, witness two chatty mothers comparing notes, one with a newly married daughter and the other a newly married son.

Mrs. A: "How is your daughter making out in her marriage?"

Mrs. B: "Wonderful, just wonderful. Her husband is so kind and good. When he goes to work in the morning, he lets Mary sleep. He simply makes his own breakfast and goes off quietly. She sends her clothes to the laundry. In the evening he even helps her with the dinner dishes. And how is John making out with his new wife?"

Mrs. A: "Your Mary is luckier than my John. His wife is a good-for-nothing. She won't even get up to make John's breakfast in the morning. She won't wash out a few rags but has to send them to the laundry. And in the evening when he comes home from a hard day's work, she even asks him to help with the dinner dishes. Really, I don't know what this modern generation is coming to."

There you have it! Exactly the same facts but diametrically opposite assessments. So is it also with the frequent divergences in views and assessments between the federal and provincial agencies, on the one hand, and the Canadian ethnocultural communities, on the other. They may all deal with the same facts but each uses a different set of criteria to evaluate the facts and to arrive at different conclusions.

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\*Prepared before Dr. Hlynka's death in May 1983.



The overriding criterion in politics is, of course, votes. But once the election is over, it is the narrower party line that sets the guidelines. In contrast, the basic issues of ethnocultural communities in Canada are broader and include full democratic rights for all Canadians, with entrenched hereditary privileges for none, as well as the basic issue of their survival as viable and identifiable cultural minorities with deep cultural, spiritual and human values. The survival of human values was captured well by William Shakespeare in these memorable words:

This above all; to thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night follows the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

Unfortunately, in political policies and programmes, the human values are too often low priorities. Consequently, it is a constant struggle with constituted political authorities to get their attention, followed by recognition and a modicum of progress in developing Canada as a multicultural nation.

In my long association with the Taras Shevchenko Foundation, the Ukrainian Canadian Committee, St. Andrew's College and the publishers of the *Ukrainian Voice* weekly, the struggle was conducted at many levels, and many of my personal views were recorded in a new book *The Other Canadians*, published this year (1981) by Trident Press in Winnipeg.

The ethnocultural communities in Canada are not small:

The total non-French, non-English population in Canada is equal to the total population of seven of our smaller provinces—Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. It is larger by one million than the total French population in the province of Quebec. Or looking at it still another way: our non-French, non-English citizens equal the population of all Canadians living west of the Ontario-Manitoba border, including Yukon and the Territories. And another interesting fact: a very large number of these Canadians are bilingual in English (or French) and their maternal tongue (*The Other Canadians*, 17).

We have here a very major demographic fact. The "other Canadians" constitute nearly a third of the total population of Canada. But being widely dispersed across Canada, the ethnocultural element is in no position to act as a political bloc, comparable to the French power bloc in Quebec, to obtain recognition of its rightful place within a multicultural Canada. As a result, each issue must be fought on an individual and difficult point-by-point basis. The ethnocultural communities must prepare brief after brief and deal usually with unsympathetic politicians and officials in

many departments, and over the years with many governments of different political stripe. It is, in fact, a constant struggle for survival against the political establishment.

Back in the late 1940s and early 1950s the Ukrainian community of Winnipeg, including the students' club at the university, leading members of the teaching profession and the Ukrainian Canadian Committee, made representations to the University of Manitoba and the Department of Education to have Ukrainian, the second most prevalent language in Manitoba, included in the curriculum of the university. After sensitive, protracted and difficult negotiations with academic and political authorities, Ukrainian was included as a subject but not as a language. For this reason, it is most heartening to report that this year the University of Manitoba and St. Andrew's College joined forces to create a Centre for Ukrainian Canadian Studies, a most significant achievement.

Another struggle involved John G. Diefenbaker, whom most of us recall for his resounding and memorable words—I AM A CANADIAN—in programmes on the CBC. When Diefenbaker decided to omit information about the ethnic origin of Canadians in the 1961 census, the Ukrainian Canadian community took strong exception and pressure was applied. Diefenbaker, unfortunately, confused two terms—citizenship and ethnic origin. We are, of course, all Canadians, but many identify with their ancestral cultural heritage within the framework of their common Canadian citizenship. From one of Diefenbaker's associates, I learned how thousands of printed census forms were shredded to make way for a revised form which recognized the ethnic identity of Canadian citizens.

Lester B. Pearson also had a thing or two to learn. Launching the bilingual and bicultural royal commission, he practically specified the answer the commission was to reach by ignoring the fact that one-third of Canada's population is neither French nor English. After strong intercession by the Ukrainian Canadian community, the commission's terms of reference were amended to include also the contribution of the "other Canadians." However, the term "contribution" has always disturbed me, because historically it implies a tribute that subjugated peoples pay to conquerors. Even so, the modified terms of reference were a welcome concession.

As prime minister, Pierre Trudeau can claim credit for introducing Canada's present policy of multiculturalism, whose tenth anniversary is being commemorated this year (1981). On the other hand, Trudeau has been most reluctant to recognize Canada's multicultural nature fully. To him, multiculturalism is only a minor feature within a bilingual English-French framework. This reluctance was evident most recently in Trudeau's unwillingness to declare Canada a multicultural nation in the draft of the proposed new constitution for Canada, in spite of the many

effective and convincing public representations to that effect. Because Canada is a multicultural nation, its elements—the others as well as the English and French—should be recognized as co-existing in one Canada.

The publicly funded Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, whose mandate is to serve and reflect the cultural needs of Canadians, has been most unco-operative and refractory. Many representations have been and continue to be made. But service to meet the cultural needs of that one-third of Canada's population that is neither English nor French has been minimal or totally absent. The struggle to recognize and service all parts of the Canadian population must continue.

As a result of the Laurier-Greenway agreement of 1896–7, Ukrainian became part of the bilingual school system in Manitoba and to some extent also in Saskatchewan and Alberta. A victim of politics and wartime prejudice, Ukrainian disappeared by legislative action in 1916. Continuing interaction between the Ukrainian community and the provincial school authorities over the years eroded many of the prejudices but not without a residue of bitter feeling. Happily, Ukrainian is once again taught in Manitoba's schools, in some as a subject and in others through a new bilingual programme. Provincial school legislation has been amended to meet today's more enlightened concepts of education.

These few instances illustrate the challenge which the political dimension presents to the Ukrainian Canadians and to other ethnocultural communities in their struggle to retain and promote their cultural heritage. The difficulties have been numerous and include encounters with school boards, the press and electronic media, as well as municipal, provincial and federal officials. These agencies frequently use different (often narrow and somewhat self-serving) criteria, based on information that is inadequate and occasionally inaccurate. However, the uphill struggle for survival goes on, and must continue, because survival is the first law of nature.

## **Political Dimensions of Ukrainian Canadian Culture**

**W. Roman Petryshyn**

In this paper the political dimensions of Ukrainian Canadian culture are discussed in terms of four requirements: 1) the need for definitions when referring to culture; 2) the need for political involvement to promote cultural activity; 3) the need for Ukrainian Canadians to change their style in the pursuit of multicultural goals; and 4) the need to appreciate that multiculturalism at government levels has advanced and continues to evolve.

1. Culture is commonly defined as a dynamic value system of learned elements, with assumptions, conventions, beliefs and rules permitting members of a group to relate to each other and to the world, to communicate and to develop their creative potential. The definition includes the entire sphere of meaningful human activity that embodies values and uses learned symbols for communication.

In their approach to culture, Ukrainian Canadians ought to address a narrower target than the above, because they have little need to discuss culture from the perspective of technology, work or even sport. The focus of community leaders ought to be on selected Ukrainian elements that comprise the Ukrainian Canadian identity—on those elements that enter into Ukrainian *ethnic culture*, because it is easiest to adapt artistic and social elements to the Canadian environment or life style, and it is such items that symbolize Ukrainians best as a historical and conscious people.

The distinction between culture in general and ethnic culture is crucial in appraising the true cultural potential of Ukrainian Canadians, so as to

determine where limited community resources should be applied in the future. Occasionally, the multicultural movement has tried to make the boundaries of cultural and ethnocultural activities synonymous, and the subsequent failure to realize multicultural objectives only underlines the fact that the boundaries of the two are quite different. While multiculturalism has given Ukrainian Canadian culture an opportunity to grow, government activity in furthering multicultural objectives has been largely in terms of priorities set by non-Ukrainian political leaders. In the future, Ukrainian Canadians must themselves indicate the cultural areas of greatest concern and state where the available resources had best be applied to maximize benefits.

2. It is vital to recognize that political activity is an essential and integral component of ethnic culture, and that it even has some bearing on the content of what is produced by individual artistry. The question of power—the politics of resource ownership and distribution—determines the opportunities that the ethnocultural groups have to develop themselves. Although governments have increased their commissioning of Ukrainian cultural productions, survival of the Ukrainian Canadian ethnocultural community will require greater resources than have been provided to date. This should not frighten anyone; government involvement in culture is today a growth industry in Canada. What is important is that ethnocultural groups participate in this development and come to realize the benefits that are increasingly becoming available.

3. To this end, the nature of the political involvement of the Ukrainian Canadians in the multicultural movement must change. During the last fifteen years ethnocultural political activity among them has been carried on mostly from the top down, rather than through a process of building political alliances from the bottom up. Many issues have been raised politically by Ukrainian leaders on behalf of Ukrainian cultural development without the *actual* support of the cultural groups concerned. As a result, their advocacy has often been of theoretical or symbolic significance without a practical or substantive base. For example, much energy has been used to convince ministers of multiculturalism to intervene on behalf of human rights in Ukraine, without practical effect. Similarly, over the years, Ukrainian spokesmen have argued the principle of language equality for French and Ukrainian at the national level, without result.

When success has been achieved, it was because political pressure by Ukrainians was applied to selected targets. For example, when one examines the 1969 recommendations on education in the fourth volume of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, one is struck how far beyond these ideas Ukrainians have moved. The bilingual classes in the three Prairie provinces and the creation of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies are well beyond the commission's suggestions that

languages and related cultural subjects be incorporated only as options at elementary, secondary and university levels of public education.

In contrast to such successes, however, Ukrainians have failed to build a network of leaders and followers to implement the commission's other recommendations. To date, the CBC has not removed its proscription against multilingual broadcasting, and funding for a Ukrainian theatre, a professional dance company and support generally for Ukrainian composers, writers and other artistic talents has not been forthcoming. In some measure this failure results from indifference to politics by Ukrainian artistic leaders themselves. To obtain the resources needed to reach new cultural objectives, creators of Ukrainian Canadian culture must become politicized—they must assist in building a co-operative network between themselves and national Ukrainian community leaders in multiculturalism.

4. But as important as it is for Ukrainian Canadians to develop multiculturalism from the base up, it is equally important to recognize that governments, too, have been changing their approach to multiculturalism. First, there were the "grand statements," followed by the appointment of ethnics to government jobs on the basis of their contacts, rather than skills. Then, as special programmes and administrative units emerged, a bureaucratic reaction emerged that isolated the unskilled ethnics. In time, programmes stabilized and began to move beyond the ethnic advisers. More and more, the multicultural message was carried into the institutions and structures of mainstream Canadian society. Today multiculturalism programmes have found a new level of support in public institutions, and are not dependent on ethnic communities. In magnitude, such programmes are not yet the equivalent of English-French bilingualism or even of native peoples programmes. But multiculturalism today is more deeply and widely entrenched than the women's movement, for example. Government multicultural programmes are slowly beginning to focus on ethnocultural communities—their most appropriate subject matter—and are being systematically extended across government departments.

Even so, one old issue—the language question—continues to haunt us. The constitutional agreement, signed recently, puts languages such as Ukrainian at a distinct disadvantage in Canadian society. I am personally offended, and protest against, the new constitution which protects only two languages—English and French—in so far as public education is concerned. Education is within provincial jurisdiction, but the new Canadian constitution lowers all other Canadian languages, even in the provinces, to a second level of citizenship. Second-class status condemns the Ukrainian language in Canada to assimilation and eventual extinction. All Ukrainian Canadians should rise as one in defence of their language.

It is simply not good enough to have permissive legislation for Ukrainian as a language of instruction in public and separate schools,



when English and French, as languages of instruction, are guaranteed by the new constitution. The situation causes the constitution to violate section 38 of the Official Languages Act, which stipulated that "Nothing in this Act shall be construed as derogating from or diminishing in any way any legal or customary right or privilege acquired or enjoyed either before or after the coming into force of this Act with respect to any language that is not an official language." Moreover, elevating two Canadian languages over all others, violates section 27 of the proposed constitution itself, which states that the constitution "shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians."

The exclusive, official recognition of English-French bilingualism in education relegates other kinds of bilingual education to the unofficial level, rendering them publicly less important. This is discriminatory. The constitutional clause prevents the equitable distribution of educational resources to other bilingual streams and hampers the careers of children educated through other than English-French programmes. In this way this clause attempts to extinguish all other Canadian languages, including Ojibway, Cree and other native languages. Such second-class status must be fought politically. Bilingual Canadians must join forces to argue for legislation that would defend their own languages; for the resources to prevent linguicide; and for affirmative action to close the gap between official and other forms of Canadian bilingual education. In defending their language against discrimination in Canadian society, Ukrainian Canadians can mobilize politically and demand the resources needed to develop their Ukrainian Canadian identity.

## Discussion

*Anthony Yaremovich:* The Ukrainian Canadian Committee has been petitioning the federal government for years to have a say in the Ukrainian artists that come to Canada. The Soviets are most particular about who from Canada goes to the Soviet Union, but to date Canada has had no say in whom the Soviets send. The Ukrainian Canadian Committee has never opposed cultural exchanges with Soviet Ukraine. It is only concerned that the government of Canada have the right to consult the committee as to who comes to Canada.

There is also a problem with ethnocultural groups working closely with governments. The feeling exists that they are too easily co-opted and that, as with the CCCM, governments acquire too much influence. More recently, the Canadian Council for Ethnocultural Organizations was formed, ostensibly as an independent new organization. Yet the government pays all its expenses and Jim Fleming, the minister, gives the keynote address.

*Vasyl' Balan:* The above notwithstanding, coalitions of ethnocultural organizations can be most effective symbolically through the general statements they issue. If asked to indicate their top priorities, however, they will differ greatly, for their interests vary. The most effective coalitions therefore are those built from the ground up around specific mutual concerns, such as ethnic museums. For results, national coalitions that cut across regions to press on specific issues are best. Large councils cannot

pursue such matters as ethnic museums because not all the groups have museums and for some members they are not a priority. For blacks, for instance, racism, not museums, is the dominant concern. Large bodies are only good for symbolic kinds of statements.

*Roman Petryshyn:* An example of a successful ethnic-group coalition in a specific case was the W5 issue on CTV, where a programme discriminatory against the Chinese was assailed. The Chinese appealed for multiethnic support and were backed by some Ukrainians, among others. Eventually CTV apologized to the Chinese community for misrepresenting it. As a model of political action, the case is a particularly good example for people involved in the arts.

*Radoslav Zuk:* In the politics of culture there is an obvious gap between pressure on particular governments and politics within the community itself. One hears that the creative artistic community should organize itself. But what is needed for political pressure is an in-between body interested in cultural activities, not the practitioners themselves; what is needed are institutions that promote cultural activities. Painters or sculptors may disseminate culture on a personal basis, but for musical events, besides orchestras and performers, an audience is needed as are advertising, promotion and subscriptions. In architecture, institutions are needed to finance and to indicate the desired kind of architecture. Perhaps the responses of governments are weak because Ukrainians do not have projects that interest the general Canadian public. The symbols Ukrainians choose may appear strong to themselves, but they may not interest other Canadians. It was good to hear that Ukrainians in Ukraine have a cultural elite with aspirations to reach an international audience. Perhaps we should have aspirations to reach at least the Canadian public.

*Bohdan Krawchenko:* The problem is enormous because in the Ukrainian community there are very few cultural associations—musical or theatrical societies—that can promote culture in an active way. For example, even though a new Ukrainian theatre has been formed in New York by recent émigrés from Ukraine, there is nobody in Canada to sponsor a tour.

Very serious also is the lack of a critical voice. The best way to kill a culture is to say, "Ah, it is lousy but it is ours." The only group that is somewhat critical is *Student*. Without a critical voice, all reports of artistic events become filiopietistic and uninteresting. Even if the Ukrainian Canadian Committee did have a say in who should come over from Ukraine (and I am not at all sure that the committee should be deciding this), they would be hard pressed to name alternative choirs to Veryovka, because so few people bother to study cultural developments in Ukraine seriously.

*Isydore Hlynka:* With the conference about to end, it is well to note its main value. Through the options expressed, a new understanding has been established. We sometimes think that we do this, and they (some mythical or undefined group) do that. But perhaps it is not really a situation of we *and* they but one of we *are* they, with all of us really we—they and us. Perhaps when we leave we will feel a little closer to the idea that there is no “we” and “they” but only “us”—all of us. That is the lesson one might learn from this conference, and it has been very successful and a most useful conference from that point of view.

*Participant:* As a follow-up to the plea for organization at the grassroots level, could not the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies organize workshops to show the community how to get organized?

*Manoly Lupul:* The institute is in no position to undertake workshops to teach people how to be more effective politically. The institute is an academic unit on a university campus with a very definite mandate and very definite objectives and responsibilities. It cannot take on the whole world. The bodies that can provide the needed political education must look to their mandates and to their objectives and responsibilities.

In closing this conference, it is well to note that, as at the 1979 conference in Edmonton on ethnicity and the writer in Canada, one often sensed a certain electricity in the air, and in the discussions one occasionally experienced creativity on the spot. It was again good to see creative human beings reflect upon their work, explaining its purposes and nature. It is always exciting (and difficult) to analyze, to compare and to evaluate in a formal setting.

Yet it is the distinguishing feature of human beings to judge and to try to separate the good from the bad. We must differentiate whether we like it or not. And so, if there is ever to be an anthology of Ukrainian Canadian artists, judgments will have to be made to include only the most deserving. That will not be easy and the temptation will be great to take the easy way out and to include everybody. But to do so would be to abdicate the making of judgments—a responsibility unique to man and one which may even define man's uniqueness.

It is important also to try to place the discussion on Ukrainian Canadian culture in a larger context. The conference was concerned to probe the place and nature of the Ukrainian aesthetic experience in Canadian society. And it naturally featured the Ukrainian fine arts. Yet, it is Canada that is undoubtedly the more important, for it is there that Ukrainian Canadian artists will continue to live and create.

What, then, is the nature of the aesthetic experience in Canada, and what place do the fine arts enjoy among Canadians generally? If Ukrainian Canadian artists are unhappy, perhaps there are deeper reasons for that. All of us live, as has been pointed out, in an urban, industrial, mass-production society, which homogenizes everything and is commercially and vocationally oriented. It is difficult to think of anything that poisons the aesthetic experience more than the smoke of industrialism and the standardized products of mass production. The world we live in would appear to have little place for the fine arts. Where in the school curriculum, for example, are the fine arts? Where are they on university campuses? How much exposure do professionals and the economic and business elites have to the fine arts? Our society does not value the aesthetic experience: not just the Ukrainian Canadian aesthetic experience, but Beethoven as well. Most Canadians have little or no contact with what is classical in anything.

One often hears that the Ukrainian cultural heritage is not understood. How could it be otherwise? How familiar are Canadians generally with the Western cultural heritage? Even in a fine arts programme at the university level, there is no liberal education. One is in a fine arts programme to obtain a fine arts degree, followed perhaps by a master's in the fine arts, and then occasionally by a Ph.D. in the same arts. The thought of a science course is usually devastating! One should not be too surprised therefore to find the Ukrainian Canadian aesthetic experience inadequately developed and poorly understood. Given the circumstances under which cultural expression must make its way in North American society, it is something perhaps of a minor miracle that such cultural expression as does exist among Ukrainians in Canada is there at all.

## GLOSSARY

<i>arkan</i>	—	a folk dance
<i>bandura</i>	—	a stringed instrument
<i>barvinok</i>	—	periwinkle
<i>bez konechnyk</i>	—	line without end
<i>buda</i>	—	shack
<i>bulava</i>	—	mace
<i>chasnyk</i>	—	garlic
<i>didukh</i>	—	ritual sheaf of wheat set out at Christmas
<i>domivka</i>	—	hall, literally home
<i>dumy</i>	—	epic songs
<i>haivky</i>	—	Easter singing-games
<i>holubtsi</i>	—	cabbage rolls
<i>hopak</i>	—	a folk dance
<i>horilka</i>	—	vodka
<i>hromada</i>	—	community
<i>khlop</i>	—	peasant, literally man
<i>khorovody</i>	—	round dances with singing
<i>kolach</i>	—	braided bread
<i>kolomyika</i>	—	a folk dance
<i>kovbasa</i>	—	sausage
<i>Kozachyna</i>	—	Cossack era
<i>kutia</i>	—	mixture of wheat, poppy seed and honey eaten at Christmas
<i>kylym</i>	—	rug, carpet
<i>maky</i>	—	poppies
<i>narodnyi dim</i>	—	national home or hall, community centre
<i>pan</i>	—	gentleman, literally lord
<i>pich</i>	—	clay oven
<i>prysiadka</i>	—	squat



<i>pyrohy/varenyky</i>	—	dumplings
<i>pysanka</i>	—	Easter egg
<i>ridni shkoly</i>	—	Ukrainian schools
<i>samvydav</i>	—	self-published
<i>selo</i>	—	village
<i>serdak</i>	—	a short peasant's coat
<i>soniashnyky</i>	—	sunflowers
<i>sopilka</i>	—	a wood-wind instrument
<i>striltsi</i>	—	riflemen
<i>Sviat vechir</i>	—	Christmas or Holy Eve
<i>tryzub</i>	—	trident
<i>tsymbaly</i>	—	dulcimer, a stringed instrument
<i>uzvar</i>	—	dried fruit compote
<i>varenyky</i>	—	(see <i>pyrohy</i> )
<i>vesnianky</i>	—	spring songs
<i>yarmarok</i>	—	market





















