FIELD NOTES FROM UKRAINIAN CANADA

Vol. 2, no. 3 (Summer 2006)

Cool mornings and a hint of fall colours have brought a rude reminder that we need to post our Summer 2006 Field Notes before all of the birds have left for warmer climes. We are pleased as always to welcome several new subscribers, and hope that you find our compilations useful and interesting to read. If you would like to be removed from mailing list, or know someone who wishes to be added, please inform Jars Balan at the address below with the relevant details.

Jars Balan (jbalan@ualberta.ca) Andrij Makuch (a.makuch@utoronto.ca)

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Conferences

The (second) diaspora conference in Nizhyn, Ukraine hosted by the Center of Humanitarian Co-operation with the Ukrainian Diaspora at Hohol State University (21–24 June 2006) proved to be a success, with approximately 60 people in attendance. This year’s Canadian contingent, however, was more modest in size than the previous one. As with the first Nizhyn conference, the proceedings of this gathering will be published.

The Kalyna Country Ecomuseum is in the preliminary stages of planning a conference featuring a day that will be devoted to papers on the Ukrainian history and culture of Canada’s oldest and largest Ukrainian bloc settlement. Oh Kalyna! The Past, Present and Future of Rural East Central Alberta is tentatively scheduled to take place 22–24 March 2007 at the Lilly Lake Village Resort forty-five minutes north of Edmonton. The resort is situated between Fedorah (originally known as Lymberg, i.e., Lviv) and Waugh, just down the road from Bon Accord – an area settled by Ukrainian pioneers in the early 1900s. Thanks to the sponsorship of the Alberta Ukrainian Pioneers Association, the first day of the conference will deal entirely with presentations of specific Ukrainian interest, while the second day will focus on other ethnic communities and natural history related topics. The third day (Saturday) will then deal with rural development issues and the agritourism potential of the region forming the ecomuseum. Speakers who gave presentations at the “Cossack Cowboys” conference are welcome to offer repeat performances at “Oh Kalyna!” since the gathering will be more public education oriented and targeted to an audience comprised of rural community activists and local historical society members. If you are interested in spending a couple of days in the country in March 2007, mark your calendars now and stay tuned for more details about how to submit a presentation proposal. Successful out-of-town applicants will, of course, have their travel and accommodation expenses covered by the conference.

Likewise, although well in advance it is certainly not too early to start thinking about attending the next annual Canadian Association of Slavists conference, which is to be held 26–28 May 2007 (Saturday–Monday) at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. A call for papers will be forthcoming. Usually it is issued early in December, with an early to mid-February deadline.

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Resources

Alberta-Ukraine Genealogical Project. This undertaking was announced in June 2006 during Alberta premier Ralph Klein’s trip to Ukraine and subsequently ratified by the signing of memoranda of cooperation. The Government of Alberta will provide $200,000 over a three-year period to establish genealogical research offices in Lviv and Edmonton and to undertake projects to make archival finding aids, registers, and other print information available in electronic form. For additional information contact the Alberta genealogical research office (co-ordinator: David Makowsky) at (780) 431-2324 or AB-Ukraine.Genealogy@gov.ab.ca.

The Kids' Site of Canadian Settlement/Les premières communautés canadiennes à la portée des jeunes (<www.collectionscanada.ca/settlement/kids>). As per the Official Release text: “Library and Archives Canada (LAC) is pleased to announce the completion of the second phase of the Web exhibition The Kids' Site of Canadian Settlement, a project funded by the Department of Canadian Heritage through its Canadian Culture Online initiative. For the second phase, we have added six settlement communities – Dutch, Irish, Japanese, Nisga'a, Plains Cree and Ukrainian – to the 12 communities featured in phase one. This children's site explores early settlements and the lives of people coexisting in Canada, and highlights LAC's holdings related to these communities. As well, it provides hands-on activities such as crafts, games and recipes that bring to life the culture and traditions of each settlement.”

We recently became aware of a thesis that will be of interest to those working on Ukrainian Canadian church history, especially Protestant missionary activities among Ukrainians in Alberta: Thrift, Gayle I., “Proscribed Piety: Woman’s Missionary Societies in Alberta, 1918–1939.” M.A., University of Calgary, 1998. You can easily access and download this work through the Thesis Canada Portal at <www.collectionscanada.ca/thesescanada/index-e.html>.

Also of note is the fact that the Alberta Labour History Institute maintains a site based largely on an Alberta Centennial project. It includes a number of oral interviews with subjects of Ukrainian background and can be accessed at: <http://www.labourhistory.ca/>.

Publications: New and Forthcoming

Vasile Avramenko: A Legacy of Ukrainian Dance (Winnipeg: Ukrainian Canadian Foundation of Taras Shevchenko, 2006; $25.00; ISBN 0-9780481-0-5) is a richly-illustrated, trilingual English-Ukrainian-French catalogue based on the text and photos of the traveling exhibit about this renowned Ukrainian dancer and film maker. The display has been mounted in various parts of Canada during the past fifteen months. Copies of the catalogue are available directly from the Shevchenko Foundation (#202, 952 Main St. Winnipeg, MAN, R2W 3P4; toll-free ph: 1-866-524-5314; price includes S&H) as well as the Ukrainian Bookstore in Edmonton and the Oseredok gift shop in Winnipeg.

An English translation of Fr. Panteleimon Bozhyk’s 1927 Tserkov ukraintsiv v Kanadi (The Church of Ukrainians in Canada) has been published. We are unaware of any systematic distribution plan for it, and, in fact, we have not yet received copies of the publication. The best bet for those wishing a copy is to contact the Canadian Consistory of the Ukrainian Catholic church in Winnipeg at (204) 338-7801. The original Ukrainian edition was reprinted in Lviv in 2004 (ISBN: 9665613405).
Two commemorative books of note have recently been issued in Winnipeg. The first is *St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church: Celebrating 100 years: Together for tomorrow* (Winnipeg, 2006; 0-9739713-1-2 [paper]; no longer available in cloth [ISBN: 0-9739713-0-4]). This well-illustrated 348-page tome, written by June Dutka and edited by Athanasius McVay, provides a history of this notable North-End church. The book is available through the parish office (737 Bannerman Ave., Winnipeg R2X 1J9; ph: 204-582-6695) for $50.00 plus $10.00 s/h.

The second work is *'Kalyna': Ivuleina knyha 1930–2005* (Winnipeg, 2005; English title [although the material is predominantly in Ukrainian]: *Kalyna: Historical Outline, 1930–2005*; no ISBN). Put together by an editorial committee consisting of A. Wach, P. Danyliuk, R. Romanovych, and D. Yaremchuk, this is a limited edition (500 copies) that will probably be difficult to obtain outside of Winnipeg.

We are pleased to announce that Zygmund Bychinsky’s epic novel about Ukrainian immigrant life in Canada, *Kliuch zhuravliv* (*A Flock of Cranes*), is about to appear in print for the very first time. The 850-page novel was written in the 1930s by Bychinsky, a Ukrainian Protestant minister who was a prominent figure in Western Canada between 1907 and 1928. After returning to Lviv to do evangelical church missionary work for two years, he spent the remainder of his life in Michigan. CIUS Press arranged for his novel, which is set in pioneer-era Saskatchewan, to be put out by Piramida in Lviv, and we expect copies of the book to be available in Canada sometime in October. The price is $49.95; ISBN: 966-8522-07-09. A précis of the work (at this time, only in Ukrainian) is available from either Jars Balan or Andrij Makuch.

Of likely interest to Ukrainian Canadianists is the recently published *Research guide to Ukrainian and Carpatho-Rusyn American newspapers, periodicals, and calendars-almanacs on microfilm (1886-1976)*, compiled by Halyna Myroniuk (of the Immigration History Research Centre [IHRC]) and Alexander Lushnycky (Minneapolis, 2005; ISBN: 0932833179). This 432-page guide is a substantial upgrade to a pamphlet (*A Guide to Ukrainian American Newspapers in Microform*) put out by the IHRC in 1998. It appears as part of a Ukrainian Microfilm Project, which was undertaken jointly by the IHRC and the Shevchenko Scientific Society. Ordering details can be obtained from the IHRC site: <www.ihrc.umn.edu/>.

Several of Jars Balan’s *annotated translations of stories by Rev. Nestor Dmytriw*, the first Ukrainian priest to visit Canada, have been published in the latest issue (Vol. 46, 3–4 [2005]) of *Logos: A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies* – put out by the Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky Institute of Eastern Christian Studies in Ottawa and the Yorkton Province of the Ukrainian Redemptorists. The four works, reproduced on pages 477 to 509 of the documents section of the journal, are “Ruthenian Easter – And a French Catholic Priest,” “My Dinner Among the Indians,” “Sunday in Ottawa,” and “Father P. Filas about Canadian Rus’,” all dating from the years between 1897 and 1903. That same issue of *Logos* also contains an article by Myron Momryk (pp. 469–476) on “Archival Sources for the Study of Eastern Christianity at the Library and Archives of Canada.”

The August–September 2006 issue of the popular historical magazine, *The Beaver*, contains an article entitled “Back in the USSR” (pp. 33–36) by the University of Alberta’s Vadim Kukushkin. The illustrated piece describes the communes established by Ukrainians and Russians from Canada and the United States, as well as other Soviet sympathizers, who established similarly ill-fated communes in the USSR during the 1920s.

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Ukrainian-Canadian courses at Canadian universities, 2006–2007

The following is a round-up of Canadian university courses focused entirely or in (significant) part on Ukrainian Canadians which will be taught in the 2006–2007 academic year.

The Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies at the University of Alberta offers a number of courses which feature a significant Ukrainian-Canadian component. In the fall semester these include “Ukrainian Culture I” (UKR 324, Maria Lesiv) and “Rites of Passage” (UKR 425/525, Natalie Kononenko). In the winter semester it offers “Ukrainian Culture II” (UKR 325, Maria Lesiv), “Calendar Customs” (UKR 426/526, Natalie Kononenko), “Folk Arts” (UKR 428/528, Andriy Nahachewsky) and the interdisciplinary “Ukrainian Dance” (INTD 431 B1, Andriy Nahachewsky). In Intersession (ie, May) the department will offer a special course on “Early Ukrainian-Canadian Culture” (UKR 327, Radomir Bilash), which deals in particular with Ukrainians in Alberta to 1930 (with special reference to the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village). As well, the U of A’s Department of History and Classics is offering “The History of Ukrainians in Canada (HIST 367, Frances Swyripa) in the first term.

The University of Saskatchewan offers (through St. Thomas More College) a course on “Ritual Spaces in Ukrainian Culture (ANTH 354, Natalia Shostak), which has a significant Ukrainian-Canadian component, in the fall term

The Centre for Ukrainian Canadian Studies at the University of Manitoba offers a course on “Ukrainians in Canada” (HIST 3910, instructor TBA) in the second academic term as well as a first-term course on “Eastern Christianity in North America” (RLGN 2520, Roman Yereniuk), which has a major Ukrainian-Canadian focus.

The Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Toronto is offering a first-term course on the “Literature of the Ukrainian Canadian Experience (SLA 238, Maxim Tarnawsky) as well as the full-year “Literature of the Ukrainian Diaspora” (SLA 1412), which includes a Ukrainian-Canadian component.

This and that

A reception was held in Edmonton on 6 September 2006 to celebrate a $2 million donation to the Ukrainian Folklore Centre at the University of Alberta. In honour of the donors, the Centre has been renamed the Dr. Peter and Doris Kule Centre for Ukrainian and Canadian Folklore. The Kules had previously (in 2003) provided the Centre with a $1 million donation to establish the Kule Chair of Ukrainian Ethnography. The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies has also recently benefited from the generosity of the Kules, who are donating $100,000 toward an endowment fund being established in their name for the study of the Ukrainian Diaspora. Dr. Serhii Cipko further received a contribution from the Bishop Budka Charitable Society of Edmonton toward the Ukrainian Diaspora Studies Initiative being conducted under the auspices of the Ukrainian Canadian Program. Anyone interested in contributing toward the Diaspora Studies Initiative can contact either Serhii Cipko at scipko@ualberta.ca or Anne Biscoe at abiscoe@ualberta.ca.

For the past few months Jars Balan has been overseeing a major research project for the Ukrainian Canadian Archives and Museum of Alberta. Six researchers as well as Jars himself have been compiling information about Ukrainian life in Alberta for use in the preparation of
permanent and special exhibitions to be mounted when UCAMA moves into the new facilities that it is developing on Jasper Avenue opposite Edmonton’s Convention Centre. Investigators are scouring select years of the *Edmonton Bulletin*, *Edmonton Journal*, and several Ukrainian-language papers, for information on individual Ukrainians and Ukrainian community activities in urban and rural Alberta. Russian Orthodox archives and sources are also being examined for details about the Russo-Orthodox and Russophile Ukrainian organizations in the province from the 1890s to 1940.

The [2006 Canadian Census](http://www.statcan.ca/) figures have been gathered and are now being tabulated. The release dates for figures of particular interest to Ukrainian-Canadian watchers include 14 November 2007 (“Language” and “Immigration”) and 18 March 2008 (“Ethnic origin”). These can be viewed at the Statistics Canada Web site: <http://www.statcan.ca/>.

Just screened at the Toronto Film Festival, *Acts of Imagination* is a 35 mm film directed by Carolyn Combs. Produced by Michael Springate and Carolyn Combs, from a screenplay by the former, the 88 minute colour film was edited by Thomas Sabinsky, designed by Roman Hlywa, and features the following in the principal roles: Stephanie Hayes, Billy Marchenski, Julian Samuel, Maki Nagisa and Volodymyr Serdyuk. The storyline has been summarized by Marguerite Pigott as follows:

A fundamental mystery overshadows the childhood memories of Katya (Stephanie Hayes) and Slawko (Billy Marchenski). Their parents were murdered in Ukraine and the details remain elusive. Now a young woman, Katya's consciousness is split between past and present, Ukraine and Canada, as she relives her mother's final days to uncover the truth. This is an inventive and ambitious feature film debut.

Katya and Slawko have only each other. He sees her as fragile and protects her from daily life in the industrial end of Vancouver. Seeing herself in harsher terms, Katya describes herself as a mutant. Almost involuntarily, she slips into the character of her mother, living out imagined scenes from her mother's past and drawing those around her into her fantasy. Katya envisages her final meetings with the mysterious Petrov (Volodymyr Serdyuk), who shared her parents' political activism in Ukraine and who may have been responsible for their deaths. Her obsession with her parents' story pulls Slawko towards a past he only wants to forget. Buckling under pressure to make ends meet and confronted with his girlfriend's desire that he move in with her, Slawko and Katya must find a place – and a time – to be together. Writer Michael Springate has crafted a thematically rich and complex narrative. The central question of the film - is one's history an act of imagination? – is taken out of a theoretical realm and actively explored by the characters. Combs's unvarnished and raw approach to the characters and their world results in an exceptional intimacy. As Katya, Hayes is a discovery. Her performance is unadorned, truthful and compelling; her beautiful simplicity and depth command our attention.

Combs teases apart the stories her characters tell themselves and examines how our relationship to our history informs who we become. Acts of Imagination delicately uncovers the truth within the lie, and leaves us with a gratifyingly authentic piece of filmmaking.

*Carolyn Combs was born in New York City and raised in Hamilton, Ontario. She received a BFA in theatre from Concordia University and a Master of Education from the University of Manitoba. She wrote, shot and edited her first short documentary, *Stories from the Diner*, in 1998. She also made the short *Money and Ashes* (00), the documentary *Protest and Prayer* (05) and *Art & Ability* (05), a four-part documentary series about adults with developmental disabilities. *Acts of Imagination* (06) is her first feature.*
Finally, nineteen boxes of the Wasyl Swystun papers were recently deposited at Library and Archives Canada. It is still early days in terms of assessing the value of the collection per se, but certainly there is no denying the significance of its originator.

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Feature

Comments on Future Developments in Ukrainian-Canadian Studies
by Andrij Makuch

The following is a slight reworking of comments made by Andrij Makuch of the CIUS’s Ukrainian Canadian Program at a recent round-table discussion on “The Future of Ukrainian Studies in Canada.” The event was held in Toronto on 27 May 2007 at the Ukrainian Canadian Art Foundation in conjunction with the “Learneds” at York University. It was co-sponsored by the Canadian branches of the Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences and the Shevchenko Scientific Society.

I would like to start by noting that I will limit my comments largely to the future of Ukrainian-Canadian studies in Canada. They are given mainly in point form and around specific topic areas; their order is random. My comments are meant to provide a general idea of developments one might reasonably expect to see in the field in the next five years or so.

The History of the “Third Wave”

I believe we will be seeing more attention and new interpretations of the so-called DP [Displaced Persons] immigration. CIUS’s Ukrainian Canadian Program (UCP) is presently well en route with its work on researching and writing volume two of the history of Ukrainians in Canada, which will deal with the interwar period (the first tome, Ukrainians in Canada, 1891–1924, written by Orest Martynowych, appeared in 1991). This then allows for systematic work to proceed in the foreseeable future on research towards a third volume, which will incorporate the DP experience. To help expedite this process, the UCP is planning to organize a conference, probably in the latter part of 2008, which will examine the impact of the Second World War and the post-war period on Ukrainian-Canadian life.

An additional aspect of the history of the “third wave” is the incorporation of a social history viewpoint into Canadian Cold War history writing. As specific examples of this I would cite the collection Love, Hate, and Fear in Canada’s Cold War (2004) edited by Richard Cavell as well as a forthcoming monograph on “social experts and immigrants” by the University of Toronto’s Franca Iacovetta. This sort of an approach broadens the possibilities vis-à-vis third-wave history, which is commonly dealt with in organizational and political terms.

As a final word on “DP history,” the upsurge of genealogical interest about the DP generation that had been anticipated by some Ukrainian-Canadian watchers has not yet been realized. There has been a growth, but of a limited nature. So, we may well yet see a “surge.”

Increasing English-language Focus

There is no disputing the fact that the number of people with Ukrainian-language skills has been steadily decreasing in Canada. Correspondingly, we have seen an increase in the number of people reliant on English-language materials or translators/research assistants in undertaking
work in the Ukrainian-Canadian field. For example, among doctoral dissertations recently completed or in progress that deal in whole or in significant part with Ukrainians in Canada, two have focused on English-language Ukrainian-Canadian literature while two others in the social history field have made use of research assistance in dealing with Ukrainian-language primary materials. And in undergraduate courses dealing with Ukrainian-Canadian history there is a decided tendency to choose research topics that can be dealt with in English.

This underscores the need for a greater amount of published material in English on Ukrainians in Canada. The good news in this regard is that a significant amount of such material has come out in the last 30 years (and, I will add, the CIUS deserve a great deal of credit for its leading role in this). It has made it possible for an author like Vic Satzewich to write a credible academic study like his *The Ukrainian Diaspora* (2002) using English-language sources. The existence of such sources does not eliminate the need for ongoing Ukrainian-language primary research, but it does afford broader access to information.

**Modest interest in Ukrainian-Canadian studies in Ukraine and elsewhere**

We have seen a definite increase of interest in diaspora studies in Ukraine in recent years, and with it, in Ukrainian-Canadian studies. There are now at least four diaspora studies institutes in Ukraine: the Institute for the Study of the Ukrainian Diaspora in Kyiv (director, Ihor Vynnychenko); the Institute for the Study of the Ukrainian Diaspora at the Ostrih Academy National University (director, Alla Atamanenko); the Centre for Humanitarian Cooperation with the Ukrainian Diaspora (director, Stanislav Ponomarevsky) at Hohol State University in Nizhyn; and the International Institute of Education, Culture, and Ties with the Diaspora (MIOK) (director, Iryna Kliuchkovska) at Lviv National Polytechnical University. As well, the recently established Ramon Hnatyshyn Canadian Studies Centre at Chernivtsi National University (director, Vitaliy Makar) has a strong Ukrainian Canadian studies component. There had been an interest in Ukrainian-Canadian and diaspora studies in Ukraine even earlier, but now we are seeing this elevated to an institutional basis.

All the same, the study of Ukrainians in Canada faces some daunting challenges in Ukraine. The framework in which topics in this area are approached is commonly the development of Ukrainian consciousness and national strengths. Researchers often have little knowledge about Canadian circumstances and an “iffy” knowledge of English. And then there is the fundamental problem of limited access to primary source material. As a result, the writing from Ukraine on Ukrainian-Canadian topics is often weaker than it could be, although there are promising signs that indicate definite potential. I would suggest that the translation of some key works on Ukrainian-Canadian history into Ukrainian—starting with Orest Martynowych’s *Ukrainians in Canada: The Formative Period, 1891–1924*—would aid the situation considerably.

I have tagged on an “elsewhere” reference here as a convenient way of mentioning that we have seen an interest in Ukrainian-Canadian studies by scholars from such far-flung places as Germany, Korea, and Australia as well as closer to home in the United States.

**Ukrainian-Canadian ethnography**

This aspect of Ukrainian-Canadian studies should do very well in the foreseeable future. In large measure this is due to the work of the Peter and Doris Kule Centre for Ukrainian and Canadian Folklore at the University of Alberta, which includes two endowed chairs (Huculak, Andriy Nahachewsky; and Kule, Natalie Kononenko) and the Bohdan Medwidsky Ukrainian Folklore Archives, as well as Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village outside of Edmonton. As a result, there is a solid cohort of students and researchers in the field in and around Edmonton. In addition, the Folklore Centre has been working on a major project dealing with “Local Culture and Diversity on the Prairies,” which provides a significant new data base for future research.
Ukrainian-Canadian history

This aspect of Ukrainian-Canadian studies should also do fairly well in the foreseeable future. It is not a large area of study, but it has been making consistent progress. The dedication of resources by the CIUS has definitely helped in this regard, both for undertaking research and writing toward a second of three projected volumes in a synthetic history of Ukrainians in Canada of Volume Two and in the staging of periodic conferences which provide an impetus for new scholarship. As well, the promotion of the annual conference of the Canadian Association of Slavists as a forum for presenting papers on Ukrainian-Canadian themes has helped the field. (As a side note, the 2006 CAS conference featured a “record” six panels on Ukrainian-Canadian topics; the number is not large in and of itself, but it is significant for a small field of study.) At this time it is difficult to assess the impact of the growing number of “diaspora” conferences in Ukraine on the field.

Potential impact of digitalization and the Internet

In short, the potential impact on the field is huge. Even now it is underway as part of the overall process of the digitalization and microfilming of information sources regarding Canadian history. As a result, a fair number of books and theses on Ukrainian-Canadian topics are available on-line (eg, the long-out-of-print Occasional Papers put out by the Alberta Historic Sites Service on the basis of research undertaken for Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village). The Ukrainian Canadian Program is joining the fray and will soon have resource materials (including two Ukrainian-Canadian theme issues of the Journal of Ukrainian Studies) posted on its Web pages at the CIUS site.

The digitalization of newspapers (and their posting on-line) will facilitate research in the future, particularly since these should include a built-in search capability. The potential digitalization of Ukrainian-Canadian newspapers will be expedited due to the fact that most of those published before 1970 were microfilmed as an early undertaking of the CIUS—the fact that they are already microfilmed simply makes the process easier. This may take years to happen, as questions of money, posting sites, and access would have to be worked out, but certainly there is real potential with this.

I would also raise the issue of the need to digitize old audio-taped materials (oral histories in particular) related to Ukrainian-Canadian studies. A significant number of them date back to the 1970s and 1980s. Some institutions (e.g., Multicultural Historical Society of Ontario) are doing this in a systematic way, while other (e.g., Manitoba Museum of Man) would like to do this, but lack the resources to do it now.