

**Robert B. KLYMASZ (ed.), «The Ukrainians in Canada 1891-1991», *Material History Bulletin* 29 (spring 1989) (Ottawa/Hull, Canadian Museum of Civilization and the National Museum of Science and Technology, pp. 118)**

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One feature of the current cowboy poetry revival is a willingness by the poets to include poems by past masters in their recitations. Even in Canada, this generally means the American past masters: Bruce Kiskaddon, S. Omar Barker, and the like. *Ballads of the Badlands* demonstrates that there is also a Canadian tradition of cowboy versifying. It will be interesting to see whether or not some of the fine performers from Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia will take the hint.

"Collectors, analysts, and lovers of folk poetry" (Renwick 1980, ix) will welcome both of these volumes. While Peake's western *Ballads* fit a more clearly identified commercial niche, my reading of the vernacular poetry of Alberta suggests to me that an audience for Whelan's more sensitive verse might exist far inland from the Miramichi, if it can be found.

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Robert B. KLYMASZ (ed.), «The Ukrainians in Canada 1891-1991», *Material History Bulletin* 29 (spring 1989) (Ottawa/Hull, Canadian Museum of Civilization and the National Museum of Science and Technology, pp. 118).

Of the many publications that have been dedicated to the 1991 centenary of Ukrainian settlement in Canada, one of the earliest is a thematic edition of the *Material History Bulletin*, produced by guest editor Robert B.

Klymasz. This volume stands out physically from the others with the bright yellow and blue ink on the cover. It stands out conceptually by being the first volume "to focus exclusively on the material culture of a single minority ethnic group in Canada" (p. 1). However, many other aspects of the publication; the format, the rubrics, the methods, and the general academic quality, conform closely to the norms of the series.

Of the many ideas related to studying Canadian ethnic minorities, the concept of "self-consciousness" is recurrent and important in my mind. On the one hand, some of the material culture of a group is produced unself-consciously. "For the most part, immigrants re-created a... landscape patterned on that of their homeland simply because it did not occur to them to do otherwise" (Lehr, p. 4). These objects are identified as "ethnic" primarily by the researcher or some other external observer. On the other hand, we also have objects which are consciously made or used as symbols of identity by the community under consideration. Many of the articles in this collection explicitly or implicitly deal with this concept, and shed light on its ramifications in material culture.

One of the strong themes around which the articles are grouped is that of domestic life on the prairie farmstead. Roman Fodchuk contributes a description of the objects and processes involved in building an early house on the prairies. Radomir Bilash deals with peel ovens. Michael Ewanchuk describes tools and farming techniques of Ukrainian pioneers. Peter Melnycky explores the history and practices associated with draft horses, learned by Ukrainians mostly after immigration. Jim Shockey and Michael Rowan each contribute short viewpoints on early Ukrainian furniture and its place in the world of antiques.

Bilash's article serves as an interesting illustration of the concept of ethnic self-consciousness identified above. The majority of Ukrainian ovens in Canada were constructed unself-consciously in the early part of this century. One of the major adaptations in Canada was an eventual relocation to outside the house (cooking and heating indoors were now performed with a purchased metal cookstove and metal pots) and the addition of a vent hole at the rear of the oven cavity. The oven is the object of a small revival, self-consciously valued as an item of curiosity, of nostalgia, and as a marker of ethnic identity. Modern examples are often urban and made with innovative materials. They are generally located outdoors, and feature a rear vent hole. The sense that these last two features are Canadian innovations has been lost, and this form of the oven is generally imagined as the "proper" and traditional form common in Ukraine in pre-emigration times.

The largest thematic cluster in the publication deals with religious architecture. Though the *Material History Bulletin* frequently includes arti-

cles on the sacred landscape in its volumes, this subject takes up some half of this particular tome. The specific interest in churches and graveyards is partially explained, as Klymasz notes, by the “aftermath of worldwide celebrations in 1988 marking the millennium of Ukrainian Christianity” (Klymasz, p. 1). The formalized and symbolic characteristics of religion render it somewhat self-conscious in all contexts, and perhaps exempt its associated artifacts from the dichotomy established above. On the other hand, in western Ukraine, as in many other societies, “apart from its spiritual meaning, the church came to represent ethnic identity; religion...became associated with a cluster of culture” (Lehr, p. 4). Thus, it may be expected to exhibit some of the features of an ethnic phenomenon as well.

John Lehr contributes an article in which he paints a general framework for interpreting the phenomenon of Ukrainian Canadian church architecture in broad historical context. The first phase of church building produced structures that gave an appearance generally reminiscent of old country counterparts (with allowance for the economy of the Canadian agricultural frontier and the dearth of experienced builders). Specialist carpenters/church builders dominated the second phase, as they established reputations for building larger and more ornate wood-frame churches. These structures and their builders exhibited clear signs of both old country and Canadian influence. The monumental structures of Father Philip Ruh (an Oblate missionary from Alsace who worked with Ukrainian rite communities) merit special mention. His thirty or more projects include several of the most prominent Ukrainian Catholic churches across western Canada. They, too, evince both western and Byzantine inspiration. The latest phase, in the post-war era, is characterized by an attempt at fusion of contemporary architectural materials, liturgical demands, and recognizable symbols of Ukrainianness. A number of architects have proposed a variety of solutions, not always successful. It is clear that the demand for explicit and recognizable symbols of Ukrainianness (even if superficial or contrived) increases in direct relationship with the integration of the church architect (and the parishioners) into the Canadian milieu.

The article by David Goa provides a third illustration of our topic, and reveals a third pattern in the data. He examines three Ukrainian Catholic churches in Edmonton *vis a vis* their manifestation of Eastern Christian spiritual tradition. The parishes are well chosen and the discussion is lively, as they represent a wide diversity in experience. If faithfulness to Eastern tradition can be simplified and visualized as a single axis, then the oldest church (built by 1947) falls near the midway in the spectrum. The second oldest (built by 1967) is most Latinized, and the youngest (opened 1983) is most Eastern. This pattern reveals a complex interplay of several factors. The “dual nature” of the eldest parish and the “more assimilated” church of the

1960s may have been expected, given the degree of Latinization of the Ukrainian Catholic church in the old country and in its first decades in Canada. The most striking case, then, is the most recent church and its community. Its members have gone to great lengths to "purify" the Byzantine aspects of their building as much as possible, certainly beyond the experience of their previous parishes. This movement of "Easternization" is, to a large degree, a function of the high level of ethnic self-consciousness of the parishioners. It is further boosted by a complementary movement in the Catholic Church since the Second Vatican Council and other factors. In this case, the self-conscious ethnic (and somewhat theological) revival relates not to roots of 100, but rather 1000 years ago.

Other articles dealing with the church and material culture include reports by Diana Thomas and Brad Loewen on surveys of Ukrainian churches in Alberta and Manitoba respectively. Stella Hryniuk documents the story of one of Ruh's churches which was recently demolished. A.M. Kostecki describes a variety of different forms of church and cemetery crosses. Bohdan Mewidsky looks at the material culture of three old prairie cemeteries, and Enrico Carlson-Cumbo comments on recent urban graveyards.

This volume of *Material History Bulletin* also includes a few short contributions on other topics; folk medicine by Andrea Klymasz, iconography by Sister Angelica (Hodowansky), an exhibition of Ukrainian breads by Olya Marko, and a description of the Ukrainian Museum of Canada by Vera Nokony.

Several of the articles in this volume provide the first rigorously academic treatment of the processes or objects involved. The collection contributes clearly to our understanding of the Ukrainian Canadian experience, the concept of "ethnicity", and the Canadian experience as a whole. In all instances, it is welcome.

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Betsy HEARNE, *Beauty and the Beast: Visions and Revisions of an Old Tale* (Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, 1991, pp. 247, ISBN 0-226-32240-8).

In 1756, Madame Le Prince de Beaumont wrote "La Belle et la