FIELD NOTES FROM UKRAINIAN CANADA

Vol. 1, no. 1 (Winter 2005)

We welcome you to the first issue of the quarterly electronic bulletin Field Notes from Ukrainian Canada. The intention of “Field Notes” is to provide information and updates about events and developments related to Ukrainian Canadian studies. The bulletin is published under the auspices of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies’ Ukrainian Canadian Programme (UCP). It supplants an earlier irregular bulletin also published under the “Field Notes” banner. For the sake of simplicity we have decided to begin a new numeration of the bulletin with this issue.

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Conferences

The Canadian Association of Slavists will be holding its annual conference on May 29–31, 2005 in London, Ontario in conjunction with the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences (“the Learneds”). Details concerning the conference and application forms are posted at the CAS Website: http://www.ualberta.ca/~csp/cas/association.html. The deadline for paper/panel proposals was Friday, February 4, 2005, but there is a provision for late submissions, albeit with a fee attached. No submissions will be accepted after March 22, 2005.

The UCP has submitted proposals for two panel sessions, including one on literature. The Canadian Association for Ukrainian Ethnology has also organized a panel dealing with some of the structures recently moved to the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village (more on this below) as well as a special session based on the "Local Culture and Diversity on the Prairies” project being undertaken by the Ukrainian Folklore Centre at the University of Alberta.

The Canadian Ethnic Studies Association will hold its biennial conference on October 13–16, 2005 in Ottawa. Details and application forms are posted at the CESAs Web site: http://www.ucalgary.ca/CESA/. The deadline for submitting paper proposals is March 31, 2005.

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Special Ukrainian Canadian Issue of the Journal of Ukrainian Studies

The forthcoming Winter 2003 issue of the Journal of Ukrainian Studies (Vol. 28, no. 2) will feature six articles on Ukrainian life in Canada as well as reviews of several recent publications on Ukrainian Canadian topics. It will appear in February-March. The authors include Orest Martynowych, Andriy Nahachewsky, Uliana (Elaine) Holowach-Amiot, Myroslaw Tataryn, Myron Momryk, and Lisa Grekul. The issue is guest edited by Andrij Makuch.

Individual copies of this issue will be available for purchase. The total cost is $20.43 ($14.00 + $5.00 shipping and GST). Orders can be placed by calling 780-492-2972 or by faxing (780) 492-4967. Payment may be made by cheque, money order, VISA or Master Card. Alternately, the issue can be ordered on the Web site http://www.utoronto.ca/cius/.
On the Museum Front

The Ukrainian Canadian Archives and Museum of Alberta (UCAMA) celebrated its 30th anniversary with a banquet at the Chateau Louis in Edmonton on October 23, 2004. The evening’s programme included a presentation of the planned renovation of the Lodge Hotel/Brighton Block, the Archives-Museum’s future home. The structures were purchased by UCAMA in 2003 for $1.6 million; the rehabilitation is estimated to cost $5.7 million. A good start on covering these costs was made that evening with an announcement by the Honourable Gene Zwozdesky, the then-Minister of Community Development, of a $3 million contribution to UCAMA from the Alberta Gaming’s Community Facility Enhancement Program.

The Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre (Oseredok) in Winnipeg celebrated its 60th anniversary with a Gala Dinner and Dance at the city’s Fairmont Hotel on November 10, 2004. As well, Oseredok has prepared a special exhibition—“A Legacy of Trust: Treasures from the Permanent Collection—in recognition of its sixtieth. It will be on display at the Oseredok Gallery from November 14, 2004 to March 19, 2005. The Centre, which has seen a considerable revival over the last few years, certainly deserves to celebrate.

Over the past year the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village (UCHV) near Edmonton has acquired and relocated ten historic buildings to the site as part of the Village Enrichment Project. This Project, a partnership with the Friends of the Ukrainian Village Society, will see the eventual relocation and restoration of over 30 buildings, finally bringing the original plan for the Village to completion. Starting in Fall 2004 research on a number of these buildings - the Morecambe school, the Luzan post office, the Alberta Lumber Co. cement shed, the St. Michael harness and shoe repair shop and residence, and the Radway post office-has commenced. Funding for this research activity has been provided by the Friends Society. An electronic bulletin concerning Village activity can be obtained by contacting Brian Cherwick at bcherwick@shaw.ca.

New Titles of Interest

Rozumnyj, Jaroslav (ed). Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow: The Ukrainian Community in Canada (Winnipeg: Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in Canada [UVAN], 2004)
• A mix of articles examining the Ukrainian community and providing prognoses for its future, with an additional article by Jaroslav Rozumnyj looking at the history of UVAN in Canada.

Lazebnyk, Stanislav and Havura, Olha. Rozdumy na mostu z dvobichnym rukhom (Kyiv: Etnos, 2004)
• Officially titled “Reflections on a Bridge with Traffic Travelling Both Ways” in English, this is largely a collection of sketches about people with whom the authors—both of whom had been active in the Ukraina Society—have met though the years. Its publication was sponsored by the Alberta Ukrainian Heritage Foundation, whose previous book project had been the document collection Na skryzhaliakh istorii (2003)

• Now available from the University of Calgary Press. ISBN 1-55238-137-4. ($34.95)

• A revised edition of the biography about “Saskatchewan’s first potter.”
• The documentary drama “Rupchan: Spirit of a Prairie Potter” appeared in 1992. It was based on the first edition (1991) of the Silverthorne biography


You can order this Ph.D. dissertation online at [www.peterlang.net](http://www.peterlang.net) or by direct link at [http://www.peterlang.net/all/remote.cfm?vDom=3&vRub=3060&vID=53106](http://www.peterlang.net/all/remote.cfm?vDom=3&vRub=3060&vID=53106). Dr. Koenke was assisted with some of her investigations during a research trip that she made to Canada in 2002. She is currently living in Kyiv, Ukraine, where she recently obtained a position at the Goethe Institute.

• The publicity material for this book reads as follows: “With over 100 colour photographs, Folk Furniture of Canada’s Doukhobors, Hutterites, Mennonites and Ukrainians offers a stunning visual record of the culture and values of these four ethno-cultural groups. Authors John Fleming and Michael Rowan take an interpretive approach to the importance of folk furniture and its intimate ties to people’s values and beliefs. Photographer James Chambers beautifully captures both representative and exceptional artifacts, from large furniture items such as storage chests, benches, cradles, and tables, to small kitchen items including spoons, breadboxes, and cookie cutters.”

“Journey of Hope: The Ukrainian Catholic Church in Alberta”
• A feature-length documentary about the Ukrainian Catholic church in Alberta from its earliest days to the present. Directed by Harvey Spak (“Wood Mountain Poems”), it incorporates interviews, archival photos, and historical film footage.

This video can be ordered from the chancery office of the Edmonton eparchy for $20.00 plus shipping and handling. E-mail: chancery@edmontoneparchy.com; phone: (780) 424-5496; post: Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton, 9645-108 Ave, Edmonton, AB T5H 1A3.

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Obituaries

We wish to pay tribute to two individuals involved in the field of Ukrainian Canadian studies who passed away recently. Their obituaries from the *Winnipeg Free Press* are reprinted below.

**MICHAEL MARUNCHAK**  
*Winnipeg Free Press*  
November 25, 2004

**DR. MICHAEL H. MARUNCHAK**  
Peacefully, on Sunday, November 21, 2004, Dr. Michael H. Marunchak passed away after a lengthy illness. Michael was born in Dalesheva, Ukraine where he grew up and completed his primary schooling. He went on to study at the University of Lviv (1936 to 1940), then on to Prague University where he attained a Ph.D in Law (1941). After his arrival in Canada (1948), he attended the University of Manitoba where he attained a degree in Social Work (1955). Upon graduation, he went to work for the Child Guidance Clinic in Winnipeg School Division No. 1, where he remained until his retirement.

Michael was an historian and community activist. During the Second World War, he spent several years as a prisoner in Concentration Camps, which undoubtedly honed his political activism. He headed the League of Ukrainian Political Prisoners and had been active in the Ukrainian Canadian Committee National and the World Congress of Free Ukrainians. He had served as President of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in Canada, the Markian Shashkevych Centre in Winnipeg and other community organizations. He was the author of numerous books, articles and studies on the history of Ukrainians in Canada, of various works on Ukraine and the Ukrainian Diaspora, and editor of a number of publications. He compiled a considerable private archive of materials related to Ukrainian-Canadian history. Michael is survived by his wife Natalia, of almost 60 years; daughter Larysa; son Lev and granddaughter Taisa, plus many relatives still living in Ukraine. Funeral services will be conducted at Sts. Vladimir and Olga Cathedral, 115 McGregor St., of which Michael was a longtime member. Panakhyda will be sung 7:00 p.m., Thursday, November 25 and Divine Liturgy will be celebrated 10:00 a.m., Friday, November 26 followed by interment in All Saints Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, if friends so desire, donations may be made to Markian Shashkevych Centre, Winnipeg, MB, in care of North Winnipeg Credit Union, 310 Leila Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2V 1L8. Special thanks to Dr. Gorski and support staff of Concordia Hospital. May God grant him Eternal Memory.

**VICHNAYA PAM'YAT KORBAN FUNERAL CHAPEL 956-2193**

**MICHAEL EWANCHUK**  
*Winnipeg Free Press*  
August 29, 2004

Michael was an historian and community activist. During the Second World War, he spent several years as a prisoner in Concentration Camps, which undoubtedly honed his political activism. He headed the League of Ukrainian Political Prisoners and had been active in the Ukrainian Canadian Committee National and the World Congress of Free Ukrainians. He had served as President of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in Canada, the Markian Shashkevych Centre in Winnipeg and other community organizations. He was the author of numerous books, articles and studies on the history of Ukrainians in Canada, of various works on Ukraine and the Ukrainian Diaspora, and editor of a number of publications. He compiled a considerable private archive of materials related to Ukrainian-Canadian history. Michael is survived by his wife Natalia, of almost 60 years; daughter Larysa; son Lev and granddaughter Taisa, plus many relatives still living in Ukraine. Funeral services will be conducted at Sts. Vladimir and Olga Cathedral, 115 McGregor St., of which Michael was a longtime member. Panakhyda will be sung 7:00 p.m., Thursday, November 25 and Divine Liturgy will be celebrated 10:00 a.m., Friday, November 26 followed by interment in All Saints Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, if friends so desire, donations may be made to Markian Shashkevych Centre, Winnipeg, MB, in care of North Winnipeg Credit Union, 310 Leila Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2V 1L8. Special thanks to Dr. Gorski and support staff of Concordia Hospital. May God grant him Eternal Memory.

**VICHNAYA PAM'YAT KORBAN FUNERAL CHAPEL 956-2193**
working on the midnight shift, he was thus able to attend daytime classes at the Detroit Institute of Technology and at Detroit City College now Wayne State University. In 1930 Michael returned to Canada and attended Wesley (United) College and Provincial Normal School in Winnipeg. Late Michael is survived by nephews Bob Bohonos, Walter Bohonos, Peter Bohonos; nieces Joni Evanchuk-Kind, Claudia Kafer and Darcy Ewanchuk. He was predeceased by his wife Muriel 1997, father Wasyl 1948, mother Paraskeva 1953, infant sister Mary 1904, brother John 1981, sister Nettie 1998, brother Peter 1994, brother Alexander 1958 and nephew Billy 1962. After graduation, Michael's first position as teacher was at Beckett (Svoboda) School near Stuartburn. He later accepted principalships at Happy Thought High School in East Selkirk, and at North Springfield. It was at North Springfield that Michael met Muriel Smith, the primary teacher whom he married. Michael and Muriel moved to Cartwright where he had accepted the principalship of the high school. While in Cartwright he enlisted in the R.C.A.F. where he served as instructor of navigation and as Officer in Charge of Airmanship. As an instructor he had various Canadian postings: Saskatoon, Regina, Rivers, Rockcliffe, Moncton and Dartmouth. He was happy that Muriel was able to join him in some of the locations. He also served as a personnel counsellor to the retiring servicemen. His last assignment was as an instructor in mathematics and English with the C.V.T. Michael retired with the rank of Flight Lieutenant. While teaching, Michael also continued his own education, attaining his B.A., B.Ed. degrees, and M.Ed. from the University of Manitoba. Following his retirement from the R.C.A.F. Michael became the first Ukrainian Manitoban to receive a permanent appointment as Inspector of Schools. He served in the Roblin-Grandview-Gilbert Plains inspectorial area and, after several years, he transferred to Carman and later to Winnipeg, where he served for twenty years as inspector of elementary and high schools, evaluating, in particular, instruction in science and mathematics at the senior grade level. His special assignment was the statistical analysis of the High School Examinations then conducted by the Department of Education. He also lectured on the preparation and measurement of examinations. During his years as Inspector of Schools Michael Ewanchuk served as president of the Manitoba Educational Research Council, the University of Manitoba Alumni Association, the Manitoba School Inspectors' Association, the Canadian College of Teachers and the Canadian School Superintendents' and Inspectors' Association (CASSI). He represented CASSI at the American Science Semenal in Washington, D.C., and at the conference of the American School Administrators in Chicago. Michael Ewanchuk also served on various curriculum committees. In 1964 Premier D. Roblin appointed him chair of a curriculum committee to prepare the first Ukrainian program of studies, and to select appropriate textbooks for the teaching of Ukrainian in Manitoba high schools. Michael Ewanchuk's contributions to education have been recognized in many ways. He was a Honorary Life Member of the Canadian Association of School Administrators and of the Canadian College of Teachers. He received recognition from the Manitoba Modern Language Association. In 1973 Michael Ewanchuk retired as Inspector of Schools and began devoting his time to his avocation of writing. A lifelong supporter of the Ukrainian community, as a student, he was secretary of a Ukrainian students' club, member of the International Students' Club of the YMCA and member of the Ukrainian National Association. While at Normal School, Michael was a member of the P. Mohyla Institute at 11 Kennedy Street where he served as assistant to the rector, was president of the Student Club Prometheus, and was active in the debating club. He was active in the Ukrainian Teachers' Society. This interest was shown in writing about Ukrainian settlement and Ukrainians who have contributed to Canadian society. Through the years he contributed articles to the Ukrainian Voice and American Svoboda. Then he began concentrating on an area in which he had personal life experience. He conducted historical research in various archives in Manitoba, in the Canadian Archives in Ottawa, the United States Archives in Washington, D.C., and the Hawaiian Archives in Hilo and Honolulu. He was awarded a certificate, Hramota and a medal of recognition by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, and received a certificate of recognition from the Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences in June 2000. For his many books he has received the
Margaret McWilliams award from the Manitoba Historical Society. For his contribution to education he was awarded a Doctor of Laws degree from the University of Winnipeg and a Doctor of Canon Law degree from St. John's College of the University of Manitoba. In his historical work he was encouraged and assisted by his wife, Muriel. He called her his primary editor and proofreader. The couple celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary in 1991. In 1992 Muriel encouraged Michael to visit his ancestral village in Ukraine. Even though she had been ill at home with diabetes since 1980, and her condition was worsening, Michael took care of Muriel at their home until her death on February 21, 1997. Encouraged by his memory of her he has produced 16 books, and with two volumes still in preparation. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the charity of your choice. Panakhyda service will be held on Sunday, August 29, at 7:00 p.m. at Holy Trinity Orthodox Cathedral, 1175 Main Street, with funeral service on Monday, August 30, at 10:00 a.m. also at Holy Trinity Cathedral. Interment to follow at Glen Eden Memorial Gardens. Arrangements entrusted to: GLEN EDEN FUNERAL HOME 4477 MAIN STREET 338-7111 Family and friends are invited to sign the Book of Condolences at www.gleneden-mb.ca

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Feature

We wish to end with a feature item by Dr. Robert Bohdan Klymasz. Titled “Crucial Problems in Ukrainian Canadian Studies Today,” it is an abridged version of an opinion piece presented on May 29, 2004 at a conference of the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in Canada held in conjunction with the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences in Winnipeg.

CRUCIAL PROBLEMS IN UKRAINIAN CANADIAN STUDIES TODAY

by
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The year 1991 was certainly a year of celebration: it marked the centenary of Ukrainian settlement in Canada and, of course, it saw the liberation of Ukraine from Soviet-Russian control. Less manifest but just as crucial was the liberation of Ukrainian studies in Canada from a messianic ideology that constantly harped on the need for diaspora Ukrainian studies to focus on topics tabooed in Soviet scholarship.

This was, of course, the ideology that fostered the founding and funding of Harvard’s Ukrainian Research Institute and several other university-based Ukrainian research centers in Canada and the United States. The slogan of the day was aby svit pro nas znav (that the world know who we are). And in Canada alone,
academia merged with national pride to produce not one but at least four histories of Ukraine -- all in English, of course (Doroshenko, Hrushevsky, Subtelny, and Magosci,). Because this frenzy of academic activity focused on the use of the English language as the vehicle for communication, it inadvertently sabotaged efforts to raise the academic profile of the Ukrainian language—a trend that reached its climax with the Encyclopaedia of Ukraine and continues via the on-going multi-volume Hrushevsky translation project (entrusted to the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies) and Harvard’s recent publication of Povist’ vremennyykh lit (often cited in English as The Tale of Bygone Years)—a Kyivan Rus’ chronicle (and one of many pawns in the perennial tug of war over its ownership between Ukrainian and Russian academic camps) that was reconstructed at Harvard’s Ukrainian Research Institute over a period of two decades.

Although studies of diaspora phenomena may lack the glamour of medieval Ukraine, there is considerable evidence that such studies are attracting more and more serious attention as scholars come to realize the need for Ukrainianists to acknowledge diversity and to examine a wide range of phenomena and expressions of “Ukrainianness” that were bypassed or poorly dealt with in the past. As far as the Ukrainian Canadian experience is concerned, this range includes events like the internment of Ukrainians during World War I, publications like C.H. Andrusyshen’s monumental Ukrainian-English Dictionary (which appeared almost half a century ago in 1955), grass-roots phenomena like Ukrainian country music on the prairies, and even Savella Stechishin’s best-selling compendium, Traditional Ukrainian Cookery. For Ukrainianists today, the crucial question is: how does one approach these Canadian Ukrainian phenomena? Are these simply minor diaspora adjuncts—interesting, perhaps, but only marginal insofar as the grand landscape of classical Ukrainian studies is concerned?

My purpose here is to draw attention to three models – three possibilities, three kinds of visions, mentalities or approaches that differ from one another, albeit at the same time they are related to one another in one way or another. One of these models, and only one, has validity as a just and productive charter—a perspective that advances the development of Ukrainian studies. The absence of such a model was demonstrated recently by the electronic bickering around the question of Ukrainian studies that followed the appearance of Taras Kuzio’s article “Myths about Canada’s Ukrainian Diaspora”—bickering that underlines the kind of dissension which has characterized Ukrainian studies here (and abroad) since 1991 and that, in my opinion, shows a general loss of direction, meaning and purpose.

The first model for Ukrainian studies that can be identified as a possibility is exclusionist in nature. The exclusive approach quite simply openly downplays and excludes variation, digression or diversion; it is an approach that advocates a single vision and ignores or outlaws all others. The best example here would be the old Soviet Ukrainian scholarship with its strict conformity to Marxist and Leninist principles. In Canada a soft version of exclusionist sentiment is found in Quebec, for example, where descendants of Quebec’s original French stock form a clique and enjoy special privileges; elsewhere in Canada, those who are similarly well-connected are also members of exclusionist groups with special powers. Even talk concerning “mixed marriages” assumes underlying exclusionist attitudes. And as a Ukrainianist, my favourite example of a “mixed marriage” comes from Alberta where a Ukrainian couple reportedly found it difficult to overcome the barriers of

1 The article appeared as an op-ed piece in the Kyiv Post on 8 April 2004 and set off a flurry of responses and counter-responses, mainly in cyberspace.
yore: he was a Bukovinian Orthodox fellow, but she was a Catholic from Galicia. And if we push this particular notion of a mixed marriage still further, we can assume that one of the reasons secular organizations like the Ukrainian National Federation emerged in the 1930s in Canada was to offer a neutral playing field, a hang-out, if you will, for Bukovynians and Galicians, Orthodox and Catholics.

The second model or approach is, in theory at least, a complete antithesis to the exclusionist way. INclusionist in nature, this inclusive approach is seemingly more tolerant: like a mother hen, it tends to be warm, and nurturing; it gives recognition to, welcomes, embraces and dialogues with diversion—but this recognition is based on the assumption that the mother hen is in control, that there is a single commanding, authoritative centrum. Although strict conformity is not a verbalized requirement, nonetheless, outside this centrum, the world tends to be marginal, parochial, peripheral, secondary, derivative. From this perspective, inclusionism can be a subtle form of open exclusionism, a tendency reflected in paternalistic attitudes shown by government vis-à-vis Canada’s aboriginal communities… “we welcome you into our fold” as long as you …The issue of a central authority, the tacit cornerstone of inclusionism, is a common topic when it comes to world religions like Christianity vis-à-vis the Vatican. And perhaps, in some regards, there’s only a fine line that separates / divides / distinguishes INclusionism from Exclusionism—two sides of the same coin, so to speak. The first—inclusionism—is more covert; the other—exclusionism—is more overt. Perhaps the best example of the above would be the assumption of the State of Israel as the centrum vis-à-vis world Jewery—that is, the Jewish “diaspora.” This term and concept has particular relevance here insofar as it was hijacked by Ukrainianists to fuel the formulation of a similar model to cover a so-called “Ukrainian diaspora.”

The phrase “Ukrainian diaspora” has strong INclusionist overtones and assumptions. It is a notion that suggests and possibly insists that, like during the Roman Empire when all roads led to Rome, for Ukrainianists all roads must lead to Kyiv. However, for some, like the late leftist, Peter Krawchuk, the diaspora approach was distasteful since it implied that his investigations into the Ukrainian Canadian experience were somehow unimportant and second-class. Similar dissatisfaction has been voiced by Jaroslav Rozumnyj, a leading figure in the Ukrainian Academy of Arts and Sciences in Canada (“UVAN”):

“The term ‘Diaspora’ is related to the Jewish messianic dispersion and it has its own deep religious and eschatological meaning rooted in Judaism. Thus, in my opinion, the Ukrainian use of this term in relation to the Ukrainian emigration is an artificial calque.”

In general, however, the diaspora approach was just fine for nationalistic Ukrainian émigrés who, after years of carrying the torch of academic freedom, so to speak, became weary and tired of guarding, agonizing, fostering and maintaining Ukrainian culture and studies outside Ukraine. For them, the “diaspora” idea coupled with a free Ukraine meant two things: it offered a much needed respite, a breather from all that frenzy (why not simply ship all those Ukrainian libraries to Ukraine where they were needed and could be used?); and at the same time,

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“diaspora” suggested that Ukrainians living outside the borders of Ukraine proper had a say in running the new state which, after all, was indebted to the émigré diaspora for its support and service as a “cash cow.”

The third approach, the one I advocate and support is *plurality* – an approach that recognizes, appreciates and accepts diversity, giving autonomy, independence and equality of stature to all streams of Ukrainian studies *without* prejudice. These parallel streams can be likened to a musical score where different voices and different instruments unite and combine to produce a total effect. These streams have a single fountainhead or wellspring but they run parallel to one another, and each stream is just as important or noteworthy as any of the others. From this perspective, studies that focus on Ukrainian phenomena in Canada, or—if you prefer—the Ukrainian Canadian experience, are just as valid and legitimate as Ukrainian studies focusing on medieval developments in Old Ukraine. With this kind of plurality, different methods and alternative perspectives are not only tolerated but encouraged in recognition of diversity as a form of enrichment. Together these different streams constitute and produce a rich panorama – a symphony that uses one score but employs many different instruments – all committed to the same end.

In addition to these three approaches, EXclusive, INclusive, Pluralistic – I wish to draw attention to some other issues of crucial importance for Ukrainian studies in general and Ukrainian Canadian studies in particular. Perhaps first and foremost is the need to define “Ukrainian”. In this connection, one may note the demise of certain kinds of vocabulary and the rise of others. For instance, it is no longer politically correct to talk about *ethnic* groups, or to use *ethnicity* as a concept (probably due to the widespread contempt for “ethnic cleansing”, a phrase first popularized by the media some years ago). Instead of “ethnos” and its various derivatives, the current trend is to use a suffix, *-ness*, tacked on to ethno-cultural designations like Indian+ness in aboriginal studies and Ukrainian+ness in Ukrainian Canadian studies.

So what IS the definition of Ukrainianness today? What are its properties? Is it something geographical / territorial, linguistic? Is it something one inherits? Are there different degrees of Ukrainianness? What are the qualifications for one to be called “a Ukrainian”? If it’s a commitment to an idea or ideology, what is that idea or ideology? And what relevance does that idea or ideology have today for me or for you?

Is there a test for Ukrainianness? Are there different degrees of levels of Ukrainianness—cool, warm, hot? Is it something biological—something in the blood, or like gender (male / female)? Do definitions vary over time, from place to place? And finally, how different from one another are definitions of Ukrainianness as they obtain here in Canada at the start of the 21st century from those that obtain elsewhere (like in Ukraine) or that were operational at other times -- for example, a century ago, when perhaps a Ukrainian was commonly perceived to be a Christian (preferably Greek Catholic or Greek Orthodox) born in Ukraine, who spoke Ukrainian (but was possibly illiterate), vis-a-vis more current notions as expressed by Canadian census-taking practices. If all of this sounds inane, perhaps it’s a sign that there’s work to do in this connection.

Complicating matters even further are the varied perceptions some people in Ukraine have about “the diaspora.” The seriousness with which it is regarded is reflected by efforts in the Verkhovna Rada in 2003 to establish a legal status for “foreign Ukrainians.”
Besides a definition for Ukrainianness, my wish list includes other topics relating to the Ukrainian Canadian experience that need attention. (Since historians, sociologists and political scientists have their own wish lists, I will confine my list to those that relate to other fields).

1. We still need a long-term, multi- and interdisciplinary study of a single Ukrainian community in Canada using a team approach and area specialists.

2. We must document and analyze all aspects of intercultural links between Ukrainian and aboriginal Canadians on the prairies.

3. We need to establish what are the aesthetics of Ukrainian life in Canada—the passion for gardening, the demise of photographing the deceased in their coffins, the appeal of the Ukrainian folk dance staged before a live audience, the zabava craze, and so on.

Finally, I wish to end off with a straightforward, but puzzling, question: how do you sell Ukrainian studies? This is a pressing bread-and-butter issue: can one earn a living specializing in, let’s say, the history of Ukrainian music? What are the job prospects?

These, I think, are some of the “crucial problems” that await our attention, individually and collectively.