



ALPHA OMEGA SOCIETY



# DIGEST

Published by  
The Alpha Omega Society  
University of Saskatchewan  
May, 1962



World like the United States or Canada. That is why, I think, every Ukrainian student society that holds dear the national name of his forefathers and values the freedom of his new homeland of Canada must speed with material and moral support to CeSUS, which leads the difficult struggle for the triumph of freedom as we have here, for the Ukrainian people in their own Ukrainian land.

Translated from Ukrainian by  
S. A. Talpash

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## Ukrainian Studies In Canadian Universities

By C. H. Andrusyshen

The problem of the establishment of Ukrainian studies on the university level had been considered by the Ukrainians living in Winnipeg at least ten years before its realization in the University of Saskatchewan in 1945. The greatest interest in that regard was shown by the late Judge J. W. Arsenych, who was much concerned about keeping the matter continually alive. To that effect several meetings were held in the Ukrainian People's Home in Winnipeg in order to activate the idea. Circumstances at that time, however, were not favorable, the main reason for the temporary failure being the lack of textbooks and of competent instructors. The authorities of the University of Manitoba on that account made no effort to give this proposition a serious thought.

In Saskatchewan this problem assumed a more promising aspect at the end of the thirties and the beginning of the forties. And for a good reason. In the university city of Saskatoon the activity of the Mohyla Institute, established in 1916, contributed greatly to keeping the idea constantly in the minds of influential individuals at the University. The greatest interest was revealed by Professor G. W. Simpson who incessantly worked towards the realization of the project until 1943, when he persuaded the former President of the University of Saskatchewan, Dr. J. S. Thomson, of the necessity of establishing a department of Slavic in which the study of the Ukrainian language and literature was to have its rightful place. And so ended the long preliminary discussions which began while yet the first President of the University, Dr. J. Murray, headed this Institution.

At first, Ukrainian was offered at the University as a non-credit subject in evening classes during the academic year 1944-45. The course given was by Dr. T. K. Pavlychenko who was Professor of Plant Ecology here. This elementary course drew more than seventy students.

Simultaneously the President appointed Dr. C. H. Andrusyshen instructor of Russian and Ukrainian languages. Dr. Pavlychenko, in fact, was an interim instructor, while the former, having been granted a fellowship by the Rockefeller Foundation, was at Harvard as a Research Fellow, preparing himself for the task. He came to Saskatoon in the fall of 1945 to assume his duties. In 1958 V. O. Buyniak was appointed Assistant Professor in the Department.

No Slavic language had been taught in any Canadian higher institution of learning until then. This University had therefore pioneered and given lead in the project which has proved so vital in the present state of world affairs.

The first credit course in the Ukrainian language and literature began in 1945. Thus far, four courses figure in the curriculum: (1) elementary, which consists of the rudiments of grammar and of the readings from the lighter authors; (2) advanced study of the grammar and a short history of Ukrainian literature, connected with the explanation of the texts from the representative Ukrainian writers; (3) Shevchenko whose poetical works contained in his **Kobzar** are fully dealt with; (4) Ivan Franko and the literary Renaissance of Western Ukraine.

University of Manitoba became the next centre of Ukrainian Studies. There the courses in Slavic were established in 1949 through the efforts of the then President of that Institution, the late Dr. A. G. S. Gillson, who fully understood the necessity of having a Department which the Ukrainian element in Manitoba might consider as the heart of their cultural and educational activity.

Dr. J. Rudnycky was the first to be appointed to conduct the linguistic and literary studies. The Department was later strengthened by Professor P. Yuzyk who, it may be remembered, did postgraduate work at the University of Saskatchewan under the supervision of Dr. Simpson. For a short time Dr. Y. Mulyk-Lucyk assisted the two mentioned. It is to be regretted that the late Dr. Leonid Bilecky was not able to continue his instruction in Ukrainian culture and literature, having established himself as an authority in these matters by his long professional work in Europe.

The number of students taking the courses in that Department was sufficiently great to warrant its continuation. The problem of establishing a credit course in Manitoba high schools has been nearly solved. Steps are being taken to begin teaching Ukrainian in the Province's high schools in 1962-63.

Manitoba possesses a fine Ukrainian section in the University library as a result of the generous contributions and donations made for that purpose by certain Ukrainians who are only too eager to maintain the Department on a high level of scholarship. Similar contributions, in the form of grants and scholarships, encourage students to study Ukrainian.

Instruction in Ukrainian at the University of Alberta unfortunately has not been given the same encouragement as in her two neighboring provinces. For several years Ukrainian there had been taught, on a non-credit basis; and only in evening classes. Those active in this enterprise are Mr. P. Lazarovich, an Edmonton barrister, and Professor O. Starchuk of the Department of Modern Languages, professor in Russian and Ukrainian. Recently, however, the Slavic Studies have become a section in the Department of Modern Languages, under the chairmanship of Professor Starchuk, and Ukrainian has been recognized as a credit subject in it. With the addition of Dr. Yar Slavutych, a poet and author of conversational Ukrainian, to the teaching personnel, Ukrainian promises to be a well-established discipline. Several scholarships have been recently established to encourage the development of Ukrainian at the University of Alberta.

In the University of Toronto Ukrainian has been offered as an elementary course for some years under the guidance of the late Dr. Y. Genyk-Berezowsky. Later under Professor George Luckyj. Owing to the indifference of the students of Ukrainian origin, the teaching of that language has not made progress.

At the University of Ottawa there exists the Eastern and North-Eastern Institute in which, among other subjects, Ukrainian is offered in its philological, literary and philosophical aspects. The University has even provided an opportunity for competent students to obtain doctorates in Slavic and has already granted both M.A. and Ph.D. degrees to some. Dr. V. Kaye, an official in the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, has taken an active part in the development of this Institute. Those who assisted him in that task were: Dr. H. Zhmurkevych, Rev. I. Nazarko, OSBM, Dr. K. Bida (its present head), Dr. W. Rudnycky, Dr. W. Litwinowich, Rev. M. Zalesky, and others.

A similar Institute exists also at the University of Montreal where Dr. D. Dontsov and Dr. Y. Russov, along with Rev. M. Zalesky, and Professors Levitzky, Bryniawsky, Fediv and Olinck figured prominently in its Ukrainian section.

A thriving Department of Slavonic Studies functions also at the University of British Columbia under the chairmanship of Dr. J. St. Clair-Sobell, but thus far no one in that Department has seriously considered adding Ukrainian to the list of its extensive courses. There is no doubt, however, that Ukrainian, being one of the more important languages in the Slavic field, will eventually press itself to the fore and will be offered at least on an elementary basis to begin with.

Since 1944 the number of students who availed themselves of the opportunity to study the language was, in a round number, about one thousand. With each passing year the number of applicants for those courses tends to increase.

Since 1947 the students of St. Joseph's College and those of the Sacred Heart Academy in Yorkton, under the supervision of the Department of Slavic Studies at the University of Saskatchewan, each year wrote examinations in Ukrainian which was credited by the University as a matriculation subject. Up to 1952 some 220 students of these two institutions successfully passed these examinations.

In 1953, after lengthy deliberations with the representatives of the Department of Education in Regina, the establishment of Ukrainian as a full credit subject in the high schools of the Province became a reality. However, only those high schools offered it where competent teachers were available. At present Ukrainian is offered in thirteen provincial school districts. This number will surely increase as the demand grows and if the requirements of the Department of Education are met.

For this purpose a special Committee is to deliberate on the proposals of new provincial centers regarding instruction in Ukrainian, and to forward its decisions to the authorities at the capital of the Province for confirmation.

The first consultative Committee consisted of: Brother Methodius (chairman), Brother Aloysius, both of St. Joseph's College, Professors G. W. Simpson and C. H. Andrusyshen, of the University, and Inspectors Peter Worobetz and J. Gorchinski of the Department of Education. To the present Committee have been added: Professor V. O. Buyniak of the Slavic Department at the University of Saskatchewan and Rev. F. Seneshen, rector of the Mohyla Institute. The inspectors are in touch with the Department whenever any important case arises.

In order to spread the instruction of Ukrainian throughout the Province, qualified teachers of course, are needed. As far as the Department of Slavic Studies at the University of Saskatchewan is able to judge, at least two hundred are now available. They may be readily selected from those teachers who have, during the past three years, taken Ukrainian in Summer School classes.

In 1950 the Senate of the University of Saskatchewan raised Ukrainian to the level equal to the other languages taught here. And so at the present time Ukrainian 102, in the College of Arts and Science, is taught not necessarily as a credited elective, but on the same basis as French 102 or German 102. Students may therefore take Ukrainian 102 instead of any other foreign language numbered 102. This measure may be considered thus far as the greatest academic achievement of the Department of Slavic Studies. Another important step has been the introduction of a credited beginner's course in Ukrainian by correspondence in 1958.

The former President of the University of Saskatchewan, Dr. W. P. Thompson, was fully cognizant of the importance of the Slavic Studies and gave the Department his full support. Although, it was under his predecessor that this Department was established, it was under the headship of Dr. Thompson that it was developed and continued to expand. It now continues its steady progress under Dr. J. W. Spinks, the present President who fully understands the importance of humanistic studies and well appreciates the place which Slavic Studies hold in the category of human knowledge. In that respect he is ably assisted by Dr. J. F. Leddy, Dean of Arts and Science, whose counsel and favorable stand with regard to this Department is exemplary. Dr. G. W. Simpson continues to strengthen our work by his constant interest in all the activities of the students of Ukrainian origin.

In 1961 Mrs. Z. Sytnick established a scholarship for students studying Ukrainian language and literature at the University of Saskatchewan. It is called "Michael Sytnick Memorial Scholarship," in the memory of her late husband, a former alumnus of this University and the P. Mohyla Institute.

In spite of certain limitations regarding Ukrainian studies in Canadian Universities, the problem now presents much more promise than it did several years ago. Wherever Ukrainian is taught, one observes substantial progress both in the academic and scholarly efforts. The number of publications is increasing, with each passing year.

The Department of Slavic Studies at the University of Saskatchewan, for example has compiled two Progressive Readers for students of Ukrainian. The one entitled **Readings in Ukrainian Authors**, edited by Dr. C. H. Andrusyshen, was published in 1949, by the Ukrainian Canadian Committee in Winnipeg. It is to be noted that the vocabulary for this reader was prepared by Professor P. Yuzyk, now of the University of Manitoba. The **Ukrainian Grammar**, now used in the elementary and advanced courses, was prepared by Mr. J. W. Stechishin, a Saskatoon barrister.

The greatest achievement of this Department was the compilation of an exhaustive Ukrainian-English Dictionary made by C. H. Andrusyshen and J. N. Krett. This was a labor of some ten years. This work, which was published by the University of Saskatchewan, and subsidized by the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations, comprises some ninety-five thousand word entries and thirty-five thousand idiomatic, proverbial and popular expressions contained in a book of some twelve hundred pages. It is preceded by a fairly extensive grammatical material which is intended to be of use to the beginner. It is hoped that this work will serve to strengthen Ukrainian studies not only in Canada but throughout the North American continent, in Europe, and in other places where Ukrainian is taught through the medium of the English language.

Professor Simpson has long been active in both political and historical matters pertaining to the Ukraine. His works in the Slavic field are well known not only on this Continent but also in Europe. Especially noteworthy is his **Historical and Geographical Atlas of Ukraine** which is now in its second edition. It was later translated into Portuguese and published in Brazil. The interest he has taken in the early history of Ukrainian immigration to the Province of Saskatchewan has led him to write a scholarly article on Delaere who performed a noteworthy role in the missionary work among the early Ukrainian settlers in central Saskatchewan. He was likewise instrumental in editing the English translation of D. Doroshenko's extensive **History of Ukraine**, for which he also wrote an illuminating Introduction. This work was published in Edmonton in 1939.

In the University of Manitoba the scholarly work is conducted chiefly by Professor J. Rudnyckyj who has been editing non-periodically a series of studies under the general term **Slavistics**. Thus far some twenty pamphlets have been published, among which is to be noted his own work on Ukrainian place names in Western Canada. He has also edited a short collection of Ukrainian folklore, which was published under the auspices of the University of Manitoba. At present Dr. Rudnyckyj is especially interested in Onomastics and is doing useful scholarly work in that regard.

Professor P. Yuzyk distinguished himself by his thorough study of the Ukrainian immigration to Manitoba. His work was published by the University of Toronto Press and has proved a valuable sourcebook for the students of that subject, and a well of information for those interested in that aspect of Canadian history.

Although the works of the late Professor Bilecky were not published under university auspices, they have nevertheless done much to strengthen Ukrainian studies throughout Canada, especially his monumental four-volume edition of Shevchenko's **Kobzar** published by the Trident Press in Winnipeg. This fully annotated work, supplied by his extensive critical studies of Shevchenko's poems has been of invaluable assistance to the instructors as well as to the students of this genius of the Ukrainian people.

In the University of Toronto Professor Luckyj has been doing useful work on Ukrainian literature under the Soviets. He has edited at least five volumes of the Canadian Slavonic Papers, which has been appearing non-periodically.

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Dr. H. Zhmurkevich formerly of the University of Ottawa, wrote an interesting study on the literature produced by Ukrainian Canadians since their pioneering days. During the time he was connected with the Slavic Department at the University of Manitoba, Dr. Y. Mulyk-Lucyk published a fine monography on the Ukrainian authoress Olha Kobylanska.

The above mentioned compilations and works of literary criticism, of course, do not exhaust the entire output of Ukrainian Slavists in Canada. Nevertheless one may readily judge from what has already appeared to what proportions the Ukrainian scholars in this country have expanded their activity in a relatively short time, in just about fifteen years.

It is evident that certain departments of Slavic in Canada seek to promote Ukrainian studies too hastily and to raise them to the level of erudition to which some of their personnel have been accustomed in Europe. In my opinion, this is an error. In Canada, as well as in the United States, this rapid manner of procedure cannot as yet be applied, for on this Continent we are dealing with students who were born here and who need to be instructed on the same basis as those who study, say, French or German. The preliminary instruction in Slavic languages must be conducted in English and must not be too hard driven, so as not to discourage those students of Ukrainian origin whose knowledge of Ukrainian, as often as not, is almost minimal. The instructors must first of all concentrate on the rudiments of grammar and, for the time being, relinquish their ambition to go into deep literary or philological studies which only deter an unprepared student from further interest in that field.

The main task of the instructors now is to concentrate on the compilation of various textbooks which, in spite of some acquirements already made, are still needed in order to afford the students the full benefit of Ukrainian courses. More and better textbooks are needed. Under such circumstances, therefore, those Canadian or American Slavists who give their full attention to producing works of advanced criticism, which as yet serve the students no useful purpose, are placing the cart before the horse. Their main task should be the production of better grammars and more appropriate textbooks. Once that is achieved, their erudite interests will later receive due appreciation. The first things, let it be stressed, must come first, in order to put the study of Ukrainian on a solid foundation. In that respect Ukrainian organizations in Canada must become fully conscious of their responsibility to have such books as are necessary published. Much depends on their generosity to give the needed impetus to the publishing activity of this kind.

It is likewise the task of Canadians of Ukrainian origin to establish and foster the institution of "Ridna Shkola" where the young ones may acquire the rudiments of Ukrainian, so that when later they enter a university they would be better equipped for a further study of the language. As is the case at present, many enroll in Ukrainian classes with but a meager knowledge of the subject and so hamper the progress of those whose preliminary preparation made them more mature. It is only too clear that a university is not the place for rudimentary instruction, except in a rare case. The knowledge of Ukrainian should be first acquired in "Ridna Shkola" or in those public schools where there is a provision for it.

Although certain limitations appear unavoidable, the study of Ukrainian in Canada and in the United States continues its steady progress. The prejudice and indifference which it suffered on the part of the educational authorities have almost disappeared. A good start has been made. Its continuance is certain, but its pace will depend on the instructors, as well as on the moral and material assistance they receive from the general public of Ukrainian extraction, especially in the matter of publishing the needed textbooks. Active support should also be given those who are competent to translate Ukrainian authors into English and so acquaint the Anglo-Saxon world with Ukrainian literature, art and culture. Only in that manner will Ukrainian studies gain a firm footing in Canadian, British, and American universities.