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## BOOK REVIEW

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Between 2016 and 2021, the Institute of Art Studies, Folkloristics, and Ethnology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine has published the first ten volumes of a twelve-volume edition – a corpus based on fieldwork materials, folklore, and ethnographic studies. This research endeavor provides an Ethnographic Image of Modern Ukraine, representing the ethnically embedded cultural traits of Ukrainians in Ukraine and beyond. This series of publications resulted from a previous research project initiated by the Institute of Art Studies, Folkloristics, and Ethnology of the National Academy of Sciences in the mid-2010s. Two significant factors motivated this project. First, radical changes took place not only in the socio-political and economic spheres but also in the cultural space of Ukraine after the proclamation of its

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independence. Secondly, there was a need for comprehensive studies on ongoing socio-cultural transformations.

The rise of a new post-Soviet reality – that is, the Ukrainian state, and the introduction of relevant state measures for protecting the national culture and its development inspired the re-actualization of researching ethnic culture. That is why the study of the preservation status and functioning of ethnic culture as an important ethnic identification marker, clarification of regional and local diversity and specificity of everyday culture, and elucidation of a socio-psychological and mental profile of the Ukrainian nation during the transition from the socialist socio-economic system to market relations has become a priority for Ukrainian ethnology. Looking at the afore-mentioned changes via ethnographic methods (direct observation of cultural and everyday realities throughout Ukraine) became topical also because such a project, relevant for any nation, of a total ethnographic survey of the population of Ukrainian ethnic lands was implemented almost a century and a half ago. It was a two-year (1869–1870) statistical and ethnographic expedition across Ukrainian lands under the direction of the famous ethnographer Pavlo Chubynskyi, which resulted in the publication of seven fundamental volumes of the Proceedings of the Ethnographic-Statistical Expedition to the West Russian Krai, which has become a powerful source base for contemporary and modern researchers.

Thus, the implementation of a similar ethnographic expeditionary project under current conditions is also dictated by the need to update and expand the source base of Ukrainian academic studies, as well as to create a comprehensive factual fund of field materials for comparative studies. At the same time, its introduction is, on the one hand, a kind of reaction to the relevant cultural and conservation initiatives of UNESCO, in particular, the latter's Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, and on the other hand, a response of national and regional cultures to powerful, leveling, and unifying globalization challenges and influences.

Given the outlined need comprehended by scholars, the ethnographic department of the Institute of Art Studies, Folkloristics and Ethnology has developed the concept and scientific and methodological tools that combine both questionnaire programs, created by predecessors and adapted to modernity, from various fields of folk culture, as well as new thematic questionnaires adjusted to the modernized manifestations of traditional Ukrainian culture in its all-national and regional features.

It was assumed that the answers of respondents, united by separate key thematic blocks of questions corresponding to the division of ethno-culture, existing in national ethnology, into its material, spiritual and socio-normative components, would serve as real criteria for grouping and categorizing the field information collected by expedition participants. According to the developed scientifically based routes, IASFE ethnographers have started a comprehensive folkloric and ethnographic expeditionary survey of Ukrainian rural settlements as early as since 2005.

Expeditionary observations covered all historical-ethnographic regions of Ukraine (namely, Podillia, Polissia, Middle Over Dnieper Lands, Carpathians, Slobozhanshchyna, and the South of Ukraine). The expeditions were conducted in the settlements of all 24 Ukrainian regions; however, the number of such expeditions and the number of surveyed villages, in which one or another part of folk culture was studied, differed significantly due to certain subjective circumstances. For example, in order to collect and complete material on relevant topics, a number



of expeditions agreed to by participants were conducted: Folk Housing Culture (350 expeditions); Household Occupations, Trades, and Crafts (320 expeditions); Traditional Casual and Ceremonial Attire (260 expeditions); Nuptial Rites (180 expeditions); and Family and the Culture of Familial Coexistence (130 expeditions).

For similar reasons, the quantitative indicators of the surveyed settlements and the interviewed informants turned out to be just as disproportionate. In particular, in order to study the topic of Household Occupations, Trades, and Crafts, ethnographers visited 399 populated areas in 170 Ukrainian districts and interviewed 795 informants, while on the topic of Traditional Casual and Ceremonial Attire, 600 settlements from 223 Ukrainian districts were observed, in which 1,480 informants were interviewed. The culture of folk alimentation was researched in 373 settlements of 175 districts of our country, in which 1,042 informants were interviewed; the clothing culture was studied in 600 settlements of 223 Ukrainian districts, where 1,430 informants were interviewed etc.

The narratives of this fundamental multi-volume work, recorded from mostly older respondents (over 8,000 people), consists of about 6,000 pages of texts. The series is supplemented by several thousand color and black-and-white photographs, which visualize the whole mosaic of the material and spiritual worlds of Ukrainians.

Expeditionary field studies of the Ukrainian population carried out by ethnologists of the Institute of Art Studies, Folkloristics and Ethnology within the framework of the comprehensive ethnographic survey mentioned above are still ongoing, as the tasks declared in it have not been completed yet. In particular, the work on collecting and compiling ethnographic-folkloristic and linguistic information on the ethnic culture and speech practices of national minorities is hitherto unfinished; the scientific study on the ethnography of Ukrainians abroad requires further field research since only the first of two parts of *An Ethnographic Image of Ukrainians Abroad* has been published.

However, the ten volumes published recently in the series already provide a good perspective on the ethnic culture of Ukraine's contemporary population and partly of Ukrainians abroad. Moreover, materials in the publications present samples of living spoken vernacular in its dialectal variety (both in electronic version and in traditional print media). This material, therefore, provides a powerful resource for linguists and dialectologists as well.

The subject matter and content of the already published volumes demonstrate the broad scope of the series. The comprehensibility of the series is shown by the volumes' titles, as they represent the whole spectrum of the folk component of national culture. These titles are as follows: vol. 1 – Oral History (Kyiv, 2021, 592 pp.); vol. 2 – Family and the Culture of Familial Coexistence (Kyiv, 2018, 460 pp.); vol. 3 – Maternity Rites (Kyiv, 2016, 472 pp.); vol. 4 – Nuptial Rites (Kyiv, 2016, 688 pp.); vol. 5 – Funeral and Commemoration Customs and Rites (Kyiv, 2020, 464 pp.); vol. 6 – Calendar Rituals (Kyiv, 2016, 400 pp.); vol. 7 – Household Occupations, Trades, and Crafts (Kyiv, 2017, 496 pp.); vol. 8 – The Culture of Folk Alimentation (Kyiv, 2018, 496 pp.); vol. 9 – The Folk Housing Culture. Ecology and the Organization of Human Environment (Kyiv, 2020, 944 pp.); and vol. 10 – Traditional Casual and Ceremonial Attire (Kyiv, 2018, 640 pp.).

As noted above, a separate volume (*An Ethnographic Image of Ukrainians Abroad: A Corpus of Expeditionary Materials of Folklore and Ethnographic Studies. Part 1. Livelihood and Traditional Socio-Normative Practices* (Kyiv, 2019, 676 pp.)) focuses on the ethnic culture of Ukrainians living beyond the national borders of Ukraine, taking the format of field records and photographs, made by both the ethnographers-employees of the Institute during their



expeditions to Poland, Moldova, Belarus, the Russian Federation, and Lithuania, and scholars of other research and educational institutions in Ukraine. A significant part of the volume's materials are some of the published materials and field records of the following foreign Ukrainians: Myroslav Sopolyha, Nadiya Varkhol, Yosyf Varkhol, Zuzana Hanudel, and Mykhaylo Shmayda – from Slovakia, Viktor Kozhukhar, Kateryna Kozhukhar, Vyacheslav Stepanov, and Oleksiy Romanchuk from Moldova, Denys Cherniyenko and Maksym Pylypak – from Bashkortostan (Russian Federation), Ihor Shulha from Volgograd and Saratov regions, Valentyn Pylypchuk from Kamchatka, Vyacheslav Chernomaz from Primorsky Krai, and Denys Cherniyenko from Kazakhstan, and others.

The materials recorded by these researchers represent a broad panorama of the presence of Ukrainian ethnic culture (from everyday culture, customary and ritual practices, alimentation, clothing culture, and traditional worldview to extant elements of farming and handicrafts), encompassing geographically remote regions. It is worth noting that the recordings made in 464 villages and towns from more than 670 respondents not only demonstrate a certain conservatism, the commitment of Ukrainians abroad to their national traditions, as well as the safeguarding of Ukrainian culture over centuries, they also provide a unique and current field data reflecting on the behavior of minority ethnic groups in an environment where the majority culture does not promote the presentation of Ukrainian ethnic markers.

A convincing proof of the preservation of ethnic cultural identity and longevity of traditions is a photo-illustrated series included in the volume, consisting of about half a thousand black-and-white and color photographs of architectural monuments, national costumes, handicrafts, and other artifacts of everyday life.

The multi-volume edition of the Institute of Art Studies, Folkloristics and Ethnology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine mentioned here is similar, to a certain degree, to the multi-volume projects accomplished by the Institute of Ethnology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. In particular, to the series *Hungarian Ethnography*, eight volumes of which had been published between 1988 and 2011. This comprehensive work is a unique achievement in Hungarian ethnology and folklore. Besides this work, the Hungarian Ethnographic Atlas consists of nine volumes (1987–1992), and The Hungarian Catalogue of Tales was published in ten extensive volumes (between 1982 and 2020). These works are rightfully unique accomplishments both in Hungarian and international ethnography.

We hope that this series on Ukrainian ethnic culture made by Ukrainian scholars will serve as a sound basis for further ethnographic and linguistic atlases, ethnographic databases, and linguistic e-archives based on spoken (living) texts, etc. Indeed, this robust corpus of ethnic culture and language is not only an essential scientific resource but also a significant contribution to the safeguarding of Ukrainian cultural heritage in Ukraine and beyond. I also believe that this series is not only a major achievement in Ukrainian ethnographic scholarship but worthy of attention throughout Europe.

