

# UKRAINIAN IMMIGRATION TO CANADA:

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## Ukrainians in the Host-Region of Newfoundland: Domestic Ethnicity and Integration

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This paper is devoted to Ukrainian immigrants who settled on the island portion of the Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador after 1991 but prior to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Scholars interested in immigrant and diasporic experiences are often drawn to representative centres characterized by sizable immigrant and diasporic populations and established institutions. Historically, Newfoundland has not been a popular destination point for newcomers. Therefore, unlike numerous other regions of Canada known for their prominent Ukrainian presence, prior to the war, the island was home to a very small number of Ukrainians. Moreover, the immigrants' experiences were largely hidden from the public eye. Ethnography, informed by close personal connections, appears to be the most suitable methodology to shed light on diasporic folklife in such small non-representative settings.

Utilizing ethnographic methods and focusing on the role of material culture – specifically the objects of “belonging” versus those of “being” in migrants' homes (Povrzanović Frykman 2019) – I problematize the notion of Ukrainian ethnicity in Canada via a narrow regional prism. What identity formation processes do newcomers undergo in places that supply a very small number of co-ethnics? Ukrainian Newfoundlanders' experiences reflect what folklorist Wyatt Shibley calls “domestic ethnicity” (2019). However, this form of regional ethnicity does not imply isolation. On the contrary, it often facilitates integration into larger society and contributes to local culture in unique ways. While this paper is devoted to the pre-war immigrants, I will briefly compare their integration processes to those of the most recent Ukrainian newcomers who settled on the island as the result of the war.

## **Bibliography**

Povrzanović Frykman, Maja. 2019. "Transnational Dwelling and Objects of Connection: An Ethnological Contribution to Critical Studies of Migration." *Journal for European Ethnology and Cultural Analysis*. Special Issue 1: Ways of Dwelling: Crisis – Craft – Creativity.

Shibley, Wyatt. 2019. "Domestic Ethnicity: Expressions of Lebanese Identity in Newfoundland." *Folklore Studies Association of Canada Annual Meeting*. St. John's, NL.