

our own time, and challenges our own understanding of contemporary capitalism as an all-encompassing socio-cultural, economic and political system, or epoch, as well. Additionally, the book serves as a reminder that we are not at the end of history and that the construction of paradigms remains an enduring feature among those who seek to understand and neatly order the world around them.

Ultimately the utility of discussing the “mercantile system” remains, situated, as a precursor to what might be more accurately described in our own time as statism, which is to say central planning of varying degrees of severity and practicability. With respect to the various issues discussed, the focus inevitably returned to the role of the monarch, or whatever central authority, as the key individual, or group, expected to follow through on any policy recommendation for the general good. Indeed, there was little variation in the literature presented from this sort of legitimization of power. Craig Muldrew’s afterward concludes with a restrained defense of the state as the only entity that can provide for the common well-being of the nation, something appropriately reminiscent of Smith’s own comments about security being more important than opulence. Whether or not this may accurately be described as a reflection of a persistent mercantilist mindset, the notion itself certainly endures.

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STOLARIK, M. Mark – *Where is My Home: Slovak Immigration to North America (1870-2010)*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2012. Pp. 392.

The author of this volume, M. Mark Stolarik, was born in Slovakia and arrived in Canada as a seven-year-old child in 1951. The young Stolarik was to follow a career trajectory not uncommon for the few hundred-thousand refugees from central and eastern Europe, who arrived in the United States and Canada under the rubric of displaced persons (DPs) in the late 1940s and early 1950s. These were people in the professions (lawyers, doctors, teachers, journalists) and holders of civil service posts—Stolarik’s father headed a local tax office in independent Slovakia during World War II—who were forced to flee because they were opposed to the Soviet-oriented Communist regimes established in their homelands after 1945.

Imbued by his parents with a love of ancestral Slovakia, yet at the same time realizing that success in the New World depended on a solid education, the young Stolarik was sent to an English-language school in Ottawa, then to the University of Ottawa where he majored in history (B. A., 1965, M. A., 1967), and from there to the University of Minnesota in the United States where he earned a Ph.D. in 1974. Trained as a specialist in immigration history, his research topics were, not surprisingly, the Slovak immigration to North America. After a teaching job at Cleveland State University (1972-1976) and a brief return to Canada to work as a researcher at the Canada’s National Museum of Man in Ottawa (currently

Canada's National Museum of Civilization), in late 1978 Stolarik was appointed director of the Balch Institute for the study of immigration in Philadelphia, where for over a dozen years he honed his skills as an academic administrator and fundraiser. In 1991, he was invited back to Canada to take up what for him was the ultimate position: an endowed tenured professorship in the newly established Chair of Slovak History at his alma mater, the University of Ottawa. Successfully ensconced in his Canadian hometown, Stolarik holds the Slovak history chair to this day.

It may seem strange to start a review with a brief biography of the author. The relevance of such an approach is related to the somewhat unorthodox format of Stolarik's book, *Where is My Home?* He has decided to tell the story of Slovak immigration during the period, 1870 to 2010, through the prism of the careers of three generations of Stolariks: his grandfather Imrich, his father Imrich Jr., and himself Mark. At the very outset the author us why he did this: "whenever I approached the subject matter in the traditional fashion by looking at the Old World background, the causes of emigration, the transatlantic voyage settling in the New World and so on, I was thoroughly bored and feared that my audience would be too." (p. xvi). To be sure, biographies and autobiographies are genres of great interest in and of themselves. But does not a relatively under-researched topic like the history of Slovaks in North America require as a first step, so to speak, a standard research narrative of the kind Stolarik feared writing because it would bore him and his readers?

In fact, the author has done both. Each of his ten chapters begins with the life story of one of the Stolariks: the pre-World War I sojourner US immigrant grandfather who returned home permanently; the Slovak civil servant turned DP father who becomes a Slovak national activist in Canada; and the scholar son who has successfully promoted the history and culture of his ancestral homeland to generations of students and readers in North America. While the lives of the three Stolariks and their spouses and relatives are in and of themselves fascinating, they function here as prototypes to represent the three stages of North American immigration from central and eastern Europe.

But this is not all. After the family history is told, the rest of each chapter relates in a standard historic narrative, with an appropriate scholarly apparatus, the nuts and bolts of Slovak immigrant life in the United States and Canada. Here the reader is provided with an excellent insight into the world of the pre-World War I immigration and the otherwise unfamiliar work that males and females needed to do in order to survive and also to earn a surplus to help families in Europe or to return themselves and buy the most treasured commodity—farm land. The author is particularly well versed in and shares his knowledge of the various mutual-benefit fraternal societies and churches (Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, Lutheran) as well as the wide range of newspapers and other publications created to serve the secular and religious interests of Slovak immigrant readers.

Politics also figures prominently in this book. And for immigrants politics means internal struggles among Slovak fraternal societies, churches, and political organizations as well as concern with the homeland in Europe. About all these

topics we learn more from *Where Is My Home?* than from anywhere else. It is particularly gratifying to read a work of impartiality and balance. On the one hand, Stolarik makes no secret of his Slovak patriotism, in particular when it comes to Slovak and Czech relations in the former Czechoslovakia which as a state—whether non-Communist in the interwar years, or Communist from 1948 to 1989—did not respond adequately to Slovakia’s legitimate demands for self-rule. On the other hand, he deals even-handedly with what he describes as the three basic political orientations among Slovaks in North America: the Slovak nationalists, the Czechoslovaks, and the Communists.

A major underlying theme of *Where Is My Home?* is applicable to many immigrant groups in North America? Namely, that they are quintessentially North American in the sense that they have functioned largely as a community or communities with common interests that unite them, regardless of the fact that they may live in the United States or in Canada. Educated and professionally employed in both countries, M. Mark Stolarik was poised better than anyone to write a history of North American Slovak immigration. We are all grateful that he has taken up the challenge and done it so well.

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THOMPSON, Neville – *Canada and the End of the Imperial Dream: Beverley Baxter’s Reports from London through War and Peace, 1936-1960*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp. 394.

In a 1931 BBC radio broadcast entitled “That Commonwealth Feeling,” the British diplomat, politician, and writer Harold Nicolson declared that the dominions had recently “began to emerge above our horizon as something unaccountable, as something forlorn and strange and powerful; as something mysterious, compelling, imminent” (Harold Nicolson, *People and Things: Wireless Talks*, London, 1931, pp. 145-6). The same year as Nicolson’s wireless talk, the Statute of Westminster gave the dominions legislative equality with the United Kingdom by granting them autonomy in foreign affairs, a symbolic “end” to the imperial relationship. Yet imperialism, or more accurately an attachment to Britons, British affairs, and things British, remained centrally important for many English-speaking Canadians for another generation. Indeed, as Neville Thompson demonstrates in this wide-ranging and elegantly written book, the “imperial dream” of a shared Anglo-Canadian identity and purpose survived, if in a diminished form and for fewer and fewer people, into the early 1960s. Thompson’s medium for tracking this development is the bi-weekly London Letters column written by the Canadian journalist and British Member of Parliament Beverley Baxter for *Maclean’s* magazine between 1936 and 1960.