

# The Showman and the Ukrainian Cause: Folk Dance, Film, and the Life of Vasile Avramenko (Studies in Immigration and Culture)

Orest T. Martynowych

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A quixotic figure, Vasile Avramenko (1895-1981) used folk culture and modern media in a life-long crusade to promote Ukraine's struggle for independence to North American audiences. From his base in New York City, he built a network of folk dance schools and produced musical spectacles to help Ukrainian immigrants sustain their identity. His feature-length Ukrainian language films made in the 1930s with Hollywood director Edgar G. Ulmer, the "king of ethnic and B movies," were shown throughout North America. Orest T. Martynowych's The Showman and the Ukrainian Cause is a fascinating portrait how culture can become a political tool in a diaspora community.



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