FROM THE EDITOR

Could anyone really have foreseen that the changes sweeping across eastern and central Europe and the Soviet Union would take place in such swift succession as they have today? Few of us would have readily thought even a year ago that we would be flocking around our televisions every morning and evening anxious to hear news of changes in Europe. We knew that Solidarność was valiantly continuing its struggle to survive and to create a new Poland, and we saw Hungary moving forward boldly to make its own social and economic statement. Then there were the dramatic changes in East Germany during the second week of November and in Czechoslovakia by the end of the month. Bulgarians have been slow in joining the others, but they have raised their voices, too. Hungary dismantled the barbed-wire on its borders back in the spring, and parts of the Berlin Wall were destroyed almost overnight. Such rapid changes as these surely mark the end of an era.

Since our Carpatho-Rusyn homeland is encompassed by Poland, the Soviet Ukraine, and Czechoslovakia, the changes in these areas are of particular significance to us. What kinds of changes are inevitable? How will they affect our people within these countries? The Poles, for instance, are drawing strength from Solidarność and from the Polish Roman Catholic Church which has helped preserve and propagate their strong nationalism. Their struggle is determined, and we, as fellow Slavs and as Americans, wish them well and have vowed to cooperate with the new government's striving for Poland's economic and political renewal.

At the same time, we read of the Lemko Rusyn struggle to survive in Poland. In the past, Polish nationalism has not been generous to the Lemkos. It is at least partly responsible for forced relocations, the destruction of Rusyn Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches, Roman Catholic absorption of church buildings and properties, and the Polonization of Lemkos. These are actions no longer appropriate in a new Poland desiring to participate actively with the rest of the world as an equal and respected partner. The creation of a healthy, tolerant atmosphere which allows for a multi-ethnic, multi-denominational population living in peace should be one of the major goals for a new Poland. This year's emergence of the Lemko Society in Poland, as well as the voicing of previously forbidden views in the official Polish press on the sensitive issue of Lemko Rusyns (see Controversial Article in this issue) are reassuring signs for the future.

In Soviet Transcarpathia, a group of Greek Catholic clergy appealed to President Gorbachev in an open letter in October 1988, and again in early spring 1989, with a strongly worded request to reestablish the legitimacy of the Greek Catholic Church, presently considered illegal in the Soviet Union. It is interesting to note that not once in their request do the petitioners refer to themselves as Ukrainians, but only as Greek Catholic citizens of Transcarpathia. This appeal appears to approach a declaration of a specific Carpathian self-identity apart from a Ukrainian identity stressed by Greek Catholic activists in the west of the western Ukraine. At the same time the petitioners are making a request publicly which would have been unthinkable only months earlier. Will their request be recognized and acted upon? It appears that there is at least some chance for official Soviet recognition of the Greek Catholic Church, if that is the price Moscow needs to pay in order to normalize relations with the Vatican.

Finally, the fate of our Rusyn brothers and sisters in Czechoslovakia remains an uncertainty. We feel solidarity with our people in their striving for self-fulfillment and peace, and we pray that they achieve their long-awaited goals.

Patricia Krafcik — Editor

A Forum on Carpatho-Rusyn Heritage

THE CARPATHO-RUSYN HERITAGE

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In this issue

Biography: Dimitry Zarechnak
Feature: Czechoslovakia Discovers Andy
Rusyn Book Corner: Review of Roccasalvo's Plainchant Tradition
Lemkos Rusyns in Poland: Article and Commentary
Recent Events in the Carpatho-Rusyn Community
Recent Publications 1984

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DIMITRY ZARECHNAK

“When talking to Mikhail, Reagan first spoke to Dimitry.”

So read the headline of a Christian Science Monitor article that featured Dimitry Zarechnak, former President Ronald Reagan’s voice to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. Zarech­

nak, a State Department interpreter, has been present at all the U.S.-Soviet summit meetings since 1985 as well as at over 30 meetings between former Secretary of State George Schultz and his Soviet counterpart, Eduard Sheverd­

nadze. Very rare are people like Dimitry Zarechnak who have had direct experience during crucial moments at the highest levels of international politics.

Dimitry Zarechnak was born in 1944 in Straze, Czechoslovakia, not far from Bratislava. His father, Michael Zarech­

nak, had come to Bratislava from Vydran, a Carpatho-Rusyn village in the Pre­šov Region of northeastern Slovakia. While in Bratislava, he married a fellow student, Galina Dronov, whose parents had fled the Bolshevik revolution in Russia and settled in Czechoslovakia during the 1920s.

When Dimitry was six months old, the Zarechnak family fled to what at the time was the American zone of Austria. In 1948, they decided to emigrate to the United States. Four years later, they settled in Washington, D.C., where they have remained ever since. Dimitry completed his education, earning in 1967 a master’s degree in Russian language from Georgetown University. Since childhood, Dimitry was reared in a foreign-language teaching environment. His mother taught Russian at the U.S. Army School for Foreign Languages at Monterey, California; his father, a long-time pro­

fessor of linguistics at Georgetown University, still heads there the School of Languages’ Computational Program, a research center specializing in problems of artificial intelli­

gence and machine translation.

Carrying on the family tradition, Dimitry himself first taught Russian at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts for two years until 1971, when he began to work as a Rus­

sian interpreter for the United States Department of State. In 1985, on the eve of the first U.S.-Soviet summit to be held in six years, Zarechnak was promoted to the prestigious post of diplomatic interpreter, a job he still holds today. Since that time he has been plunged into the world of Soviet-American politics at the highest level.

Aside from the Reagan-Gorbachev summits of 1985, 1986, 1987, and 1988, at which Zarechnak with his Soviet counterpart was often the only other person present during private discussions between the world’s most powerful leaders, he also did live interpreting for the ABC network’s “Capital-to-Capital” live debates between American and Soviet leaders. During the past three years, Zarechnak has lectured as well on “High-Level interpreting” at Georgetown University.

Dimitry Zarechnak comes from a family of deep Carpatho-­

Rusyn roots. His father Michael identifies himself proudly as a Carpatho-Rusyn, speaking without any foreign influence a pure Rusyn dialect from the Prešov Region. It was none other than the Soviet leader Gorbachev who brought this aspect of Dimitry’s life into the open.

This occurred in 1985, when Zarechnak was accompanying a delegation of United States senators to Moscow and where he met Gorbachev for the first time. Already during the initial formal meeting, the Soviet president, in an im­

promptu move for which he has become famous on the world diplomatic stage, interrupted his discussion with the senators and suddenly turned to Zarechnak. “Where are you from?” Gorbachev asked. Zarechnak later recalled: “Nobody had ever asked me this in the middle of my inter­

preting. When I told him that my father was from the Carpa­

thian Mountains, he said his father had died in the same area during the war.”

Dimitry Zarechnak will probably have many more occa­

sions to meet with Gorbachev and other Soviet leaders, but now as the voice of President George Bush and members of his administration, Zarechnak’s job is a demanding one re­

quiring extraordinary linguistic skills which, given the per­

sonal aspect of high-level diplomatic encounters, can certainly influence the tone if not the course of Soviet-American relations.

Philip Michaels
Like many famous people, the renown of Andy Warhol seems to have grown as much after his death as when he was alive. Ever since he unexpectedly died during a routine operation in February 1987, the American pop artist and experimental film maker has remained a popular subject for the media. Immediately after his passing, numerous journal and television commentators provided extensive accounts of Warhol’s career, emphasizing how he not only influenced but how he veritably personified late twentieth-century American culture. Subsequent events have continued to keep Warhol’s name in the news, whether these have been connected with the New York Museum of Modern Art major retrospective of his paintings; Sotheby’s record-breaking week-long auction of his massive personal collection; or the most recent announcement of the opening of an Andy Warhol Museum in connection with the Carnegie Museum of Art in his native Pittsburgh.

Whereas Warhol’s reputation as an American pop artist made him known throughout cultural circles in western Europe, he remained virtually unknown in eastern Europe. One reason for this was that Warhol was a practitioner of modern art, which for the longest time was frowned upon in Communist countries as being nothing more than decadent products of the “imperialist West.” Thus, for many years, authorities in eastern Europe tried to keep out such “subversive” western phenomena as rock-and roll, outlandish clothing and hair styles, and modern art.

But the so-called Iron Curtain was never able to divide Europe’s airwaves, and by the late 1960s rock music was heard virtually everywhere in the East. In some cases, ideological controls over art were also loosened as painters and sculptors in Poland and Hungary were given by the 1970s free rein over their artistic creativity. In Czechoslovakia, however, the failure of the Prague Spring in 1968 and the return to political conservatism stifled the public display of new and experimental art forms (including much abstract and pop art) and closed off knowledge of contemporary artistic developments in the West. Even the recent winds of political change sweeping Gorbachev’s Soviet Union did not until very recently have any real effect on its formerly loyal ally, Czechoslovakia. One exception, however, seems to be the case of Andy Warhol. The reason for this has perhaps more to do with national pride than with a sudden official appreciation for “decadent” western art.

Soon after his death, art journals in neighboring Poland and Hungary published articles on Warhol, claiming that he was of Polish background or of Hungarian background. In response, a few newspapers in Czechoslovakia responded with brief articles stating that the parents of the world-famous American artist actually had emigrated from their country, and not from Poland or Hungary. When Czechoslovakia’s commentators learned that the native village of the Warhola family was Miková in far eastern Slovakia, it seemed easy to describe Warhol as a Slovak and therefore to claim him for Slovak culture both at home and abroad.

It was not until the spring of 1989 that Czechoslovakia’s public was given a true picture of the Warhol legacy. The country’s two leading monthly illustrated magazines —
The Greek Catholic Church in Miková where Julia Warhola was baptized and where she sang in the choir before emigrating to America in 1921.

future — the possible establishment of an Andy Warhol Museum of Contemporary Art in Medzilaborce, located in the Rusyn-inhabited Prešov Region of far northeastern Czechoslovakia. All this is being discussed, since even in politically conservative Czechoslovakia it has become possible to produce, display, and write positively about modern art. Formerly underground abstract artists can now show their works in public without fear of persecution for “political deviation” from the Communist norm of socialist realism. One artist from Prague, Michal Cihlář, has even modelled most of his own paintings on work by Andy Warhol.

Another of these younger artists is Michal Bycko from Medzilaborce. Bycko discovered Andy Warhol way back in the early 1980s. His source was none other than the biography that appeared about Warhol in the Carpatho-Rusyn American (Vol. III, No. 2, 1980), which a relative from America had given to him during a trip to Czechoslovakia. Then, when Andy’s brother John Warhola visited his parents’ native village and Medzilaborce in the spring of 1987, Bycko met with the artist’s American relative. John Warhola suggested that he, as a member of the Warhol Foundation responsible for the deceased’s estate, would like to donate a painting or two by Andy to Medzilaborce.

Bycko acted quickly, convincing the local town authorities of the world fame of their “local son” and of the possibility of obtaining original works by him. Not surprisingly, officials and art curators “higher-up” also began to discover what they described as Andy Warhol’s Czechoslovak roots and heard of John Warhola’s statement, so that Slovak institutions in Bratislava and Martin, even Czech institutions in far-away Prague began to recognize and claim Warhol as theirs in the hopes of possibly obtaining valuable art works.

Meanwhile, the resourceful Bycko, who is a Carpatho-Rusyn patriot loyal to his native region, got the support of the Medzilaborce town authorities to found a museum of contemporary art which would carry the name of Andy Warhol should his brother John’s wish to donate some works be
fulfilled. Not only would the Warhol legacy be preserved in the specific Carpatho-Rusyn context from which his ancestors had derived, as importantly, the proposed museum would be the only institution devoted specifically to contemporary art throughout all of Czechoslovakia. This in itself would encourage young artists to create new works in a way that would have pleased Andy Warhol himself.

As of September 1989, town officials in Medzilaborce led by Dr. Michal Turok-Heteš, who is responsible for cultural activity, have already made excellent progress. They designated the former post office on the main town square as the site for the new Warhol Museum and are on the verge of completing interior renovations on the three-story building which will include 20 areas for the display of paintings, a lecture hall, several offices, and storage rooms.

While the highlight of the proposed museum would be original works by Andy Warhol and Czechoslovak contemporary artists, the Medzilaborce organizers have as well begun to collect publications by and about Warhol, copies of his motion pictures, and documentary material from the family in nearby Mikova. Ideally, Medzilaborce could become a

The former post office in Medzilaborce and sight of the proposed Andy Warhol Museum of Contemporary Art.

Architectural plans by Vaclav Kohlmayer showing the present post office building (bottom) and the proposed facade (top) of the Andy Warhol Museum of Contemporary Art in Medzilaborce.
center for anyone in eastern Europe wishing to learn about the legacy of Andy Warhol and of modern American art and culture from the second half of the twentieth century. Even Slovak officials like deputy minister of culture Dr. Vladimir Čerevka and the chairman of the Union of Slovak Creative Artists Dr. Milan Jankovsky have come out in support of Medzilaborce as the most appropriate place for Czechoslovakia’s Andy Warhol Museum of Contemporary Art.

The initiative of Carpatho-Rusyn cultural activists in Medzilaborce has led to concrete results. We wish them well in the completion of their worthy goals and we trust that the Andy Warhol Foundation in New York City will become an active partner in the Medzilaborce project whose realization will promote the artistic heritage of their benefactor, encourage the creation of new art works in eastern Europe, and in general increase cultural ties between Czechoslovakia and the United States.

Paul Robert Magocsi

RECENT PUBLICATIONS 1984 (continued)

Švetlosc (Enlightenment), Vol. XXII, Nos. 1-6 (Novi Sad, 1984), 792 p.


RUSSYN BOOK CORNER


The title of this study is overambitious. In fact, Roccasalvo is concerned only with one segment of the plainchant tradition of one area of southwestern Rus’. She discusses the heirmoi of the Canon as noted in Carpatho-Rusyn collections, most notably the Cerkovnoje prostopinije (Church Plainchant) of Boksaj and Malynyc (Mukacevo, 1906, thereafter offset-reprint several times). [The hermos (Greek) or irmos (Slavonic) is the opening stanza in each canticle of the canon. — Ed.]

This makes Roccasalvo’s study a trifle theoretical in that the Orthros [Matins or Utrenia (Slavonic)] is almost never sung any more in Byzantine Catholic or Carpatho-Russian Orthodox churches in the United States. Therefore, it is virtually impossible to hear the musical pieces Roccasalvo is investigating, unless, of course, one goes to the Prešov Region of Eastern Slovakia or to neighboring Soviet Transcarpathia (Subcarpathian Rus’) where this chant tradition is alive and well. It is astonishing that Roccasalvo tells us next to nothing about the present situation of church chant in the native European setting of the genre she is investigating.
Roccasalvo does mention several publications of noted chants and studies of chant in Czechoslovakia and Hungary. But some indication of what is actually used in churches today in the homeland (where Church Slavonic is still the liturgical language) should have been an essential part of this study.

The book has an inexcusably large number of typographical errors, far too many for us to note. Similar confusion arises with nomenclature. Although Roccasalvo generally prefers the term "Rusin," she also uses "Ruthenian" fairly often. For instance, and for no apparent reason, on page 9 she provides excerpts from two of the Reverend Aleksander Duchnovyc's most famous patriotic verses. One reads: "I was, am, and will always be a Rusyn...," yet three lines later, she has Duchnovyc saying: "Carpatho-Ruthenians, arise from your profound sleep...." Duchnovyc, of course, used the same word (rusyn, podkarpatski rusyny) in both lines.

The most interesting question concerning the liturgical chant of Carpatho-Rusyns is the origin of the music which is actually in common use — primarily the music of the Divine Liturgy — and the portions of other services commonly sung in parishes. The Carpatho-Rusyns have an intense tradition of congregational singing which has survived any number of upheavals and is really the most important factor in setting the Carpatho-Rusyns apart from other Orthodox and Catholic Slavs of the Byzantine Rite. One would very much like a scholarly study of this chant and its origins. Roccasalvo does analyze some of the heirmoi and some of the variant melodies of the Eight Tones (idiomela and automela) in the Carpatho-Rusyn tradition, and she demonstrates reasonably well that the material selected is very closely derived from the tradition represented by the 1709 L'viv Irmologion and the 1601 Suprasl' manuscript collection. [Idiomela are hymns written in verse which have their own meter and melody, and which never serve as a model for other hymns. Automela are hymns in verse whose meter and melody are used for other hymns. — Ed.]

We note, however, that Roccasalvo does not demonstrate such origins for material in common use. Thus, for instance, on page 82 (and in an attached footnote) Roccasalvo indicates that the music given by Boksaj and Malynyc for the heirmoi of the Christmas Canon is unrelated to any of the older sources.

Roccasalvo's use of technical and pseudo-technical terminology in this discussion is inconsistent and unscholarly. First of all, insofar as chant in Church Slavonic reproduces the Byzantine patterns, it is conventional to use Byzantine nomenclature. The only reason to use a Slavonic (or Arabic) term would be for a category that does not exist in the Byzantine original, for example, the "velycanije" [the hymn beginning with the words "We magnify..." — Ed.] following the Polyeleos at Matins in the Slavonic tradition [Polyeleos is the title primarily applied to Psalms 134 and 135 which are read at Matins on certain days. — Ed.]. Roccasalvo insists on using Slavic terms throughout, with no consistency of transliteration. Thus she writes hlasny but also osmoglasnik — transliterating one Church Slavonic word as though it were Carpatho-Rusyn while she transliterates the other, closely related Church Slavonic word as though it were Muscovite Russian. All this only adds to the existing confusion.

On the other hand, it is odd that in her models Roccasalvo seems to assume that her readers can read the Greek alphabet but cannot read the Slavonic alphabet. Much bother and repetition could have been avoided by leaving Church Slavonic words — particularly when printed with musical notation — in their proper alphabet, and including a brief explanation of how to read square notes. This is not difficult and, in fact, is an essential skill for anyone seriously interested in the subject matter of Roccasalvo's study.

Roccasalvo has clearly done serious research, and, even if only to a limited extent, has proved her point. But her book is poorly done and very confusing even for this reviewer who is keenly interested in the question and has read the book through three times. We are not sure to whom the book can be recommended. Specialists will find the technical flaws unbearable, and the general reader who is mildly interested in certain aspects of Carpatho-Rusyn religious tradition will find the book too technical.

Perhaps some people will purchase the book not to read it, but to cherish it as proof of the authenticity and antiquity of "our" chant. Yet this in itself would be ironic, since such people are not likely ever to sing or even hear most of the music which Roccasalvo is actually discussing.

The author is continuing her research, and we look forward to her investigation of the more frequently sung pieces of the Carpatho-Rusyn chant tradition. We hope that she may publish her next set of findings without the problems which afflict this volume. Meanwhile, we would suggest that someone undertake a reprint of the 1709 L'viv Irmologion, to which Roccasalvo refers frequently.

Brian R. Keleher
Dublin, Ireland

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**RECENT EVENTS**

**Jerusalem, Israel.** On June 17, 1989, Dr. Paul R. Magocsi delivered an illustrated lecture on "Carpatho-Rusyn Art and Architecture" to members of the departments of art history and Slavic studies at Hebrew University, where he was a visiting professor in May and June. His talk focused on wooden church architecture and the twentieth-century Carpatho-Rusyn painters, Josyf Boksaj, Adalbert Erdeli, Ernest Kondratovyc, and Fedir Manajlo. Israeli art historians showed particular interest in the problem of the influence of traditional religious environments on artistic creativity, as well as of the work of the American pop artist of Carpatho-Rusyn descent, Andy Warhol.

**Vatican City.** On July 26, 1989, Pope John Paul II received Dr. Paul R. Magocsi who presented the pontiff with a recent volume he published, Morality and Reality, dealing with the history of the Greek Catholic Church in Europe during the first half of the twentieth century. As president of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, Dr. Magocsi also used the occasion to offer greetings to the Pope on behalf of Carpatho-Rusyn cultural activists in the United States.

**Košice, Czechoslovakia.** On August 10, 1989, Dr. Paul R. Magocsi was the guest of the Chairman of the Union of Slovak Creative Artists and director of the Bratislava Art Gallery, Dr. Milan Jankovsky. Discussion focused on the proposal to establish a museum of contemporary art named after Andy Warhol in the town of Medzilaborce, a few miles from the village where Warhol's parents were born. Dr. Magocsi, who also met with Medzilaborce town officials and
producers from Czechoslovak television who are preparing a documentary on Warhol's life, supported the idea of the museum as long as it would be made clear to the Czechoslovak public that the Warhola family and the Presov Region where the proposed museum might be opened is part of the sphere of Carpatho-Rusyn culture.

Paris, France. On August 17, 1989, Dr. Paul R. Magocsi met with the administrative director of the Institut d’études slaves (Institute of Slavic Studies) and reached an agreement for the simultaneous publication between that center and the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center of Pëtr Bogatyrev’s outstanding ethnographic study, *Actes magiques, rites et croyances en Russie subcarpathique* (Magical Rites, Rituals, and Beliefs in Subcarpathian Rus’). First published by the Paris institute in 1929, the new edition will be reprinted in Paris in French and by the C-RRC in an English translation; both versions will have a new introduction and photographs which did not appear in the original.

Wyandotte, Michigan. In October 1989, the Carpatho-Rusyn Cultural Society participated in the 12th annual Czechoslovak American Festival at the Benjamin Yack Arena. Alongside Moravians, Czechs, and Slovaks, Rusyn Americans also had a booth displaying icons, books, and information about Carpatho-Rusyn culture and religious faith. The Carpatho-Rusyn anthem, Aleksander Duchnovyc’s “Ja Rusyn byl,” was among the national anthems sung representing the different regions of Czechoslovakia at the opening of the festival.

Toronto, Ontario. In October 1989, the Hungarian Research Institute of Canada provided a subsidy to the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center in the amount of $7000 (Canadian) toward publication of an English translation of Alexander Bonkalo’s book entitled *The Rusyns*. First published in Hungarian in 1940, the Bonkalo volume will appear in the series, Classics of Carpatho-Rusyn Scholarship, published for our center by Wilhelm Braumuller in Vienna.

McKeesport, Pennsylvania. On Sunday, October 29, 1989, the adult Carpatho-Rusyn singing class at St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church received two visitors from the town of Kybljary (formerly Kobylyar, Už county) in Soviet Transcarpathia. The visitors, Marija Huzinec Sember and Borka Vatunja are visiting the United States as guests of Marija’s sister Ann Huzinec Krolik and her husband John of Herminie, Pennsylvania. Marija and Borka sang Carpatho-Rusyn folksongs with the class and taught the students several additional songs. Both women received a gift icon presented by the class’s secretary Dorothy Pohodich. The Reverend Stephen Veselenak, O.S.B., pastor of St. Nicholas Church, greeted the guests in Carpatho-Rusyn. Instructor for the class is Jerry Jumba.

West Paterson, New Jersey. During the months of October and November 1989, the Heritage Institute of the Byzantine Catholic Church’s Passaic Diocese featured an exhibit entitled “Carpatho-Rusyn Folk Art.” Examples of flax, hemp, and wool weaving, practiced in the Carpathian region from time immemorial, were on display along with other items. Among these were kilims, a form of heavy tapestry rug employed as coverings for walls, floors, and seats. Intricate and traditional patterns of embroidery, differing from region to region and used extensively for decorating blouses, scarves, tablecloths, and other household and clothing items, were also displayed. In addition, the exhibit included a number of dolls and flowers made of straw and corn husks.

North Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. On Sunday, November 5, St. Stephen’s Byzantine Catholic Church hosted high school Eastern Christian Formation students and adults from five area Byzantine Catholic parishes. Together they participated in a catechetical class which simulated the Byzantine Rite wedding ceremony and a traditional Carpatho-Rusyn wedding reception with commentary by the instructor, Jerry Jumba. The students and their parents reenacted the Ceremony of Forgiveness, the procession to church, and a Divine Liturgy. The wedding reception included: a welcome with bread and salt; the Ceremony of the Common Cup; a vinkovanie or toast by the best man; the čepcovanie or capping of the bride; and a rjadovij tanec or bridal dance. St. Stephen’s catechetical leader Diane Spivak coordinated the arrangements which also included traditional Carpatho-Rusyn wedding cuisine donated by St. Stephen parishioners. The bridal party included Tina Mihalick, Marc Roman, David Raynak, Danielle Spivak, Ann Janov, and Steve Planey.
CONTROVERSIAL ARTICLE ON LEMKOS APPEARS IN POLAND

The following article appeared in the July 19, 1989, edition of Gazeta Krakowska, an official Polish government newspaper. It was written by Jerzy Harasymowicz, a prominent Polish poet. The article was the focus of heated discussion at this year's Lemko Vatra festival (see the C-RA, Vol. XII, No. 2, 1989). A translation of the article here is followed by a commentary by C-RA correspondent A. Dryja, who attended the Vatra. For more on the Lemko question in the Polish press see the C-RA, Vol. XI, No. 1, 1988. — Editor.

To the Lemkos For Their Consideration

Lemkos are the descendants of Vlach-Moldavian shepherds with an admixture of Polish and Rusyn blood. They brought the Eastern icon with them, erected their churches, and brought the Byzantine ritual originating in Bulgaria and Greece. They travelled along the Carpathian Mountains with their herds and then settled down. After the passing of centuries, the Ukrainian movement which, of course, is a very young movement, is now trying to dominate the Lemkos who have lived here since the fifteenth century. The Ukrainians have sent in nationalist leaders from eastern Poland to make subservient those ethnic groups unconscious of their own origins. But who are the Lemkos? If we take the criterion of religion, we might say that the Lemkos are either Greeks, Bulgarians, or Serbs. After all, the Lemkos came from the south, from the Balkan peninsula, and not from Kiev or Pskov. Trained Ukrainian nationalist instructors, however, conducted Ukrainianization of the Lemkos on a large scale and no one opposed them.

Polonization of the Lemkos was conducted before the war, just as Ukrainianization is currently being conducted in Poland today, which is somewhat of a paradox. I consider traitors to the Lemko nation those of its educated sons who suddenly felt themselves to be Ukrainian. Meanwhile, the Lemkos are a separate nation with their own language, their own superb iconographic art, and their own poets. Just as the Poles in Lithuania, so too should the Lemkos in Poland strive toward establishing their own Autonomous Lemko Region. In my humble opinion, such a region should be comprised of the southern parts of former Gorlice county. The Lemkos should have their own administration, their own national symbols, their own gold banner with a red Orthodox cross. Lemkos are not chauvinists, and they would surely cause no trouble for Poland within whose boundaries they reside. They would certainly not leave the land to waste, but would cultivate it to blossom.

Recently I read in a certain brochure that “the Lemko Region became the basic supply base for the Ukrainian Insurgent Army — the UPA.” Whoever writes in such a manner does not know the realities. After dusk, the poor Lemko peasant was visited by all possible bands and partisans who simply took all they could find without even the thought of asking. These intruders were Ukrainians, Poles, and Russians — the left wing and the right wing. At best they left a bank note, not infrequently printed with a crowned eagle [the former Polish state emblem].

The Lemkos, on the other hand, have nothing on their conscience. Their hands are not stained with the blood of the defenseless. A great wrong done to the Lemkos was their baseless forced relocation to the west [Polish territories acquired after World War II from what had been Germany]. Why should the Lemkos have suffered and have been so severely punished for the bestial behavior of the UPA? The UPA was composed of Ukrainians, not Lemkos. Why did UPA barbarism cause the banishment of the Lemkos? Interestingly, at the very same time, the Lemko departure was paralleled by other trains coming from farther east [i.e., former Polish territories in the Soviet Union] which carried several million banished Poles.

Why did a genocidal nationalistic movement develop in the Lower Beskyd mountains where Lemkos lived? The main mass of Lemkos in this area supported neither the UPA nor the Ukrainian nationalists. Incidents of Lemko renegades do not amount to much. And I want to stress this strongly: Lemkos are not an ethnic group. They are a nation like the Slovaks, Basques, or the Scots. Does their speech resemble Ukrainian? The “credit” for this belongs primarily to the Greek Catholic Church. Czech and Slovak also resemble Lemko. So what? Czechs are Czechs, Slovaks are Slovaks, and Lemkos are Lemkos. It seems that the problem is with the press. One particular Lemko periodical published in the United States [Lemkivs'chyna] is completely directed by Ukrainian chauvinism, just as Naše slovo in Poland. I have also noticed that some Lemkos, who have attained a higher education and who seek to enter the “larger world” with fanfare, become more Ukrainian than the Ukrainians in the Ukraine. Their motherland, the Lemko Region, has ceased to exist for them. I consider them degenerates of the Lemko nation.

The Lemko nation is not a group of shepherds, as it is thought by some of its sons educated at Polish universities at the expense of the Polish state. These degenerate sons suddenly become fiercely Ukrainian, undoubtedly considering this as something better, as something ennobling them. These traitors are no longer interested in their own native Carpathian landscape with its talented Lemko people. They seem more Ukrainian than authentic Ukrainians. They become the heirs of well-known divisions marching at the heel of their German masters — the S.S. Nachtigal and the S.S. Galizien [military units formed during World War II], known for their brutality toward the defenseless Polish population. The Lemkos have nothing to do with this. They are a noble people.

Why do I speak out on this issue? Because when no one would even dare to discuss the Lemkos, I wrote the poems “Lemko Elegy” and the “Rusyn Candlestick,” in which I described the difficult fate of the expatriated Lemko population. I feel these poems will certainly outlast the newspaper Naše slovo, where the Ukrainians magnanimously granted the Lemkos a single page embellished with a shepherd and sheep. They probably think that this is just fine for Lemkos, that this is enough. During the time that I wrote my poems, I experienced much cordiality from simple Lemkos. But there were those infected with the notion of a “self-determined Ukraine” who tried to annoy me. I shocked them off like dust from the shoes. I feel rather that a “self-determined Lemko Region” ought to come into existence with two flags over its own home — Polish and Lemko, the latter gold with a red Orthodox cross on it.

In addition, a political party or Lemko Association ought to come into existence with its own publications. Lemko dances, folklore, and a dusty museum seem to suffice for
the Ukrainian-language Nase slovo, for whom the Lemkos are only a supplement. Ukrainian fascists murdered about half a million unarmed Polish civilians between 1940 and 1947. The Lemkos had nothing to do with this. On the contrary, many Lemkos from the Lower Beskyd mountains joined the partisans and perished in the struggle against the Germans. We Poles are aware of this. That is why it is not necessary to quarrel. Lemko forests and everything else that was once theirs should be returned to them. This includes buildings, schools, and their places of worship which were turned into Roman Catholic churches, as well as everything that ought to be in the territory of the Autonomous Lemko nation.

A weekly publication called Lemkovyna [The Lemko Region] should arise, and in it Lemkos should be able to express fully everything according to their own desires, including their thoughts on injustices dealt the Lemko nation. It may be then, at last, that the Polish and Lemko nations will arrive at a true concord.

Commentary

Jerzy Harasymowicz’s article “To the Lemkos for Their Consideration,” created quite a stir at this year’s Lemko Vatra festival. Harasymowicz, not a member of the Communist party, is a long-time friend of the Lemko Rusyns of Poland and has composed numerous poems and two poetic epics about them. His article is significant for several reasons.

The very fact that Harasymowicz was permitted to write about the Lemko issue and mention injustices inflicted upon Lemkos by the Polish Communists and others is in itself the first remarkable point, for it represents a definite thaw in censorship as well as in the Polish political situation in general. Secondly, his article represents the first recognition of Lemko nationhood to be permitted in print since World War II. It is important to note that even though the author uses the term “Lemko nation,” both he and the Lemkos are aware that this is simply the local name for the Carpatho-Rusyn nation which includes people on both sides of the Carpathian Mountains. Communist policy, on the other hand, has been to subordinate Lemkos to a Ukrainian identity, both in Poland and Czechoslovakia.

Most Lemkos were extremely enthusiastic about the article, because it reflected a public recognition of their nationhood and their grievances and because it included a demand for an autonomous Lemko region in Poland, in particular in the southern part of Gorlice county. At the same time, there were several minor points of difference between Harasymowicz and those Lemkos who read and commented on his article. The first was his theory of Lemko ethnogenesis which most Lemkos reject. Harasymowicz presents Lemkos as Vlach-Rusyn shepherds who migrated into Poland and mixed to a degree with ethnic Poles. Lemkos, on the other hand, see themselves primarily as autochthonic descendants of Rusyns and White Croatians who inhabited the Carpathians well before the later Vlach migrations.

Another point of difference between Harasymowicz and many Lemkos concerns the Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches. Harasymowicz suggests an absolute correlation between Greek Catholics and Ukrainians and between Orthodox and Lemkos. Such a correlation cannot be drawn. The author focuses only on the Orthodox as if there were no Greek Catholic Lemkos. For instance, the three-barred cross which Harasymowicz calls the Orthodox cross is not used exclusively to identify the Orthodox, but is also used by the Lemko Greek Catholics. On the other hand, this cross is particularly offensive to Ukrainian Catholics.

It is true that before World War II, tens of thousands of Lemkos embraced Orthodoxy as a way of avoiding Ukrainian-oriented Greek Catholic priests. This situation was so serious that in order to stem further defections the Vatican established in 1935 a Lemko Apostolic Administration, independent of the Ukrainian-oriented Greek Catholic eparchy of Przemyśl which previously had jurisdiction over the Lemko Region. After the war, Ukrainians, especially members of the Baslian Order, assumed positions of leadership within the Greek Catholic community of Poland. The Ukrainians sought gradually to transform the former multi-ethnic, nationally neutral Greek Catholic Church into the “Ukrainian Catholic Church.” Of course, those who suffered were the non-assimilated Lemkos.

Even though Ukrainians continue to occupy the top posts within the Greek Catholic Church, controlling most institutions (with the exception of the Holy Protection/SS. Cyril and Methodius Monastery in Ujkowice near Przemyśl), still their hegemony is far from complete. Most of the Greek Catholic rank and file are Lemkos and not Ukrainians, and many of them still have an awareness of being Lemko, Rusyn, or Rusnak, even though they are stifled as a group. In connection with this situation, it is interesting to note that the terms Lemko, Rusyn, and Rusnak are completely functional within the Polish context, for they have no negative connotations among the Poles. The term Ukrainian, on the other hand, is associated in the public mind with the massacre during the war years of approximately 500,000 Poles by the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) and with the Ukrainian units within the German military (the S.S. Nachtigal and S.S. Galizien Divisions).

It appears, finally, that Harasymowicz is unaware that a number of Lemko/Carpatho-Rusyn periodicals and publications not under Ukrainian influence, such as the Carpatho-Rusyn American, are published in the United States. Such knowledge might strengthen his optimism for the future situation of Lemkos in the homeland.

In conclusion, the Lemkos at the Vatra festival were greatly pleased by a generally accurate portrayal of their plight, while Ukrainian nationalists were dismayed and angered by this article, as well as by the emergence of the Lemkophile Lemko Association of Poland.

A. Dryja
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OUR FRONT COVER

Julia Warhola in Pittsburgh with two of her three sons, John (left) and Andy (right). Photographed circa 1929.