FROM THE EDITOR

As we near the end of our third year of newsletter publication as well as other activities of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, the time has come to reassess our purpose, our present, and our future. Already in the last issue, I described the situation as it now exists: the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center is a very small group of people volunteering their time and energy in trying to provide many services for which there most obviously is a vitally interested audience. What are these services? Some are the publication and distribution of materials which have been ordered by hundreds of people, including students, scholars, churches, college and university libraries and departments; the production of the Carpatho-Rusyn American newsletter; and the answering of numerous questions sent in by readers, such as where to find certain books or maps, how to translate certain information on birth certificates, how to approach a genealogy, and so on. That these services are appreciated has been amply demonstrated by mail, phone calls, and meetings with you, our subscribers and readers. If satisfying people’s needs and financially breaking even at the same time is a mark of success, then indeed we have been successful.

The important point (introduced in the previous issue) is that in order to ensure that these basic services can be continued and increased, we must reconsider our purpose and realign our forces. For one thing, the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, Inc., is a non-profit organization to which donations are tax-deductible, although no donations have up to now been solicited. But, if it were to expand into an ethnic organization with a membership, thus standing on more substantial and prestigious ground, it would be eligible for various kinds of funding and other privileges. The government, for example, provides financial aid of various sorts to ethnic organizations for the production of educational materials—language books, tapes, films. Such funds from federal, state, or local government could become available to us. A non-profit ethnic organization with supportive members could also approach city and university libraries to order ethnic materials since libraries frequently reserve funds for such materials.

Tax-deductible funds solicited from members, along with government grants could be employed to support a variety of projects. For instance, there is a great amount of Carpatho-Rusyn literature—scholarly works, prose, poetry, drama, folklore—which languishes in dusty corners of public and private libraries. Literature is the pearl of a culture, but how many of us know anything about Carpatho-Rusyn literature? What is this literature about? How did our ancestors express themselves as literary artists in prose, as poets in verse, as clerics in sermons? Shouldn’t this material be made available for us today? Of course. But this requires a substantial translation effort which would need some funding, even if it were done on a partly voluntary basis.

Another important area in which translators and researchers could be employed is for the preparation of genealogies. This would require the services of European agents who could seek out records, often hard to locate, plus persons here to translate and assemble information. We already have the necessary qualified contacts in Europe, but again, only further funding could make this feasible.

Another project is the support and development of a lectureship in Carpatho-Rusyn studies at one or more universities. Our organization should at least sponsor an annual lecture on some aspect of Carpatho-Rusyn history and culture at various universities, and it might even lead a campaign for the establishment of a chair of Carpatho-Rusyn studies. It is quite clear that Carpatho-Rusyn studies are beginning more and more to occupy a place in university programs and in international scholarly conferences. The list of recent activities and upcoming events in the present as well as in past issues of the newsletter demonstrates this fact.

One of the most attractive and exciting activities conceivable in the context of a Carpatho-Rusyn ethnic organization is the arrangement of study tours to the Old Country. Such tours could be led by someone who might lecture on Carpatho-Rusyn history and culture along the route, perhaps giving some basic language instruction—all this in order to make the trip a really full educational experience.

Enough ideas. Our initial needs are two-fold. First, among our readership and the community at large, there are talented people in the professions—accountants, business people, lawyers, secretaries, teachers, and others—who feel the urge to do something more, to become involved, to become part of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center’s efforts. You are the people who may know or be able to investigate how to solicit government funding. You are the people who should let us know who you are, where you are, and what you can do. Secondly, it appears—in the light of all that has been said above—that it is time to consider seriously expanding the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center into a membership organization. This would open the door to funding and to the numerous exciting possibilities slated for the future. However, volunteers from among our readers must come out to help initiate and sustain a membership drive. You must let us know who you are. You need only look about you to see that all conscious ethnic groups—Hungarians, Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, and others—have such organizations and foundations, whose supporters and their children enjoy the privileges of belonging to a group and thereby enriching their own lives.

We have sat back long enough watching our ethnic culture gather dust, be absorbed by other groups, or simply be forgotten. The first step has been made over the past few years to reverse this process. Let us not hesitate to strike out further. Should you be inclined to play an organizing or contributory role in our work, please tell us about yourself and what you might be able to do by writing to the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, 355 Delano Place, Fairview, New Jersey 07022.
In 1978, a new film burst onto the American scene whose popularity has not yet diminished among movie-goers and popular music fans. The film is a musical called "Grease," and it is an attempt to depict the life of teenagers during the late 1950s—the classic era of bobby socks, convertible cars, and rock and roll. The film's leading male, John Travolta, and the dress and lifestyle he espouses have once again become ideals among many American children and, interestingly, also among the young people of eastern Europe, who are ever ready to rebel against the restrictions of their own societies by copying any new fad from the West.

The female star of "Grease" is the talented Australian-born pop singer, Olivia Newton-John, who plays the character of Sandra Dee, a naive and properly-mannered American teenager who is eventually swayed over to the more flamboyant, motorcycle-gang lifestyle of the "ultimately cool" Danny (John Travolta). Many people who have seen "Grease" believe that Sandra Dee is simply the character depicted in "Grease." Little do they know that a real Sandra Dee actually exists.

The real Sandra Dee was a well-known Hollywood movie actress during the early 1960s. In fact, she was born in 1942 as Alexandra Zuck into a Carpatho-Rusyn (Lemkian) family in Bayonne, New Jersey. Her grandparents, Akym Van'ko and Aleksander Cymbaljak, were natives of the Lemkian Region (now in southeastern Poland) who immigrated to the United States before World War I and who were for many years members of the Lemko Sojuz in Yonkers, New York.

The pretty, blond-haired, blue-eyed Alexandra began her career as Sandra Dee already as a model at the age of 12 for a leading agency in New York City. Three years later she played in her first film, and in 1957 signed a long-term contract with United-International Pictures in Hollywood. From 1960 to 1967, she was married to the popular singer Bobby Darin.

In an era of American social development when Elvis Presley, James Dean, and other "rowdies" were idols of the young, and when Marilyn Monroe and Jayne Mansfield were female sex symbols for the somewhat older, another side of America was represented by a clean, upright, and wholesome way of life as shown in numerous films of Doris Day and Rock Hudson. In this equation, Sandra Dee was chosen to play the role of the proper American teenager, and she herself once remarked: "I was a junior Doris Day for years." Sandra starred in a whole series of films—"Gidget" (1959), "A Summer Place" (1959), "Tammy, Tell Me True" (1961), "Tammy and the Doctor" (1963), and "Take Her, She's Mine" (1963), in which she played cute and glamorous nymphets on the threshold of romantic maturity.

By the 1970s, the innocent teenager was no longer a popular or real reflection of American female youth, and because Sandra was typecast in such a role, her career eclipsed. In contrast, she has played more serious dramatic roles in some of her later films—"The Dunwich Horror" (1970) and "Ad est di Marsa Matruh" (Italian, 1971).

Nonetheless, the legend of the innocent Sandra Dee as a symbolic reflection of American girls in the 1950s and 1960s lives on and has become virtually immortalized through the songs and the character depicted in the enormously popular contemporary film, "Grease."
CARPATHO-RUSYN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

(Part 1)

It is necessary to stress at the outset of this series of articles that there is, in general, often a great difference between written or literary languages on the one hand and spoken languages on the other. Moreover, all languages are made up of individual dialects which may differ to a greater or lesser degree from each other. In the course of the development of literary languages, various possibilities were open to grammarians, writers, and other members of the intelligentsia.

One possibility was to revive some ancient form of language, as was tried in Greece, when in the nineteenth century some leaders argued that classical Greek should be revived as a means of written communication. Eventually, not classical, but rather a more modern form of Greek, closer to the contemporary vernacular or spoken language, was adopted. On the other hand, the Jews of eastern Europe, who spoke Yiddish, which is basically a dialect of German, dropped the spoken language in favor of ancient Hebrew as their literary language. A second possibility was to choose one spoken dialect as the basis from which a literary form could be created. Usually, linguistic forms from related dialects were also added so as to make the standard more attractive to the national group as a whole. This route was chosen by the French whose literary language is based on the region primarily around Paris. Similarly, among the Slovaks, the central Slovak dialects around Turciánky Svatý Martin became the basis of literary Slovak. A third possibility was to create a literary form that had no basis in any one dialect, but which was an amalgam of all the dialects and in theory would be acceptable to all. This was the case in the development of modern German (Hochdeutsch) and of Norwegian, both of whose literary languages are not really spoken by any one dialectal group in Germany or Norway.

In the case of Subcarpathian Rus’, the major questions stand for us as follows: What is Carpatho-Rusyn? What is its history? How does it relate to the above schema? Carpatho-Rusyn is not usually described as a full-fledged language within the Slavic family. In effect, Carpatho-Rusyn refers to a series of dialects which are spoken by the Slavic population of what is today the Transcarpathian oblast’ of the Ukrainian SSR and the Prešov Region of northeastern Slovakia. Modern scholarship is in agreement that the dialects spoken in these areas should be classified with the Ukrainian language. It is important to remember, however, that notwithstanding this classification, several members of the local intelligentsia in the Old Country, and especially immigrants from the region to the United States, continue to think in terms of a distinct Carpatho-Rusyn linguistic and national identity.

Linguists have identified as many as fourteen different Rusyn dialects, and they have grouped these into three dialectal subgroups: (1) the Lemkian dialect in eastern Slovakia—as well as in the immediately neighboring portion of mountainous southern Galicia; (2) the Transcarpathian dialect (sometimes identified as south Boikian) spoken in the central region and related to the Boikian group north of the mountains; and (3) the Hutsul dialect in the eastern portion of Subcarpathian Rus’—which is the same as the Hutsul dialect spoken in Galicia. With the exception of the relatively small Subcarpathian Hutsul region, the differences between these three dialectal subgroups are not great. They occur mainly in the pronunciation of vowels, especially the variants of i, o, and u. For example, the words for an ox in Lemkian dialect is vol, in Transcarpathian vill, and in Hutsul wil. Also, the vocabulary of these three dialectal regions sometimes differs, reflecting borrowings from various neighboring languages. Thus, the Lemkian dialect has many Slovak lexical influences, while the Transcarpathian dialect includes many Magyar loanwords.

Although Subcarpathian dialects are classified broadly within the Ukrainian language group, they are located along the farthest western edge of that group and as such differ substantially from, let us say, central or eastern Ukrainian dialects. Moreover, they reflect a common linguistic rule in that they have features which make them as close, if not closer, to the immediate adjacent language group than to the rest of the group under which they are classified. For instance, the speakers of the Lemkian Rusyn dialects in Slovakia can communicate much easier with speakers of eastern Slovak dialects (themselves considerably different from standard Slovak) than with Ukrainians from Kiev or Kharkiv.

So much for the spoken language. Turning to literary language, we see that the Subcarpathian intelligentsia was generally in agreement on one thing—that the traditional Cyrillic alphabet be used as a writing system in their publications. More complex was the actual form the literary language would take. In essence, Subcarpathian authors tried each of the three possibilities mentioned above.

Like the Greeks, they tried to resurrect an archaic language; in the case of the Rusyns, this was Church Slavonic which had been used exclusively in a religious context. At varying times in their careers, this was the solution chosen by Duchnovycz, Rakows’kyj, and other nineteenth century priests who published their sermons in Church Slavonic. The second solution—development of a literary language on the basis of a local dialect—was also tried. The early poems, grammars, and plays of Duchnovycz and later writers like Ćopec and Volosyn were written in local vernacular. Similarly, under the Hungarian regime during the Second World War, most periodicals, scholarly, and literary publications appeared in the Transcarpathian dialect of the region between Uzhhorod and Mukachevo, as outlined in the grammars of Ivan Harajda and Reverend Julij Marina. This attempt was short lived, however.

Much more successful is the interesting case of the Rusyns in the Bačka or Vojvodina region of Yugoslavia, about 150 miles northwest of Belgrade. These people come from the very western edges of Rusyn linguistic territory, from areas near Bardejov and Trebišov in present-day
eastern Slovakia. They went to the Backa in the eighteenth century, maintained their language, their Greek Catholic religion, and most especially their name—Rusyn or Rusnaci. And when a national revival began in the twentieth century, their intelligentsia, led by Gabor Kostelný, published writings based solely on the local spoken dialects. After the Second World War, under the favorable conditions provided by Tito’s Yugoslavia, the Rusyn language of the Backa Region was developed into a sociologically complete language; this means that modern terms and concepts for mathematics, biology, geography, the social sciences, law, and other fields were developed. And all this for a population of only 25,000 Rusyns.

But this development, namely a literary language based on one or more local dialects was exceptional for the Rusyn intelligentsia. Instead, leaders would usually argue that there were too many Rusyn dialects and that they were too small a people to have a language based on their own local speech. Such an interpretation was unfortunately shortsighted. First of all, every language has many dialects, and it is precisely the job of the intelligentsia to choose one or more of these as the basis for a standard written form. Secondly, Carpatho-Rusyns, who numbered about half a million in the first part of this century were unaware that at the same time the much smaller Icelanders (150,000), Luxemburgers (275,000), and Lusatian Sorbs (80,000), to name but a few, all had literature and publications written in languages based for the most part on the vernacular.

But Rusyn leaders generally did not take up the challenge; rather, they looked well beyond the spoken language of their own people (which they unfortunately too often scorned) and accepted instead a ready-made literary language, whether it be another Slavic tongue like Great Russian or Ukrainian, or one totally unrelated like Latin or Magyar. In the late nineteenth century, Great Russian or Magyar were the more popular, but whereas they could learn Magyar in school, Russian had to be learned on their own and the results were not always positive. In fact, most nineteenth century Subcarpathian writers wrote in a varying mixture of Great Russian and local Rusyn, with some Church Slavonic thrown in—a combination never standardized. This combination was referred to by some Rusyns as the “traditional Carpatho-Russian language” and by critics as the jazyčie, or macaronic jargon.

By the twentieth century, some Rusyn writers learned Great Russian very well—as we shall see in the writings of Karabeles and Popovyč—while others began to use literary Ukrainian, also correctly, as in the works of Grendza-Dons’kyj, Borsos-Kumjets’kyj, and Zoreslav. The point is that traditionally the majority of the Carpatho-Rusyn intelligentsia chose, even if they did not know it well, to write in an already developed literary language—Latin, Magyar, Great Russian, Ukrainian, and sometimes Church Slavonic—and to look down upon the speech of the people as something to be reserved only for the kitchen and market place.

One brief word on Rusyn publications in the United States. As in the Old Country, most writers here have tried to write in an already developed literary language, generally Great Russian, and among the most recent immigrants, Ukrainian. The results, especially with regard to Russian, have been worse than in the homeland, most simply because these writers rarely, if ever, studied Great Russian. The result is a language, usually in the Latin alphabet, which is basically the dialect of Rusyns from eastern Slovakia (from whence most Rusyns in this country originated) with some Russian words added. This is the language of writers like Emil Kubek, Joseph Hanulya, Peter Maczkov, and Orestes Koman. It is interesting to note that a grammar by Hanulya and an elementary primer by Maczkov were published specifically for Rusyns in the United States. The linguistic forms they adopted were similar to standard Great Russian, but in all their other writings they used mainly the Rusyn dialect of eastern Slovakia mentioned above. (To be continued)

Paul R. Magocsi

RECENT PUBLICATIONS 1976 (continued)

Naukovyj zbirnyk Muzeju Ukrajins’koji Kultury u Svidnyiku

After a delay of four years, the important Naukovyj zbirnyk has reappeared in its largest issue to date. It includes 17 articles (in Ukrainian, Slovak, and Russian) dealing with the history, ethnography, and language of the Carpatho-Rusyns, with special emphasis on the Prešov Region of eastern Slovakia. Besides several articles dealing with the last years of World War II in the region, there are several other studies of particular value including a previously unpublished manuscript on pedagogy (1861) by Ivan Stavrov’s’kyj-Popradov (the father of the well-known poet); a study on the beginnings of Carpatho-Rusyn ethnography in the late nineteenth century by Olena Rudšovčak; and an illustrated analysis of Carpatho-Rusyn village (folk) architecture in eastern Slovakia by Myroslav Sopočiýa. The volume includes an index.


The size of Nova dumka’s issues has expanded to incorporate more scholarly as well as popular material on the life of Yugoslavia’s Rusyns. This volume reveals the journal’s desire to serve as an international forum (the only one) for studies about Carpatho-Rusyns in all parts of the world. Hence, there are articles by Oleksa Mysnyč (Kiev) on education and printing in Subcarpathian Rus’ during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; by Attila Paládiovács (Budapest) on Carpatho-Rusyn settlements in northeastern Hungary; by Mykola Musynka (Prešov) on the Czech friend of Yugoslavia, František Hlaváček; and by Paul R. Magocsi (Cambridge, Mass.), the first part of the Rusyn translation of his Historiographical Guide to Subcarpathian Rus’.

This is the only comprehensive discussion of the founding of the "Johnstown Diocese" led for almost four decades by Bishop Orestes Chornock. The author surveys briefly the earlier Greek Catholic movements to Orthodoxy in the United States and then focuses on the celibacy controversy of the 1930s which resulted in the creation of the only distinctly Carpatho-Rusyn (Carpatho-Russian) Orthodox Church based today in Johnstown, Pennsylvania.


This is the eighth in a series of popular brochures published by the Central Committee of the Cultural Union of Ukrainians in Slovakia. The work deals with the short-story writer Ivancov who, although born in Subcarpathian Rus', settled in the Prešov Region after World War II where he has done most of his publishing.


This anthology, whose first part appeared in 1964, covers the first half of the nineteenth century. It includes texts of twenty-five Carpatho-Rusyn authors (in the original, usually dialectal language), each preceded by short analyses (in Ukrainian) by the talented literary historian O. Rudlovcak. The chief value of the volume lies in the fact that the works of some authors (Lodij, Pastelij, Ripa, Luckaj, Vysloc’kyj, Nod', Janovyč, Bystran) were either never published before or had appeared only in obscure publications. It is a pity this volume was not prepared for a wider audience than the students of Safárk University in Prešov for whom it is intended as a course textbook.

Sopolyga, Myroslav. Narodna architektura ukrajinciv Schidnoji Slovačiny—L’udova architektura ukrajincov vychodného Slovenska (Folk Architecture of the Ukrainians of Eastern Slovakia). Svidník: Muzej ukrajins’koji kultúry, 1976, 132 p. This is a handsomely produced collection of 123 photographs of traditional village houses (interiors and exteriors), barns, haystacks, stables, wells, fences, mills, and a few wooden churches. A short introduction with parallel texts in Ukrainian and Slovak discuss the basic aspects of Carpatho-Rusyn folk architecture in Eastern Slovakia.

OUR FRONT COVER

Church at Rovné (Prešov Region), pen and ink drawing by Michael Buleza. Reproductions of this and other sketches are available at a reasonable cost by writing to Michael Buleza, Byzantine Catholic Seminary, 3605 Perrysville Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15214.

RECENT ACTIVITIES

Cleveland, Oh. Jerry J. Jumba of Pittsburgh has accepted a teaching and research position in the Byzantine Catholic Diocese of Parma beginning September, 1980. His tasks include instructing diocesan school students in Carpatho-Rusyn folk dancing, singing, and folk customs. He will publish a book of Carpatho-Rusyn folksongs, and will produce a Carpathian Chant Supplement and Cantors’ Guide. Along with helping to establish a diocesan music library of folk and liturgical music, Mr. Jumba hopes to do extensive field research interviewing Carpatho-Rusyn immigrants with regard to life in the Old Country, the immigration experience, and folklore.

McKeesport, Pa. Throughout the United States, summer folk festivals of many sorts add color to everyday life, and give Americans of all ethnic backgrounds a chance to come out and share the best of their foods, crafts, dances, and songs.

In areas where Carpatho-Rusyns have settled, the folk festivals are frequently enhanced by lively karícky (circle dances) and sokýry (axe dances) which never fail to excite a crowd. In the Greater Pittsburgh area there are a large number of folk festivals, and Carpatho-Rusyns, who are numerous and culturally active here, perform in many of them.

The McKeesport folk festival—International Village—held between August 19-21 was a particularly significant event for the Rusyn community of Pennsylvania. In an interview, Andrew Kovaly, co-director of the host group for Rusyns—Rusyny, a Carpatho-Rusyn folk group based at St. Nicholas Church in McKeesport—explained: "The festival is different from the others. This is the first time three individual Carpatho-Rusyn groups are joining forces to dance and sing together. But that’s not all. This is the first time that the three groups are from separate religious jurisdictions: We, Rusyny, are Byzantine Catholics; the group Karpáty from Ambridge, are Carpatho-Russian Orthodox of the Johnstown Diocese (St. John the Baptist); and the Monessen group, the Carpathian Youth Choir and Dancers are from the Orthodox Church in America, the OCA (St. John the Divine). We young people are rediscovering each other after years of isolation because of religious controversies. We are finding that we share the same values and the same rich Carpatho-Rusyn cultural heritage. It’s very exciting!"

John Righetti, director of the Monessen group, concurs and adds: "Many of the ‘Russians’ in the OCA are really Carpatho-Rusyns whose parents and grandparents come from today’s eastern Slovakia and western Ukraine, yesterday’s Austro-Hungarian Empire. For various reasons, many Carpatho-Rusyns in the OCA see themselves as ‘soft’ Russians, not ‘hard’ Russians like the Muscovites; in other words, not quite on an equal standing as the ‘hard’ Russians. The fact is, though, that we are a separate ethnic group with our own history and culture and sense of identity. We don’t have to try to be like Great Russians or anyone..."
else. We have our own individual and fascinating Carpatho-
Rusyn culture to explore and exhibit. Participants here in all
three groups have discovered that their grandparents come
from some of the same villages in the Old Country. We share
the same roots. Friendships made here in McKeesport won't
be easily forgotten.
Father John Gido, spiritual director and participant in the
Ambridge group, stresses the new pride the young people
are taking in themselves: "They have worked for hours
drenched in sweat perfecting a dance—and the finished
product is a joy which gives us all a tremendous sense of
satisfaction. The ancestors of these young people would
never have believed that now, in 1980, thousands of miles
from the homeland, their young descendants—some not
yet teenagers—would be moving to the same rhythms and
enjoying the same songs they did. And they would be mighty
proud, too!"
Jerry Jumba, who supervised the entire three-group Rusyn
show, was exhausted, but exihilarated after the performance.
When asked how he would assess the show and the whole
joint experience, he responded with a big smile and an
exhuberant traditional Carpathian leap into the air.

Directors of the Pittsburgh area Carpatho-Rusyn folk groups;
left to right: John Righetti (Monessen), Ed Jones (McKeesport),
Rev. John Gido (Ambridge), Andrew Kovaly (McKeesport);
seated: Helenka Ura (McKeesport).
Courtesy of The Daily News (McKeesport, PA.)
THE CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN

A Newsletter on Carpatho-Rusyn Ethnic Heritage

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