

# CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN

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A Newsletter on Carpatho-Rusyn Ethnic Heritage

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## FROM THE EDITOR

Beginning with the present issue of the *Carpatho-Rusyn American* newsletter, we are privileged to offer our readers a series of articles by the well-known Czechoslovak folklore specialist, Dr. Mykola Mušinka. Because of the dearth of information on Carpatho-Rusyn folklore available in English, Dr. Mušinka's contributions to the newsletter will be especially valuable. We are initiating this series with a description about the folklorist-author himself.

Mykola Mušinka was born into a peasant family on February 20, 1936, in Kurov, a Carpatho-Rusyn village in the Eastern Slovak district of Bardejov. He attended high school in both Bardejov and Prešov, and continued his higher education in Prague in 1958, studying with the well-known professors Pan'kevyč, Zilinský, and Vrabcová. Under their direction, his interest in Rusyn folklore of the Prešov region (Prjašivščyna) deepened, and he undertook his first field-work expeditions into the region at that time.

After completing his studies, Mušinka worked for a short time as a high school Russian language instructor. In 1960, he joined the newly-established research department of the Ukrainian Philosophical Faculty of Šafárik University in Prešov where he lectured on Ukrainian history and folklore. In 1963, he became a graduate student at Charles University in Prague. From there he was sent for further study in 1964-1966 to the University of Kiev in the Soviet Union where he studied under Professor Hrycaj and to Moscow University where he studied with the Russian folklorist Petr Bogatyrev, himself a prolific scholar of Carpathian folklore.

At this time, Mušinka carried out folklore research among Rusyns who had resettled from the Prešov region to the Rovno and Volyn Oblasts in the western Ukraine. He was awarded the equivalent of an American doctorate (*Kandidat nauk*) in 1967 for his thesis entitled *Volodymyr Hnatjuk: Researcher of Transcarpathian Folklore (Volodymyr Hnatjuk: doslidnyk tol'kloru Zakarpat'ja)*. In 1975, this work was published as a separate volume by the Ševčenko Scientific Society in Paris. Mušinka has published numerous other works on Rusyn-Ukrainian folklore of the Prešov region, including the folklore anthology entitled *From the Depths of the Ages (Z hlybyny vikiv, 1967)*.

Mušinka served as editor of the first four volumes of the scholarly journal on Carpatho-Rusyn studies, the *Naukovj zbirnyk*, published by the Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník. He likewise helped organize several of the famous Svidník annual festivals of folksong and folk dance. In addition, he has published at least 200 scholarly articles and reviews, mainly on folklore. Until 1971, he taught at the Philosophical Faculty of Šafárik University in Prešov, and subsequently worked intensively in Slovak scholarly institutions on Rusyn-Ukrainian folklore in the Prešov Region, Bohemia, and Moravia, as well as in Poland, Romania, and Yugoslavia.

For his scholarly work and research from 1976 to 1979, Mušinka was presented the highest award of the Slovak Academy of Sciences. In the last few years, his articles have appeared in the Canadian and American press. One exam-

ple is an extensive chapter on the folk culture of Carpatho-Rusyns in the Prešov Region which he prepared for the *Encyclopedia of the Lemkian Lands* to be published by Harvard University.

Dr. Mušinka is a distinguished scholar whose expertise is much in demand. He has long been familiar with the *Carpatho-Rusyn American* newsletter and has expressed a strong desire to give of his time and energy so that Americans of Carpatho-Rusyn ethnic background can come to know and understand better their rich cultural heritage. As part of his first article in this issue, Mušinka provides a glimpse of some of the subjects he will cover in subsequent installments. The information and insights he offers us cannot be found elsewhere. Let us thank Dr. Mušinka for his contribution to the newsletter.

From the middle of this July through the beginning of June 1984, I will again be in Czechoslovakia. After a month of intensive Slovak language study, I will begin research on the heroic brigand tradition in Slovak and Carpatho-Rusyn folklore. The major focus of my study will be Juraj Jánošík, the seventeenth-century Slovak brigand celebrated widely in legend, song, and art throughout the Carpathian area. The tradition of which Jánošík is an important part spans at least four centuries and includes such Carpathian figures as the eighteenth-century Oleksa Dovbuš and even the twentieth-century Nikola Šuhaj. As with almost all aspects of the rich Slavic Eastern European and Carpathian folklore, little or no solid scholarly or popular information is available in English. I hope that my work will help remedy this situation.

In my absence, the *Carpatho-Rusyn American* newsletter will be produced by the new associate editor, Andrew Kovaly. Mr. Kovaly is a graduate of Duquesne University and has pursued additional study at the Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Pittsburgh. Among his many activities, he is National Auditor of the Carpatho-Rusyn fraternal United Societies (Sobranije), and he serves as cantor at St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church in McKeesport, Pennsylvania. He teaches Carpathian plain chant (*prostopinie*) at St. Nicholas School, and is a co-director of the McKeesport-based Carpatho-Rusyn folk ensemble *Rusynj*. A long-time activist in the Carpatho-Rusyn community, Andrew Kovaly is devoted to the preservation of those features of the ethnic culture which are shared by and unite both Byzantine Catholic and Orthodox Carpatho-Rusyns. We warmly welcome him to our staff.

## OUR FRONT COVER

Rusyn boy in traditional dress from Rachiv, Transcarpathian Oblast (photographed 1935).

## EMILIJ A. KUBEK (1857-1940)

While most of the leading Carpatho-Rusyn poets and novelists in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries lived and published their works in or near the European homeland, there is at least one talented author who did much of his writing after having immigrated to the United States. This was the Carpatho-Rusyn belletrist, cultural leader, and priest Emilij A. Kubek.

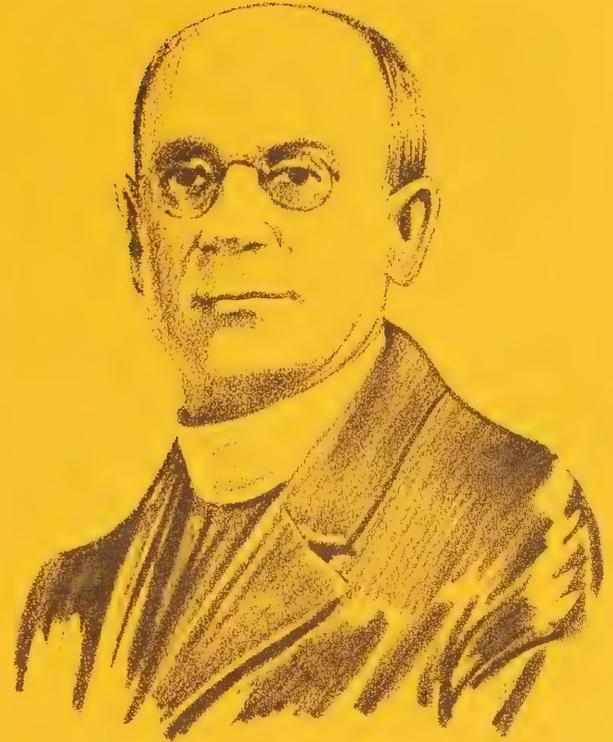
Kubek was born in 1857 in the small village of Štefurov, not far from Svidník in what is today the Prešov Region of northeastern Slovakia. Like his father, the young Emilij was ordained into the Greek Catholic priesthood in 1881. He began his religious calling as a parish priest, and after working in a few villages he was transferred in 1885 to Snakov, where he was to remain for the next two decades. At Snakov, a Carpatho-Rusyn village high in the mountains in what was then Šariš county of the old Hungarian Kingdom, Kubek set the pattern for the rest of his life's work.

Through his deeds, he showed a deep commitment not only to the spiritual, but also to the economic and cultural welfare of his people. Being in a rural environment, he tried to help his parishioners improve their agricultural techniques, and although his actions were initially greeted with skepticism, the often short-sighted peasants eventually followed his advice, such as preparing their tools and fertilizer already during the winter months and diversifying their exclusively potato-based cultivation with fruit trees and apiaries.

It was in the cultural sphere, however, that Kubek's work proved to be most lasting. He made the villagers realize the necessity of education for their children and he introduced for the first time theatrical performances usually on subjects that revealed the evils of alcohol. Kubek also began to publish literary and religious works in both Rusyn and Hungarian. His most impressive achievement from this period was a large polyglot *Old Slavonic-Hungarian-Rusyn-German dictionary (O-szláv-magyar-ruthen-nemet szótár a szentírás olvasáshoz)* that appeared in Užhorod in 1906.

Even before the appearance of this monumental scholarly work, Kubek decided that his own cultural activity and economic status might be enhanced by emigrating to the United States. In 1904, he arrived with his wife and four children in eastern Pennsylvania, where he served as a priest in Mahanoy City for the next 35 years until his death in 1940. During the first few years, Kubek's economic situation in the new world was not the best, so he helped to support his family by painting icons together with his artistically inclined son, Anton Kubek (1885-1971), who was also a Greek Catholic (Byzantine rite) priest.

Of course, Emilij Kubek continued to write, and by 1915 he had completed a four-volume collection of poetry and prose. After appearing in serial form in the Sokol newspaper of the Greek Catholic Union (Sojedenenje), the popularity of Kubek's writings convinced the Obrana publishing house in Scranton, Pennsylvania to bring out the entire collection in book form. Finally, in 1922-1923 four volumes appeared (with illustrations by his son Anton) under the title *Popular Tales and Poems (Narodny povisti i stichi)*. The first volume contained poems and short stories; the remaining three volumes comprised a 577-page novel entitled *Marko Šoltyš:*



*A Novel About Life in Subcarpathian Rus' (Marko Šoltyš: roman iz žit'ja Podkarpatskoj Rusi)*. Although all four volumes of the *Popular Tales and Poems* were written in Carpatho-Rusyn using a Prešov Region dialect, they were, to the author's regret, printed in Latin letters not Cyrillic. This apparently occurred because the younger generations of Rusyns in America were already by World War I losing the ability to read in the Cyrillic alphabet.

While Kubek was able to describe vividly and in a naturalistic vein the setting and characters that form the subject of his poetry and prose, it must be admitted that most of his works had primarily a didactic purpose. The reader had a lesson to learn, whether it be to shun alcohol, to work hard and gain economic wealth, to help fellow Carpatho-Rusyns in the European homeland, or to preserve Rusyn language and culture in America. Kubek was particularly adamant that Rusyn Americans retain a sense of a distinct ethnocultural identity, and he spoke out often in favor of using in English the term Rusyn and not Russian to describe the group.

Emilij Kubek was typical of many first generation immigrants who were favorably impressed by the opportunities to be found in America, but who at the same time could not help but reflect in melancholic terms on what might still have been a better life in the homeland. This psychological dilemma was best summed up in the final refrain of what is perhaps Kubek's most well-known poem, "Does It Only Seem So?" ("Ci lem viditsja mi?"):

Are the evenings, the summers, the land, the  
resting places more beautiful over there?  
Or does it only seem so to me?

Philip Michaels

## FOLK CUSTOMS OF THE CARPATHO-RUSYNS

The folk customs of the Carpatho-Rusyns evoked the interest of researchers as early as the middle of the nineteenth century. The term Carpatho-Rusyn refers here not only to the indigenous East Slavic population of the Prešov Region, Transcarpathia, and northern Romania (Marmaroš county), but also to those Rusyns who emigrated and settled in the Bačka/Vojvodina of present-day Yugoslavia or Bohemia and Moravia of present-day western Czechoslovakia. Scholarly interest became especially developed during the interwar period when numerous descriptions of Rusyn folk customs appeared in articles and books both in the homeland and abroad.

While socioeconomic changes in the life of the Carpatho-Rusyn population after World War II caused a partial disappearance of these customs, many of them have been retained to the present as the cultural heritage of past generations. Virtually all the customs originally had magical functions — to safeguard crops, to extend the homestead, to insure health and prosperity, and to defend against adverse supernatural forces. The origin of most of the customs dates back to the earliest primitive stages in the development of society, when man was incapable of interpreting natural phenomena and was completely at their mercy. Long observations of sunlight, rain, and wind on one hand, and the yield of crops on the other, led primitive man to perceive a connection between them. Seeing that his prosperity depended especially on those three natural factors, he came to understand them in a personal way as forces that could either benefit or harm him. Naturally, he tried to enter into contact with them and gain their favor. Hence the rise of exorcising prayers addressed to the sun, rain, wind, and other natural phenomena which gradually came to be understood as supernatural forces or gods.

The greatest menace to primitive man was storms accompanied by hail, thunder, and lightning, capable of destroying in a few minutes the results of a hard year-long effort. Therefore it is not surprising that the god of thunder and storms, Perun, was regarded by the early Eastern Slavs as the most powerful of all gods. While the cult of Perun was widespread among all Slavic peoples, it survived longest among the Carpatho-Rusyns. Even today in many villages we find such topographical designations as *Peruniv verch* (Perun's Hill), *Perunova skala* (Perun's Rock), *Perunovy strily* (Perun's Arrows), and so on. The saying *Bodaj t'a Perun zabil* (May Perun kill you) is still regarded by the older generation as one of the strongest curses.

Apart from Perun, the supreme god, early Slavs also believed in the existence of a number of "lesser gods" dwelling in the house, in the fields, in groves, forests, rivers, hollows, and elsewhere. They "saw" them in their visions, they "met" them, especially at night, or at least felt the impact of their activity. Even today the older generation likes to tell tales and legends about encounters with *straški* (ghosts), such as *Did'ko*, *Sčeznyk*, *Smertka*, *Vovkun*, *Mamuna*, *Mora*, *Rusalka*, *Vod'anyk*, *Lisovyk*, *Domovyk*, *Chovanec*, *Bohynka*, *Mavka*, *Pokutnyk*, *Potopel'nyk*, *Poviseľnyk*, and other demonological beings. The exorcisms addressed to the supernatural beings gradually attained a collective character and developed into a traditional custom repeated

at regular, usually annual, intervals. This led to the rise of a whole system of folk rituals consisting of a number of activities ordered in a particular hierarchy.

Virtually all these traditional rituals and customs known today originated in the pre-Christian period. Christianity tried to eradicate these customs from the life of the people and to replace them completely with its own rituals, as attested in a number of communications and decrees issued by church authorities that were aimed at subduing the pagan folk traditions. It is interesting that some of the decrees come from as late as the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The relative ineffectualness of the church's struggle against these traditions led to a certain amalgamation of pagan and Christian religious conceptions. Thus the pagan ritual of winter solstice was replaced by the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, and the heathen "welcome to spring" by the Resurrection. The god of thunder Perun was superseded by the prophet Elias who ascended to heaven in a chariot of fire; Ivan Kupalo by St. John the Baptist; and so on. The people, however, were too steeped in their pagan tradition and did not give it up even after the general adoption of Christianity. This led to a kind of "double belief" (*dvojevirje*) which lasted several centuries and is found in various forms even in the twentieth century.

Some of the customs of Carpatho-Rusyns were taken over with modifications from neighboring peoples. The medieval European church mystery play, for instance, gave rise to the folk Nativity play in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; the Polish *šopka* was the inspiration for the Rusyn *vertep*; the ancient Roman *Rosalia* for Whitsuntide.

Carpatho-Rusyns generally retained archaic elements in their folk customs more than any other Slavic people or ethnic group. Still today there has been a continuation of the old Christmas and Whitsun customs; the blessing of Easter foods (*paska*); customs accompanying births, weddings, and funerals; dancing around Maypoles; midsummernight fires. The degree of the preservation of these and other folk customs differs from place to place. They are best retained in peripheral areas, especially among the easternmost and westernmost Carpatho-Rusyn areas, that is, among the Huculs in the environs of Jasinja and the Lemkos in the Spiš area of Eastern Slovakia.

In time, the original magical function of folk customs and rituals gradually waned. Pagan rituals assumed a social or recreational function. No one sees any longer in the painted Easter egg a fertility symbol addressed to supernatural beings or to the souls of ancestors, but rather an effective aesthetic artifact intended to please one's nearest friends and relatives. Similarly, the leaps of young people across the midsummernight fires at *Ivanden'*, *Kupala*, *Sobitky* are no longer looked upon as a magical act of purgation, but rather as a show of courage and dexterity. Carnival or Mardi Gras masks no longer stand for supernatural beings or the souls of ancestors, but rather contribute to the merriment of the onlookers.

In the course of history, many folk customs have disappeared and others are dying out before our eyes. However, we also find the reverse process in the revival of some of the defunct rituals and customs and the establishment of some new ones. This can be best illustrated by the example of the

ceremony of *dožinky* (harvest festival). In the original ceremony, reapers wove a harvest wreath using the last ears of the harvested corn. It was an offering to gods for a successful, abundant harvest. The ceremonial harvest wreath was brought to a special place of offering, usually to a statue of Perun or some other god, where it was left or burned. During the feudal period when the land was owned by the aristocracy, reapers brought the wreath to their master or a deputy farm manager who rewarded them for their hard work with a treat (*oldomaš*). This custom largely disappeared after the abolition of serfdom, but it was retained at some nobility-owned farms, as well as in the "lowlands" where a great number of Rusyns were engaged in seasonal agricultural labor.

After World War II, when agriculture both in Transcarpathia and in the Prešov Region was collectivized, the harvest ceremony was restored in a modified form in almost all villages. Now the reapers ceremoniously deliver the harvest wreath, accompanied by both traditional and present-day harvest songs, to the head of the collective farm (or the Agricultural Cooperative Farm in Slovakia), and are duly rewarded with a treat. The government favors this renewed custom, and in addition to the local harvest festivals there are also harvest festivals on the district, regional, and national levels in association with popular festivities and cultural programs.

In recent decades, a revival of defunct customs has been attempted by an ever-growing number of village folklore groups. They are usually small groups of lovers of folk traditions, both young and old, men and women, who try to restore to their original form the defunct songs, dances, and customs of their localities and to perform them publicly either for their fellow villagers or at folklore festivals. We can thus speak of a second life of authentic folklore. Various cultural and adult education establishments sponsor this form of folk creative activity and propagate it especially among the young people who often know these customs only from literature, films, or from their elders' accounts. Thanks to the scenic presentation of some of the customs, they tend to become gradually a part of everyday life again. While in the 1950s and 1960s, wedding ceremonies and songs were on the wane, in the 1970s, in localities with active folklore groups, they were revived. Similarly, many villages have seen the comeback of ritual Easter dances, customs connected with conscription into the army, carnival parades of mummers, St. Nicholas Day festivities, and many others. Transcarpathia in the Soviet Ukraine, for instance, has witnessed the return of Christmas Eve carol singing.

At present we are also witnessing the rise of some new customs unknown in the original folk tradition. These include the feast on St. Sylvester Day and New Year's Eve parties; festivities connected with the annual International Women's Day on March 8; festivities and customs linked with student graduation; with silver, golden, and diamond wedding anniversaries; and with birthdays, especially "round" birthdays at 50, 60, 70, and even 75 years of age. New customs also include the civil ceremony of "welcoming new-born children to life" and leaving for retirement; feasts connected with the annual financial review at cooperative farms; "Father Frost" (i.e., Father Christmas) festivities, and others.

Since socialism looks with disfavor on religious ceremonies and customs, it attempts to replace them with civil ceremonies, drawing richly on elements of folk tradition. For this purpose many local Soviets (or National Committees in Slovakia) establish special parlors for civil ceremonies, often located in historical buildings and castles with attractive furnishings, and they appoint special committees which organize the above-mentioned civil ceremonies. We see here an analogy to the "double belief" connected with the earlier establishment of Christianity. In order to comply with the requirements of the state, many parents attend the "civil baptism" of their child, followed — often secretly — with a christening ceremony in a church, either in compliance with their own convictions or with the wishes of their elders or other relatives. Until the sixties, civil weddings required for the purpose of official registration were largely a mere formality, attended by all the members of the wedding. The civil ceremony is followed by a church ceremony which, however, is ruled out for a certain category of people such as state functionaries, career soldiers, policemen, as well as the intelligentsia and students. As a result, the church ceremony for these people is held only in the presence of two witnesses. A similar situation also exists in connection with civil funerals and ceremonies for silver, golden, and diamond wedding anniversaries.

At present, the archaic and original character of the customs of Carpatho-Rusyns is attracting scholarly interest. Among researchers are members of scholarly institutions from Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, L'viv, Prague, Brno, Bratislava, and elsewhere. An International Committee for Research in the Folk Culture of the Carpathian Region was established in 1960. It incorporates folklorists and ethnographers of six countries and has a special section for the study of folk customs. Research of the folk customs and ceremonies in the area has also been pursued by a number of scholars from local museums and universities. The folk customs of Carpatho-Rusyns are also often featured in films and television programs.

We are also witnessing at this time a certain revival of interest among American Carpatho-Rusyns in the traditional folk customs of their ancestors, especially since the television serial *Roots*. In response to this growing interest, I have written a series of articles for the *Carpatho-Rusyn American* to acquaint my countrypeople in the New World with the most significant customs of the annual and family cycles in the lives of Carpatho-Rusyns. I will highlight Rusyn folk customs connected with Christmas and the New Year, as well as with spring — Easter, turning cattle out to graze, the first tillage; with summer — *Ivanden'*, Whitsun; with fall — the harvest festival, church festivities; with winter — threshing corn, pig butchering; and others. Among family customs, I also wish to acquaint readers with customs connected with the three paramount milestones in human life — birth, marriage, and death.

I hope and believe that these articles will bring American Carpatho-Rusyns nearer to the rich cultural heritage of the homeland of their forebears.

Mykola Mušinka

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Here is yet another word on the Markus-Magocsi debate. What must be understood as the dominant factor in the basic debate is this: Professor Magocsi has irrefutably established that the history of national development in Subcarpathian Rus' before 1945 *cannot* be viewed simply as Ukrainian history. His work is not the first to do so, but it does constitute the greatest scholarly authority on the subject and represents a great victory for truth.

Most of the Subcarpathian immigrant population in America arrived in the pre-1945 era. Thus, Professor Markus's contention that the Transcarpathian immigration (does he consciously omit the substantial group from Prjaševs'ka Rus'?) can endure only by uniting into an "all-Ukrainian community" has absolutely no foundation. There is no historical tradition, no memory of, no transplanted consciousness for this orientation. Quite the contrary. The Ukrainian option, an alternative available for nearly 150 years, has been clearly, consistently, and knowingly rejected. Popular support for it emerged as a faction only in Transcarpathia during the interwar period. Whatever totalitarian regimes in the homeland may decree (e.g., that Transcarpathia is a Ukrainian oblast), it does not in any way alter the true history of the region or the remembrance of that past at least in this land, especially among historians. Thus, Markus, a self-proclaimed "Ukrainian community activist" is engaging in missionary activity not to enlighten but simply to convert, lest the unconverted perish. It really is a shame, as Magocsi observes, that after so many years in this country, Markus has learned so little.

While Magocsi's studies must be applauded for their many accomplishments, certain aspects of his work are not altogether successful, and some are even regrettable. Three areas of particular concern are the Magocsi terminology, his judgments regarding the role of religion and the churches, and his definition of a separate Subcarpathian national identity — how he views its historical development and his conception of its very essence. Space limits my comments to the first issue.

Despite Magocsi's attempts to declare the nomenclature question solved ("a non-issue"), it remains unresolved and sensitive, as Markus's criticisms also indicate. After all, a name is precious; it provides instant recognition of a person or group; it denotes belonging and inspires pride. It contains one's identity in a word. Of course, I agree that "the name used to describe any group should be employed by the group itself," but whereas Magocsi proclaims this maxim, he does not follow it. Creating the new name, "Carpatho-Rusyn," is indefensible and his justification for so doing is totally illogical. Surely he knows that Duchnovyč interchangeably used nearly a dozen different appellations for his people, referring to them as *Karpato-Rossy*, *Ugorskie Rossiane*, *Karpato-Rossiane*, and by four other names in one work alone (*Istinnaja istorija*). While he and Pavlovych often used the term "Rusin," I do not find the redundant hyphenated form "Carpatho-Rusyn."

What is more germane, however, is the plain fact that neither Duchnovyč nor any of the other national awakeners ever wrote *in English*. And is the name "Carpatho-Rusyn" used "by the group itself" in its numerous churches and their affiliated institutions, schools, cultural organizations, social clubs, fraternal and literary societies, journals, newspapers,

and corner stones? Not to my knowledge. Trained historians rely only on sources, and the sources do not substantiate using the name "Carpatho-Rusyn." Interchangeable use of the most commonly used terms — Carpatho-Russian and Carpatho-Ruthenian — would encounter far less resistance, better convey the oneness of the people, and greatly reduce questions about the names' origins. No one likes to have his name misspelled, mispronounced, or "corrected," but it is understood that there may be acceptable versions of a name in different languages. Otherwise we should rename the French "les Français," the Russians "russkie," and so forth.

As for the general debate, I am heartened by this effort of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center to broaden their discussions by soliciting differing viewpoints. Such a spirit may succeed in kindling even wider interest and participation — a positive and desirable objective. Professor Magocsi and his colleagues at the Center are to be congratulated for their vigor and dedication. At the same time I strongly urge them not to become an impenetrable dogmatic "Carpatho-Rusyn school" intolerant of interpretations and orientations which do not conform to theirs. Does the Center recognize the need for mutual respect and understanding within the "family," so to speak, even as it extends an invitation for dialogue to the surrounding "neighborhood"? Are, for example, the Carpatho-Russians and Carpatho-Ruthenians as welcome among the Carpatho-Rusyns as the Carpatho-Ukrainians and Ukrainians? Or is enrollment in the Carpatho-Rusyn school a precondition to inclusion in its activities?

Julianna Dranichak  
State University of New York at Binghamton

## OUR CENTER REPLIES

We read with interest Dr. Julianna Dranichak's comment on the Markus-Magocsi debate, in which she registers some concern with the use of the term Carpatho-Rusyn. Initially, it should be pointed out that her criticism of Dr. Magocsi for supposedly using the term Carpatho-Rusyn is unjustified. Throughout his *Shaping of a National Identity*, which is the subject of the above-mentioned debate, only the term Subcarpathian Rusyn is used to describe the population in question. This term is derived from the opening line of the Rusyn national anthem by the great nineteenth-century national leader, Aleksander Duchnovyč, "*Podkarpatski rusynj, ostavte hlubokyj son*" (Subcarpathian Rusyns, Arise from Your Deep Slumber).

Our center, however, does use the term Carpatho-Rusyn, and therefore an explanation for our usage is appropriate. As for the noun Rusyn, the answer is simple. Rusyn is the historic name of the East Slavs who inhabit the Carpathian Mountains. The immigrants who first came to this country before World War I (and even some of those who have arrived more recently) always called themselves — among themselves — Rusyn, or sometimes the variant Rusnak.

It is true that after living in the United States, some of our people's publications and organizations used the term Rusyn (often spelled Rusin), while others felt that Rusyn/Rusnak was unacceptable English and therefore should be translated by terms like Russian or Ruthenian. Such translations, however, have often caused great confusion that otherwise could have been avoided. The translation Russian suggests that Rusyns are culturally and linguistically similar

to Russians, which they are not. On the other hand, while the translation Ruthenian does not convey such distortions, it is nonetheless a term frequently associated with the Greek Catholic/Uniate/Byzantine Rite Church, and therefore unacceptable to many Rusyns of Orthodox religious persuasion.

But why translate Rusyn in the first place? Rusyn is Rusyn and that's that. Moreover, if Rusyn is acceptable to such prestigious American publishing houses as Harvard University Press, then it is certainly acceptable English for us — especially if it reflects the original name of our people.

Before leaving this point, something might be said about our spelling, that is, Rusyn instead of Rusin. This is simply a matter of transliteration. The two standard transliteration systems for the Cyrillic alphabets (the Library of Congress and the International) render the Slavic letter и in РусИН as *y*. If in using these standard transliteration systems we rendered the letter и as an *i*, that would suggest the sound in question was like a double *ee* (as in *bee*). In fact, the correct pronunciation of и in РусИН is like the *y* in *myth*.

As for the adjectival prefix Carpatho-, we have decided to use it for two reasons. First of all, Rusyn is a term that derives from the Rus' of medieval Kievan Rus', and therefore was used to describe peoples that later adopted the designations Ukrainian, or Belorussian, or Russian. (For instance, until at least World War I in neighboring Galicia and Bukovina, the East Slavs who now call themselves Ukrainian had all used the term Rusyn). Therefore, to distinguish Rusyns from the Carpathian Mountains, some prefix seemed appropriate.

Why not, the reader may ask, chose Subcarpathian Rusyn, as Dr. Magocsi used in the *Shaping of a National Identity*? However, unlike that book which is about the European homeland, our newsletter is printed for and about our people in the United States. In fact, Rusyns in the United States include immigrants and their descendants from the Lemko Region (just north of the Carpathian Mountains), as well as those from south of the mountains — the Prešov Region and Transcarpathia. In such a case, Subcarpathian would have been inadequate and therefore we chose Carpatho-, which clearly suggests that the Rusyns in question derive from the Carpathian Mountains. And whereas Dr. Dranichak is correct in stating that historically our national leaders often used varying terms to describe themselves, she seems unaware that the sources also reveal that one of those terms was карпато-русини (Carpatho-Rusyns).

Despite this rather long explanation of the reasons behind our use of nomenclature (Dr. Dranichak criticizes but makes no alternate proposals), the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center does not believe that endless discussions and arguments about how something is called can lead to anything productive for the preservation of our people's heritage in America. As an organization committed to concrete cultural work in the form of publishing and distributing written materials, we are not able to accept the innocuous term "our people," and therefore have chosen the name Carpatho-Rusyn for the reasons outlined above.

Finally, our publications have from the outset made clear which ethnolinguistic group and territorial entity is of concern to us. Whatever people and their descendants from that region now living in the United States call themselves — Rusyns, Rusnaks, Lemkos, Carpatho-Rusyns, Carpatho-Ruthenians, Carpatho-Russians, Carpatho-Ukrainians — is their business. We have and will continue to write about the

activity and to publish the opinions of individuals from all these "factions" within our "Carpatho-Rusyn family."

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS 1979 (continued)

Kochan, Vasyl' I. *Mižhir"ja: putivnyk* (Mižhir"ja: A Guidebook). Užhorod: Karpaty, 1979, 88 p.

Mižhir"ja, formerly known as Volove, lies high in the Carpathian Mountains in the western part of former Marmaros county (today the Transcarpathian Oblast). This guidebook, with Ukrainian and Russian texts and 32 pages of photographs, provides a brief introductory history of the village with emphasis on the post-1945 Soviet era.

Kozauer, Nikolaus G. *Die Karpaten-Ukraine zwischen den beiden Weltkriegen unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der deutschen Bevölkerung* (The Carpatho-Ukraine Between the Wars with Special Emphasis on Its German Population). Esslingen am Neckar: Bruno Langer Verlag, 1979, 240 p. and 48 plates.

Although the majority of the population living in Subcarpathian Rus' has historically been of Carpatho-Rusyn origin, the region has also been inhabited by people of other nationalities. Among the least known of these are Germans. A few Germans had settled in the area in the Middle Ages, but larger groups did not really begin to arrive until the eighteenth century. Several German villages were founded at that time on the huge estates of Count Schönborn near the city of Mukačevo. By 1930, the total number of Germans in Subcarpathian Rus' was 13,249; they lived in 84 towns and villages, 12 of which were purely German. Over ninety percent of the German inhabitants were concentrated in the region around Mukačevo and the upper Tysa valley east of Chust. In terms of religion, the vast majority were Roman Catholic.

This handsomely-designed volume by Dr. Nicholas Kozauer, a German native of Subcarpathian Rus' living in the United States, discusses statistical aspects of the group, as well as its socioeconomic status, cultural development, religious life, and folk customs, especially during the 1920s and 1930s. There are also 75 good quality black-and-white photographs of German and Carpatho-Rusyn life in the region. The author also provides a general history of Subcarpathian Rus'. It is unfortunate, however, that he has not made use of any material published on the subject since the early 1960s, when he defended the English text of this study as a doctoral dissertation in the United States.

Laboš, Fedor. *Istorija rusinoh Bačkej, Srimu i Slavoniji 1745-1918: doseljenje, gazdovski, prosvitni, kulturni i duhovni život* (A History of Rusyns in the Bačka, Srem and Slavonia, 1745 to 1918: Their Settlement and Economic, Educational, Cultural, and Religious Life). Vukovar: Sojuz Rusynoch y Ukrajincoch Horvatskej, 1979, 301 p.

This is the first comprehensive historical survey of all aspects of Rusyn life, since their earliest settlement in the Bačka Region, and secondarily in the Srem and Slavonia (all territories in the former Hungarian Kingdom) until the end of World War I, when these regions became part of Yugoslavia, where they remain to this day. The work of Laboš contains a wide variety of statistical data and factual information, and although the technical aspects of the book leave much to be desired, this is still the best history to date of Rusyns in Yugoslavia.

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