

CARPATHO-RUSYN AMERICAN

A Newsletter on Carpatho-Rusyn Ethnic Heritage



FROM THE EDITOR

The discovery or rediscovery of one's ethnic heritage is an exciting and fulfilling activity for many people. For some, it is sufficient simply to know what the roots are. Others are inspired to share with family, friends, and even a greater public all they have experienced and learned. I was delighted to find an example of such sharing last spring in the prestigious *Gourmet* magazine (April, 1983). In an article entitled "A Ruthenian Heritage," Tatyana McWilliams reminisces about her childhood in an eastern Pennsylvania Carpatho-Rusyn community. She briefly discusses Rusyn history, and describes in an unexpectedly delicious way Rusyn ethnic food culture — a treasure obviously very dear to her. If you have not yet read this enjoyable and informative article, ask for the April issue of *Gourmet* in your local library.

Another recent example of the active sharing of ethnic awareness is a shining star closer to home, a young woman with sparkling dark eyes and a lovely Slavic face. She is thirty-year-old Bonnie Balas, born and raised in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, about an hour southeast of Pittsburgh. Bonnie is well-known in the Uniontown area as a talented folk artisan and *pysanky* instructor. Her activities in the past few years have attracted the attention of local newspapers, which periodically run extensive articles covering her art and craft workshops and Carpatho-Rusyn folk festivals held at St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Church where she is an active parishioner.

Bonnie is a graduate of Pennsylvania State University in elementary and special education. She has taught in the Uniontown Public Schools and now teaches at St. John's Elementary School. Her ethnic origins are a mix of Slovak on her father's side and Carpatho-Rusyn on her mother's. From childhood she attended St. John's, and thus the Rusyn side of her background was to become closest and dearest to her. But awareness of her ethnicity was not immediate or automatic. Bonnie recalled recently: "We always kept the seasonal church customs, and I simply thought everyone else did, too. Only gradually did I begin to sense that our observances were different, somehow more intense and complex than our neighbors'. I came to discover my ethnicity gradually, by virtue of these differences."

Two subsequent events proved significant in her ethnic awakening. While teaching her pupils a unit on eastern European history and culture, she herself became utterly fascinated with the subject: "I knew my own homeland was there, but I started wondering *exactly* where I belonged. My family had always been reticent on this issue, but now my desire to know wouldn't let me rest." And she did not rest. When her mother's relatives invited her to visit them in Czechoslovakia in the summer of 1979, she went. She returned with all sorts of folk artifacts, embroideries, *pysanky*, and a new understanding of her origins.

Bonnie brought all this back to her family which had fostered a love of art in their talented daughter. Returning from Europe, she decided to attend a *pysanky* class at the local YMCA to learn this art of which she now had numerous examples. It was here that she began coming into her own real domain. She recalls that from the start there was clearly something marvelous, almost mystical in her relationship to making *pysanky*. "I picked up the egg and the tools for the first time, and suddenly felt that I had been doing this all my



life. My teachers were shocked that the art came so easily to me. And you can imagine how astounded I was when one day my grandmother handed me an old "family pattern" for my *pysanky* designs. I never knew we had one, and my grandmother had never disclosed this before, probably because she felt no one would be interested. My search for my roots was coming full circle, right back to my own home."

Bonnie's work did not go unnoticed. Father Eugene Yackanich, pastor of St. John's, strongly encouraged her work. She took up his suggestion to hold a *pysanky* workshop during Great Lent, 1981. Eighty people showed up! As Bonnie began mastering the art of embroidery, another workshop was arranged. After her second trip to Czechoslovakia, she returned with more artifacts, including woodburn items, cornhusk dolls, and bread dough cutouts. Now brimming over with dozens of new ideas, she met again with her Ethnic Crafts Club at St. John's and with classes she taught at other parishes and at a shop in Uniontown.

At present, Bonnie continues her school teaching, as well as her instruction in folk art and craft. She is a high quality artisan, hungry for authenticity in her work and aware of the desperate need for folklore research in Carpathian regional culture among immigrants in this country. "I am saddened at the shame which our immigrant people sometimes felt at their folk culture in the larger American society," Bonnie says, "but I understand that they were trying to survive and adapt in their new land. In those early years of this century, they felt that they had to pay the price of their own identity in order to become Americans. They didn't give away everything, of course, but we can never recover all that was lost. I just pray that I can preserve at least a fraction of our culture and identity and pass it on to others. It is my way of paying homage to my people and their sacrifice."

The year 1983 is the two-hundredth anniversary of the birth of a remarkable man — the Carpatho-Rusyn priest, poet, and scholar Vasyľ' Dovhovyč. At a time during the early nineteenth century when it seemed that Carpatho-Rusyn national life was entering a period of stagnation, Dovhovyč was busily at work in small mountain villages writing treatises on the most famous German philosopher of the day — Immanuel Kant.

Vasyľ' Dovhovyč was born in 1783 in the Carpatho-Rusyn village of Zolotarevo (Maramaroš county) in what is today the Transcarpathian oblast (Subcarpathian Rus') of the Ukrainian SSR. The son of a peasant — whose original family name was Dovhanyč — the young Vasyľ' showed already at an early age a strong inclination toward education, so that he was sent to the cantor of a neighboring village to learn to read in Rusyn and to sing the Carpathian plain chant. After attending several middle level schools, he completed theological studies at the seminaries in Trnava and Užhorod. In 1811, he was consecrated into the Greek Catholic priesthood.

The young priest with his new wife was first sent to serve in the small Carpatho-Rusyn village of Dovhe in western Maramoros county. It was there that he spent the longest time — 13 years — which allowed him to pursue more intensively his scholarly inclinations and poetic writing. After leaving Dovhe in 1824, Dovhovyč served as a parish priest in several Carpatho-Rusyn villages and he also held administrative posts in the lower Greek Catholic ecclesiastical administration.

Yet Dovhovyč is not remembered today for his priestly accomplishments, however successful they may have been, but rather for his scholarly contributions, which were certainly unique for the Carpatho-Rusyn lands if not for eastern Europe in general. Dovhovyč became a true child of the Enlightenment, an era in European and American culture which witnessed a new emphasis on rational thought and an attempt to understand all aspects of human existence. The Enlightenment and its universalistic approach to knowledge reached the Hungarian Kingdom during the last two decades of the eighteenth century, precisely when the young Dovhovyč was beginning his education. This was also the era when the talented bishop of Mukačevo, Andrej Bačyns'kyj (1732-1809, consecrated 1773), was successfully raising the educational level of Carpatho-Rusyns through the establishment of a theological seminary, a pedagogical institute, and many elementary schools.

Acculturized in an environment which placed such importance on education and imbued with the universalistic spirit of the Enlightenment, it is not surprising that Dovhovyč, besides writing poetry and philosophical works, also composed music, painted, published ethnographic descriptions and works on astronomy, and studied intensively physics, especially the most recent theories of light, electricity, and magnetism. In this, he was like his somewhat older contemporary, Benjamin Franklin, who is mentioned frequently in Dovhovyč's studies and even in one of his poems.

Despite his wide-ranging interests, it is because of his contributions to philosophy that Dovhovyč is best remembered. While serving as a parish priest in Dovhe, he learned

German, in order to read the works of the leading philosophers of the time — Fichte, Schelling, and most especially Kant. The result was several works published in Hungarian scholarly journals on these philosophers as well as on the implications of the work of Descartes and Newton for the study of astronomy. So highly respected was Dovhovyč's scholarship that he was elected in 1831 a corresponding member of the recently established Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

Although Dovhovyč's interests were universal in nature, he did not forget the specific Carpatho-Rusyn environment in which he was born and in which he functioned as a spiritual leader in local parishes. In fact, one of his earliest published scholarly works (1824) was an ethnographic study in which he criticized the unfavorable description of Rusyn village life put forth in a study by a well-known Slovak-Hungarian researcher. Another effort at making Carpatho-Rusyn culture known to the Hungarian public was a biography (1827) of the outstanding bishop of Mukačevo, Andrej Bačyns'kyj. Dovhovyč also wrote poetry in his native Carpatho-Rusyn dialect as well as in Latin and Hungarian. While a few of these poems appeared in print during his lifetime, it was not until this year — 1983 — that all of Dovhovyč's poetic corpus was finally published in Svidník, Czechoslovakia.

Vasyľ' Dovhovyč is a foremost example of a Carpatho-Rusyn who, through hard work and much self-education, was able to make recognized contributions to the general advancement of knowledge. At the same time, he never forgot his own Carpatho-Rusyn people and, therefore, he continued to work for their spiritual and cultural welfare. Dovhovyč's career, which began two centuries ago, should serve as an example to be followed by Carpatho-Rusyns and their descendants wherever they may live today.

Philip Michaels



Original manuscript title page in Latin of Dovhovyč's collection of poetry (1832).

FOLK CUSTOMS OF CARPATHO-RUSYNS: CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

The archaic calendars of the Eastern Slavs, including Carpatho-Rusyns, were neither stabilized nor unified. "New Year" usually began in March or September, and years were counted from "the creation of the universe" or some other hypothetical beginning. The acceptance of Christianity from Byzantium led also to the acceptance of the Julian calendar established by the Roman emperor Julius Caesar in 46 B.C. according to which every fourth year was a leap year with 366 days, i.e., a year in which February had 29 days. This date differed every year by 11 minutes and 14 seconds in excess of the astronomic calendar, and as a result in excess of 1 day every 128 years. This fact led Pope Gregory XIII in 1582 to reform the Julian calendar by abolishing the leap years falling on each respective 128th year. Since there were 10 such years preceding the pope's reform, he ordered that initially October 4, 1582 be followed by October 15.

This reform was binding for the Roman Catholic Church, but other churches, including the Orthodox Church, either did not accept this reform, or did so considerably later. The Gregorian reform was not accepted by the Greek Catholic Church in western Ukraine or in Subcarpathian Rus' (Transcarpathia), even after establishing its union with the Roman Catholic Church; nor was it accepted at first by the newly founded Orthodox and Greek Catholic parishes in the Americas, with the exception of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay where the Gregorian calendar was proclaimed universally mandatory in 1939. As a result, all traditional church holidays celebrated by members of both the Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches "lagged behind" holidays celebrated by Roman Catholics by 13 days. (Easter and other moveable feasts are celebrated according to the lunar calendar.) Even though church authorities in Transcarpathia, as well as in the United States and Canada, have today no objections against the transfer to the Gregorian calendar, most parishes, especially in the countryside, follow the traditional "old style" calendar.

It is to be emphasized that until the twentieth century the official calendar was virtually of no great significance in the everyday life of Carpatho-Rusyns. The common folk marked years rather in terms of memorable historical events (wars, natural disasters, epidemics), and months and days according to the departure or arrival of migratory birds, the beginning of agricultural seasons (*koly jarci sijaly*; *koly žita žaly* / when they sowed the barley; when they harvested the rye), or according to Christian holidays (*na Matku Bižu*; *na Velykden'* / at the Feast of the Assumption; at Easter). Until quite recently, it was common to find among the elderly that they were not aware of the exact date of their birth. As a consequence, the celebration of New Year is not connected with any particularly rich complex of customs.

The most important New Year custom was the New Year's Day well-wishing. From early in the morning, groups of about 3 to 5 boys visited their neighbors and relatives, proceeding from the low-lying localities to those at the top of the village (*žebý gazdivstvo dohorŷ išlo* / so that their home-
stead would move up in the world), and they recited their well-wishing verse:

*Vinčuju, vinčuju na tot Novýj rik,
Žebý vam výrosla pšenycja i bib,
Snop pry snopi, kopa pry kopi
A vŷ, pan gazda, mežy snopamy,
Jak jasnŷj Misjac mežy zirkamy.*

I wish for you this new year
A good crop of wheat and beans,
Sheaf after sheaf, stack after stack,
And that you, dear husbandman, stand among
the stacks
Like a bright moon among the stars.

However, most of the wishes were more jocular:

*Vinčuju, vinčuju,
Štoska pid kominom čuju:
Dajte mi z n'oho pokošovaty,
Budu vam lipše vinčovaty.*

I wish you all the best,
And if you let me taste
What I smell hiding under your chimney
[the smoked meat there],
My wishes for you will be even better.

Some other of these New Year wishes were "transplants" of wishes from the Christmas period.



Nativity players from the village of Kurov, near Bardejov, Prešov Region (photographed by the author, 1983).

It is relevant to note in this connection that New Year's Day was generally regarded as a holiday of servants, for it was on this day that their contracts were either concluded or canceled. The servants came from the poorest parts of society and were mainly orphans. Therefore, the orphan motif appears frequently in New Year songs:

*Siroty, siroty, tjažko bidujete,
Jak pride Novýj rik de sja podijete?
Čtora ma rodinu, ta pide dodomu,
A ja, nebožatko, nemam raz ku komu.*

Oh, you orphans, you live in great misery,
And where are you to go when the New Year
comes?
Those with relatives will go home,
But I, a poor orphan, have nowhere to go.

In the distant past, the beginning of a new year was identified with the central event of the winter solstice, the Yuletide (*Rizdvo, Hody*). It was a feast directed at the safeguarding of the new crop. Its original magical function, connected with agriculture, is still prominent in many customs today.

One of the ancient customs required that on Christmas Eve the husbandman (*gazda*) nurse his fruit trees by bandaging them with straw binders and treating them as living beings. The tree which did not bear fruit was warned by the husbandman holding his axe: *Jablin', jablin', zarod' jabka; jak ne vrodyš, vyrublju tja* (Appletree, appletree, you shall bear fruit, or else I will cut you down). It was believed that such a tree would take the threat seriously and would start bearing fruit.

In another custom, the feed for hens and other poultry was put into a hoop or a chain shaped into a closed circle with the belief that the poultry would not then go astray into the fields. Cattle were chased across a brook to prevent them from limping in the summer. They were further protected from the supposed bad influence of witches by being fed thornbush hips (*sverbohuzky*). Also, nothing in the house could be lent out on that day so that good fortune would not leave the house. Linen could not be hung around, for throughout the year it was usual to hang the skins of dead cattle around in a similar manner. The windle (*motovidlo*), an appliance for winding yarn, was to be left empty to prevent poverty from "winding" around the house, while the distaff was to be full so that the house would be full of prosperity, and so on.

Most magic customs were connected with Christmas Eve (*Svjatýj večur, Koročun, Vilija*). On that day the husbandman covered the floor with straw. An unthreshed grain sheaf, usually oats (called in some localities "Didko" or "Diduch"), was placed on the honorable seat at the table, i.e., "into the corner" under the icons. According to historical and ethnographic literature, in the archaic Slavic homes one corner was reserved for a representation of the pagan gods. Oats or straw were also used for decorating the festive table on which there had to be seeds from all crops. In the spring these very seeds were used in the first sowing. The oats and straw had a magical function in pagan society: they were expected to secure plenty of fodder and grain. Christianity provided another rationalization for the custom, stressing the birth of Jesus on straw and oats, thus transforming the two into symbols of that event. Also placed in the place of



The Dido character from a nativity play in the village of Čertižné, near Medzilaborce, Prešov Region (photographed by the author, 1972).

honor was the festive bread (*koročun, kračun*) decorated with wintergreen or periwinkle (*barvinok*) and various small figures. Prosperity was symbolized by a "mountain" of bread at the end of the table. At the beginning of the evening meal the husbandman hid behind this "mountain," asking: "Can you see me from behind the bread mountain?" The children replied in a chorus: "We can't," after which the husbandman concluded: "Let us wish you'll not see me either in the spring from within the hay or in the summer from within the wheat!"

When the first morning star was up, the whole family hurried to wash in a cold brook. They believed that the bath had a magical purgative function and that it would help them to maintain good health throughout the year. The last to leave the brook was the husbandman's wife bringing with her a pot of water into which the family put bits from each dish of the evening meal in order to feed the cattle later.

After returning from the brook, the husbandman stated his good wishes for the family: "abundant crops in the fields, new offspring at home, expansion of the homestead, satisfaction from children, kindness from the overlords, respect from fellows, as many heifers as there are firs in the wood, as many bulls as there are beeches in the forest," etc.

After a common prayer, candles were lit on the table and all took their seats at the Christmas Eve table which no one could leave during the evening meal. Under the table they

put various iron objects as symbols of good health, most frequently an axe or a plowshare. The legs of the table were tied with a chain in the hope this would keep the family together all the year round. If a member of the family were absent or had died in the course of the past year, a symbolic spoon was displayed for him which nobody could use.

The Christmas Eve meal was in some localities connected with the symbolic summoning of Frost — *Moroze, moroze, pod' t'yu nam večerjaty* (Frost, Frost, come join us for supper) — in order to placate "him" and make sure "he" does not destroy the crops. In a similar manner they would summon to the meal the most feared forest vulture, the wolf, begging him not to eat the cattle in the summer.

The Christmas Eve meal itself consisted of seven, nine, or twelve dishes. It began with garlic, regarded by Rusyns as a universal medicine. But the garlic also had a magical function: it was to safeguard the togetherness and unity of the family, so that all its members would hold together like the cloves in a garlic head. It was followed by a mushroom sauce (*mačanka*), cabbage, beans, peas, meatless *pirohý*, other sauces from dried fruits (from plums — *slivčanka*, pears — *hruščanka*), and baked pastries with poppyseed (*bobal'ky*). In eastern Transcarpathia the predominant dessert was wheat porridge with honey (*kutja*). Brandy (*palenka*) was always used for toasts.

Each dish was accompanied by a brief comment. When the husbandman distributed cloves of garlic among the members of his family, he made sure that they were eaten with the peel, saying "Don't strip it bare in order that it protect us from all evil." When the husbandman's wife offered cabbage, she stirred it in a dish so that new cabbage would grow strong and thick in the summer. The rich variety of food offered at the Christmas feast was motivated by the wish for prosperity all year round. According to the law of analogy in magic, it was believed that what appeared on the Christmas table would appear there throughout the year.

Similarly motivated were a number of other superstitious rites aimed at finding out what the future held for the coming year in the way of marriages, deaths, etc. The rites included blowing a candle, throwing a bunch of tied spoons against the door, bringing logs into the room, counting stakes in the fence, and others.

An inseparable part of each Christmas Eve as well as of the rest of Christmas was group caroling which took a number of forms. The simplest form was *polaznikuvanja*. Groups of young boys — *polaznici* — went from house to house, often with a lamb, visiting their relatives and wishing them in simple verse fortune, health, and prosperity. In some areas the *polaznici* always carried a shining star decorated with cosmic or religious motifs; north of the town of Bardejov the *polaznici* presented their hosts hazelrods called *šcedraký*, with which to turn the cattle out for the year's first grazing.

The second form of the Christmas visits by young well-wishers was caroling proper. The participants included both young boys and girls and often even young married men and women. The groups of carolers proceeded from house to house singing *koljadky* — secular festive songs dedicated to individual members of the family: to the husbandman, his wife, his son, daughter, etc. They were extremely archaic songs with a fixed form, most frequently consisting of a ten-syllable line with a break in the middle and with a refrain after

each line. Their characteristic feature was the idealization of patriarchal family life. *Koljadky* devoted to the husbandman emphasize his wealth: he is said to own many flocks of sheep and herds of cattle; his larders are said to be full of grain; his household full of servants, his children are obedient; he has a good wife and limitless amounts of money, etc. The husbandman's wife appears in the *koljadky* as an ideal of industriousness and fidelity: she sews a shirt for her husband with golden thread and simultaneously looks after the servants. *Koljadky* devoted to the daughter sing about her beauty, noble nature, industriousness, loveability, and the fact that she is sought in marriage by no one lesser than princes. The sons, in turn, are paragons of all virtues characterizing a good husbandman and endowed with a chivalrous spirit. Many *koljadky* include religious motifs, too; however, these motifs are expressed in an apocryphal form: Jesus Christ tills land with the husbandman's plow; the Virgin Mary turns oxen out to graze; Saint Joseph sows grain, etc.

Since the folk *koljadky* did not correspond to canonical religious beliefs, there were attempts to replace them with church carols (*koljady*) about the birth of Jesus Christ. These, however, substantially differed in both contents and form from the folk *koljadky*. The religious carols were in part codified by church authorities in a book form, the *Bohohlasnik* published in Počajevo in 1790, which appeared in dozens of editions and thus became a part of the folk repertory.

The third form of Christmas caroling was the Nativity Play ("Viflejem," "Jasličky"). Its main performers and disseminators were shepherds; hence, it is often referred to in the folk idiom as a "shepherds' play." It represents the highest form of folk creative expression and includes almost all varieties of performance: singing, music, dance, the spoken word, as well as graphic art. Basically it can be described as a folk drama about the birth of Jesus Christ. The cast includes three shepherds, three kings, and also Herod, angels, and sometimes the Devil, the Jew, and other characters. All are brightly made up and hold sticks with little bells or axes. The central requisite of the play is "Bethlehem," i.e., the representation of the nativity scene in the form of a cradle or a little church. The main protagonist is the oldest shepherd (*Dido, Guba, Kubo*) with a mask on his face. He is reasonable and experienced, but he almost always gets involved in comic situations.

The Nativity Play became widespread in Transcarpathia only in the nineteenth century, but it is actively performed even today. While several variations of the play have been repeatedly published, the play has also been passed on orally or in handwritten copies. A special variety of the Nativity Play is the *vertep*, a puppet play about the birth of Jesus Christ with a number of entertaining folk characters. The *vertep* was widespread, especially in the eastern part of Transcarpathia. The performances of both the Nativity Play and the *vertep* were accompanied by the singing of folk *koljadky* and religious *koljady*.

In all the forms of caroling the hosts rewarded the performers with money and goods, especially with grain. In the late 1940s and in the 1950s there were unsuccessful attempts on the part of Soviet Transcarpathian authorities to abolish the performances of the Nativity Play. At present the performances are tolerated, provided the religious motifs are subdued.

Many magical superstitions were also connected with other days of Christmas. It was generally believed that as of midnight on Christ's nativity day water changes into wine and that at this hour cattle can speak like people.

On Christmas morning it was customary to put coins, a symbol of wealth, into water with which the morning wash was done, in order to "conjure up" prosperity for the coming year. Moreover, the first visit on Christmas day was paid to a neighbor living in a higher location, so that one's homestead would get "higher" in the world, too. The Christmas straw was burned in the garden on the third day, or wisps of this straw were used as binders on fruit trees to ensure a good crop. During the post-Christmas cleaning of the house, one of the daughters (usually naked so that the various parasitic insects could not take hold of her clothes) used to exorcise the insects in this incantation:

*Posota, chorota, blychý, bloščici,
Id'te že vŷ z našej chyžy do pan'skej švitlici.
Tam jest vaša mati,
Ona vam bude jisty davaty.*

Bad luck, illness, fleas and vermin,
Leave our house and go to the rich people;
Your mother is there,
And she will feed you.

At present, the Christmas customs are rather simplified. What has disappeared are especially the magical rites aimed at improving the crops or ensuring prosperity. Even though they may still be carried on here and there, their function is largely entertaining.

Mykola Mušinka

RECENT PUBLICATIONS 1979 (continued)

Lacko, Michele. "La Chiesa dei Ruteni subcarpatici" (The Church among the Subcarpathian Rusyns), *Oriente Christiano*, Vol. XIX, no. 1-2 (Palermo, 1979), pp. 92-103.

This popular Italian-language article provides a brief historic survey of the Subcarpathian church from earliest times to the present. Written by the well-known church historian, Reverend Michael Lacko, the article also contains rare photographs of Subcarpathian monasteries and bishops.

Lemkivščyna (The Lemkian Land), Vol. I, nos. 1-4 (New York, N.Y., 1979).

This new quarterly is published by the Lemko Research Foundation in cooperation with three other Ukrainian-oriented Lemkian immigrant organizations: the World Lemkos' Federation, the Organization for the Defense of the Lemko Land, and the Union of Lemkos in Canada. Each issue of this Ukrainian-language journal numbers twenty-eight pages and includes brief articles on the history and culture of Lemkian-inhabited territory in the former Austrian province of Galicia, today the southeastern corner of Poland.

Lutskay, Michael. *Grammatica Slaveno-Ruthena* (Buda, 1830) (Slaveno-Rusyn Grammar). *Ukrajins'ki hramatyky*, Vol. 2. Munich: Ukrajins'kyj Vil'nyj Universytet, 1979, xvi, 204 p.

On the eve of the 150th anniversary of the first appearance of Lučkaj's Slaveno-Rusyn grammar, Professor Oleksa Horbatsch of the University of Frankfurt in West Germany has prepared this reprint of the original grammar as well as a brief analysis (pp. 192-201) of the life of Lučkaj and the language he used. Lučkaj's work is written in Latin, and the language he called "Slaveno-Ruthena" is a Subcarpathian recension (variant) of Church Slavonic, that is, Church Slavonic with borrowings from local Carpatho-Rusyn vernacular.

Magocsi, Paul R. *The Language Question Among the Subcarpathian Rusyns*. Fairview, N.J.: Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, 1979, 41 p.

This pamphlet discusses how Rusyns resolved the question of which language to use as a medium for their national culture. Like other peoples in eastern Europe, the Rusyns in the course of their historical development used different languages.

Dr. Magocsi traces the five periods of the language debate between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries which saw the use of Rusyn vernacular, Church Slavonic, Latin, Magyar, Russian, and Ukrainian in Subcarpathian publications.

(Available from the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center for \$5.75).

Magocsi, Paul R. *Let's Speak Rusyn — Hovorim poruský: Transcarpathian edition*. Fairview, N.J.: Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, 1979, xii, 106 p.

The Transcarpathian edition of *Let's Speak Rusyn* follows the same format as the earlier Prešov Region edition (Englewood, N.J., 1976). The present volume is based on the language of a village near Mukačevo, in the former county of Bereg. It includes a methodological introduction, 14 chapters of phrases based on a wide variety of everyday occurrences, and grammatical notes. Each chapter is accompanied by a humorous cartoon by Fedor Vico based on a phrase in the text. A full-page map shows the contemporary ethnographic boundaries of Carpatho-Rusyns.

(Available from the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center for \$6.95).

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OUR FRONT COVER

Rusyn girls returning from church, Užhorod area, Transcarpathian oblast. (Photographed 1935).

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