

David Svoboda

**The end of “divine providence”.**  
 Ukrainian nationalism in Subcarpathian Rus in the context  
 of the Czechoslovak crisis of 1938

Between the wars, there was no corner of Central Europe where rival geopolitical visions and constitutional tendencies came into such intense conflict as they did in Subcarpathian Rus. This is where the Czechoslovak crisis after Munich exposed unrequited ambitions and the lack of trust that everyone had in everyone else. It forces us to re-evaluate romantic Czech notions of a fairy-tale region where the greatest risk one faced was being robbed by bandits. Czechoslovakia obtained this territory in 1919 without any effort, owing it to historical coincidence, and the country did not know what to do with it the entire time. Now, after the Munich Agreement, this submontane province became a barrel of dust and all those who made their claims in the region were playing with a short fuse: Poles, Hungarians, Ukrainian nationalists, and Czechs, who strived to save what they could.

Looming over everyone at this time were Nazi strategists, who cleverly directed everything.<sup>1</sup> Everyone here refined their “calculating skills” and mostly came up short. The Czechs did not fulfil their promise that they would give the region autonomy and they led the locals up the garden path for 20 years. But thanks to Czech sovereignty alone, a rivalry was able to develop here between Ruthenian, Ukrainian, and Russophile political programmes. Subcarpathian Rus also became the only piece of territory claimed by political Ukrainianism, where an attempt was made to form an autochthonous Ruthenian ethnicity. If the republic had survived for longer in its existing form, this new ethnic strain could still ultimately have developed with difficulty in Central Europe with its own constitutional ambitions, albeit disadvantaged by its location between Hungary, Poland, Romania, and the Soviets.<sup>2</sup>

1 WELYCHENKO, S.: Carpathian Ukraine in Eastern European Politics 1938–1939. *Ukrainian Review*, 1971, III, pp. 34–35. FANO, Š.: Zakarpatská Ukrajina v politických kalkuláciách susedných štátov v období od Mníchova po marec 1939 /Carpathian Ukraine in the political calculations of neighbouring states in the period from Munich to March 1939/. *Slovanské štúdie /Slavic Studies/*, 1971, Vol. XI, pp. 61–79.

2 The hopeless way in which the Czechs handled the territory entrusted to them when it came to nationalities is apparent in developments from the Education Ministry’s decree that the *Ruthenian language* was part of *little Russian*, which was spoken by Galician Ukrainians to the ban on using the word *Ukrainian* (as an adjective or ethnicity) in legal matters, which was issued in 1933 by the Constitutional Court chaired by Emil Hácha. For more on the first subject, see BEDNARŽOVA, Taťana: *Avhustyn Voloshyn – deržavnyj dijač, pedahob-myslytel’*. Osnova, Lviv 1995, p. 214. For more on the ban, see STEFAN, Augustin: Myths About Carpatho-Ukraine. *The Ukrainian Quarterly*, 1954, No. 3, p. 221.

Although Poland only rushed to divide its prey after Czechoslovakia was on its knees in the wake of the Munich Agreement, the decline of its neighbour unintentionally opened up a space south of the Carpathians for Ukrainian separatists, who hurried there to sow the seeds of a future Greater Ukraine. Warsaw realised what consequences this could have for the stability of the situation in Eastern Galicia and it proceeded to carry out the requisite brutal measures to suppress the movement. At the same time, the consolidated Ukrainians bothered the Hungarians, who made up for the Treaty of Trianon after Munich. Kárpátalja, as Subcarpathian Rus is known in Hungarian, was meant to be once again under the Crown of Saint Stephen and the common Hungarian-Polish border would guarantee the fulfilment of the Polish dream epitomised by the Polish foreign minister Józef Beck, which consisted of securing Poland via an alliance zone of states who were wary of further claims by Germany.<sup>3</sup>

The steps taken by Hungary also had some surprising consequences. Hungary, which was decimated in Trianon, was recompensed with the southwestern part of Subcarpathian Rus after the First Vienna Award in November 1938 and this facilitated the rise of a Ukrainizing mood in the remainder of the territory, because the most eastern part of the republic became more homogeneous ethnically and the trauma it suffered made it easier to mobilize against the Hungarian and Polish threat under a Ukrainian banner.<sup>4</sup> Even though Czech historiography does not adequately reflect it, thanks to these pressures Ukrainian radicals emerged as a tactical ally of Czech border defenders against diversionary commandos sent to Subcarpathian Rus by Poland and Hungary.<sup>5</sup>

The Germans continued to bid for Polish favour while at the same time corrupting Ukrainians with deceitful promises using the chimera of protecting the next “Ukrainian Piedmont” as a territory that would give rise to national unification (the first was known as Ukrainian Galicia in Austria-Hungary). The closer the Ukrainians’ autonomist establishment subsequently aligned itself with the Germans, the less capable Prague was of defending the territorial integrity of Subcarpathian Rus against Hungary.<sup>6</sup> The logic of the political alliances and loyalties is also not easy to

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- 3 ŽERKO, Stanisław: *Stosunki polsko-niemieckie 1938–1939*. Instytut Zachodni, Poznań 1998, p. 137; ULAM, Adam B.: *Expansion and Coexistence. Soviet Foreign Policy 1917–1973*. Praeger Publishers, New York – Washington 1974, p. 262; ČARNOGURSKÝ, Pavol: *14. marec 1939 / 14 March 1939/*. Veda, Bratislava 1992, p. 87.
- 4 Jaki vyhljady Karpats'koji Ukrajiny? *Dilo*, 4. 11. 1938, p. 5; KUL'ČYČ'KYJ, Stanisław: *Ukrajina miž dvoma vijnamy (1921–1939 rr.)*. Vydavnyčyj dim Al'ternatyvy, Kyiv 1999, p. 316. Ukrainian and Russian sources cited in the footnotes have been transliterated into Latin script using Czech transcription rules, e.g. Shukevych is rendered as Šuchevyč, etc.
- 5 MAREK, Jindřich: *Hraničárská kalvárie. Příběhy posledních obránců Masarykovy republiky na severu Čech a Podkarpatské Rusi v letech 1938–1939* / Border Cavalry. Stories of the last defenders of Masaryk's republic in North Bohemia and Subcarpathian Rus/. Svět křidel, Cheb 2004, p. 208; POP, Dmytro: *Istorija Podkarpats'koji Rusy*. Self-published, Uzhhorod 2005, p. 196; ONUFRYK, Vasyl': *Spomyn z Karpats'koji Ukrajiny 1938–1939*. Toronto – Uzhhorod 1995, p. 19–21; SAMUŚ, Paweł – BADZIAK, Kazimierz – MATWIEJEW, Gennadij: *Akcja „Łom“*. Polskie działania dywersyjne na Rusi Zakarpackiej w świetle dokumentów oddziału II Sztapu Głównego WP. Oficyna Wydawnicza „Auditor“, Warsaw 1998.
- 6 KUL'ČYČ'KYJ, Stanisław: *Ukrajina miž dvoma vijnamy (1921–1939 rr.)*, p. 316; See a congratulatory telegram from the Carpatho-Ukrainian government to Hitler. Dokument ukrajins'ko-nimec'koho pryjateljstva! *Nova Svoboda*, 11. 2. 1939, p. 3.

David Svoboda

understand. The Hungarians cultivated the Russophiles as an ally, the Germans lied to the Ukrainians, and those who defined themselves as state-forming Ruthenians, including the indifferent masses, carried no weight and had no support in the midst of this battle between more powerful currents – Prague was no longer paying off as an ally. Naturally, foreign agents were operating diligently on every side and they also infiltrated the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN).

### We don't need autonomy from the Czechs

The OUN gained a foothold in Carpathian Ruthenia in the very first year it was established (1930).<sup>7</sup> Czechoslovakia had a strange pre-eminence in this respect in that its branch of the illegal organization was established by a woman. Stefaniya Novakivska was a member of the teaching staff at an Uzhhorod grammar school and she ended up in jail following a crackdown by Czechoslovak police after the local OUN adopted Galician methods of working: in June 1930, the reverend Greek-Catholic clergyman and Moscowphile Yevmeniy Sabov (1859–1934), became the target of an unsuccessful assassination attempt, which was carried out by a radicalized Ukrainian student who had been put up to it by Novakivska. The advent of organized political violence in the province was a milestone, but this act was an isolated phenomenon here until the end of the 1930s.<sup>8</sup>

The OUN laid down more palpable foundations for its structures in Subcarpathian Rus at the beginning of the 1930s. The dream of a separate Home Executive (i.e. an autonomous organizational unit) did not come to fruition here: Until the end of the First Czechoslovak Republic tasks were divided up into a propagandistic, legally operating segment, which was entrusted to Stepan Rosokha,<sup>9</sup> and an illegal segment led by Yulian Chymynets.<sup>10</sup> The local OUN was not subordinate to the Galician Home

7 VEHEŠ, Mykola: Do pytan'nia pro učasť OUN v oboroni Karpats'koji Ukrajinu. In: *Materijaly naukovoji konferenciji OUN i UPA (istorija, uroky, sučasnist')*. Stryi 1993, p. 36.

8 SYTNYK, Oleksander: OUN i Zakarpatt'a. *Vyzvol'nyj šljach*, 1998, No. 2, p. 217; Po Užhorodském atentátu /After the Uzhhorod assassination/. *Lidové noviny* (morning), 3. 6. 1930, p. 1; CHYMYNEC', Julijan: *Zakarpatt'a – zemlja ukrajins'koji deržavy. Notatky z istoriji Zakarpatt'a*. Vydavnytvo Karpat, Uzhhorod 1991, p. 72.

9 Stepan Rosokha (1908–1986) was a Ukrainian nationalist and journalist. In the post-Munich period, he was a member of staff of the Carpathian Sich and acted as a liaison between the OUN and the autonomous government. In February 1939, he was elected as a deputy in the autonomous parliament of Carpatho-Ukraine. In the Second World War, he lived in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, and he was imprisoned by the Germans. He died in Canada. According to testimony, as a Sich officer he walked around with a dagger garnished with a Swastika. (LEMAK, Vasyl' – PETRYŠČE, Petro: *Zahadkova zmova. Novyny Zakarpatt'a*, 8. 5. 1993, p. 8). After the war, he was journalistically productive insofar as it concerns his extensive memoirs, but he is guilty of insincerity with regard to his own role in the critical events of the period described. Ibid. See also SHANDOR (Šandor), Vincent (Vikentij): *Podkarpatská Rus od vzniku ČSR po sovětskou anexi. Očima přímého účastníka události* /Subcarpathian Rus from the establishment of the Czechoslovak Republic up to the Soviet annexation. Through the eyes of a participant in events/. Rybka Publishers, Prague 2013, pp. 127–128.

10 Yulian Chymynets (1911–1994) was a Ukrainian nationalist connected with Subcarpathian Rus and later Carpatho-Ukraine. From the beginning of the 1930s, he was a liaison between the Carpathian Sich and the foreign leadership of the OUN. He was in contact with Avhustyn Voloshyn, with whose knowledge

## The end of “divine providence”

Executive (the Ukrainian abbreviation is KE, Krajova Ekzekutyva), but answered directly to the foreign leadership of the organization (PUN – Provid ukrayinskykh nationalistiv) Rosokha was himself a fierce agitator, whose anti-Czech vituperation did not prevent him from studying at Charles University in Prague, where he became the most important exponent of nationalist tendencies among Ukrainian students. From 1933, he published the celebrated bimonthly *Probojem*, where he combined calls for autonomy with hints of territorial claims on part of eastern Slovakia from Košice to Poprad, which dovetailed with criticism of the Slovakization of the local East Slav minority.<sup>11</sup> Although *Probojem* was published legally, it called Czechs imperialists who had subjugated Ukraine together with other invaders. The fact that they did not have to deal with any resistance under the Carpathians was overlooked by journalism of this kind. A memorable speech by Edvard Beneš in Uzhhorod on his visit in May 1934 drew particular ire from the journal when the then foreign minister said that *the fate of Subcarpathian Rus has been decided for centuries to come*. The fact that the speech did not count on the will of Ukrainians could not escape the notice of Rosokha’s journal.<sup>12</sup> Beneš’s self-assured relationship with the League of Nations was also ridiculed. After the experience of years gone by, Ukrainian nationalists were not dazzled by the authority of this organization to say the least. The reality of the situation had convinced them that self-help and force were the only things that counted.<sup>13</sup>

In the role of general secretary of the paramilitary Carpathian Sich formation, Rosokha eagerly built a new order in Subcarpathian Rus at a time when this part of the post-Munich federation had taken the new name of Carpatho-Ukraine,<sup>14</sup> and he was therefore one of those who oversaw the ties between this entity and the foreign leadership of the OUN as well as the Galician Home Executive. The main link between the Sich and the PUN was Khymynets, whose Mukachevo house had hosted many leading figures in the movement during illegal visits over the previous decade.<sup>15</sup>

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- he led the so-called Carpatho-Ukrainian Delegation in Vienna from September 1938. He supported the pro-German orientation of Carpatho-Ukrainian policy. In March 1939, he was interned by the Hungarians, but soon released. He died in the USA. SYTNYK, Oleksander: *OUN i Zakarpattia*, p. 217. Some Ukrainian authors nonetheless write about the existence of a Home Executive – Ukrainian acronym: KE OUN Z – Zakarpatti (Transcarpathia). POSIVNYČ, Mykola – PAHIRJA, Oleksandr: *Vojenno-polityčna dijāl'nist' OUN u Zakarpatti (1929–1939)*. *Ukrajins'kyj vyzvol'nyj ruch*, 2009, No. 13, p. 45.
- 11 *The National Archives Prague* (NA) F. (fund) Zpravodajská ústředna při policejním ředitelství Praha (Intelligence Centre at the Police Directorate) – AMV 200 (hereafter referred to as ZÚS-AMV 200), Box 376, sign. (signature) 200Mat.-6-31, l. (folio) 20–21; ROSOKHA, Stepan: Krovave povstanňa. *Probojem*, 1935, No. 3–4 (berezeň–kviteň), p. 32; BELEJ, Ljubomyr – BELEJ, Les': *Stylos proty styletiv. Karpats'ka Ukrajina u žurnali Probojem (1934–1943)*. Vydavnytvo Gražda, Uzhhorod 2009, pp. 71–77; DOVHANYČ, Omeljan et al.: *Karpats'ka Ukrajina*. Tom II. *Chronika podij. Personaliji*. Zakarpattia, Uzhhorod 2010, p. 197.
- 12 POPADYNEC', Vasyľ: Vidpovid' na odnu promovu. *Probojem*, 1934, No. 8–9 (žovteň–hrudeň), pp. 114–115.
- 13 *Ibid.*, p. 115; ROSOKHA, Stepan: Sučasnyj polityčnyj stan na Pidkarpatti. *Probojem*, 1934, No. 8–9 (žovteň–hrudeň), p. 120. Viz POSIVNYČ, Mykola – PAHIRJA, Oleksandr: *Vojenno-polityčna dijāl'nist' OUN u Zakarpatti (1929–1939)*, pp. 47–48.
- 14 I use this interchangeably with the term Subcarpathian Rus purely because the current political complexion of this territory was still taking shape. We deal with its legitimacy from a legal point of view further on.
- 15 CHYMYNEC', Julijan: *Ternystyj šljach do Ukrajiny*. Gražda, Uzhhorod 1996, p. 234.

## David Svoboda

The attitude of the Czech security services to the activity of the OUN was neither clear nor consistent throughout. We know, of course, that there was no abatement of police vigilance towards expressions of Ukrainian separatism, but Hungarian irredentism was a disproportionately more serious spectre and was also resented by Ukrainian nationalists themselves. In at least one case, the intelligence services made use of a quote from the nationalist ideologue and journalist Mykola Stsiborskyi (1897–1941), who concernedly drew attention to the dangers of Hungarian aspirations in 1928.<sup>16</sup> The members of the PUN who were staying in Prague at the time of the First Republic enjoyed the freedom of movement that conditions in Czechoslovakia offered them for their activity, and they had no interest in disrupting this idyll by carrying out revolutionary anti-state actions. Consequently, the OUN in Transcarpathia remained exclusively political and ideological in nature, and it infiltrated cultural educational institutions, such as Prosvita and the scout movement Plast, which played no less a role in spreading Ukrainian nationalism than in Polish Galicia.<sup>17</sup> As the nationalist journalist Yevhen Onatsky (1894–1979) said to the OUN leader Yevhen Konovalets<sup>18</sup> in a letter from Rome in the spring of 1934, it would be a crime to rise up in Transcarpathia *too soon* and force the Czechoslovak government to take action. Poland and the U.S.S.R. were the priority objectives and Transcarpathia was meant to provide a *cultural hinterland*.<sup>19</sup>

The Czechs did not manage to appreciate the potential of the Ukrainizing trend in time and they placed their hopes in cultivating an autochthonous Rusynism, which was supposed to support the interests of the state. They missed the opportunity to gain Ukrainophile allies at a time when Rosokha was not the only one who spoke for them with his words *We don't need autonomy from the Czechs, but an independent Ukrainian state*, and Hungarian irredentism escalated.<sup>20</sup> For example, as late as 1937,

16 HYRJAK, Volodymyr: *Uhors'ka iredenta v mižvojennomu Zakarpatti*. Vseukrajins'ke deržavne vydavnytvo Karpaty, Uzhhorod 2012, p. 88.

17 CHYMYNEC', Julijan: *Zakarpattia – zemlja ukrajins'koji deržavy: notatky z istoriji Zakarpattia*, p. 72. NA, f. Ministerstvo vnitra (Ministry of Interior) I – Prezidium (Presidium) (hereafter referred to as PMV-AMV 225), sign. 225-1280-4, Presidium zemského úradu (Presidium of the federal authority) in Uzhhorod, 22. 4. 1932, l. 104.

18 Yevhen Konovalets (1891–1938), leader of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, later historically the first leader of the OUN. As a soldier in the Austro-Hungarian Army, he found himself in Russian captivity in 1915. After escaping to Kyiv in 1917, he organized the Halytsko-Bukovynsky Kurin of the Sich Riflemen, with whom he actively participated in the defence of the city against the Bolsheviks, later rising up against the government of hetman Pavlo Skoropadskyi. From the beginning of the 1920s he lived in exile, where he dedicated himself primarily to building up contacts for the benefit of establishing an independent Ukraine (in the USA, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and also in Czechoslovakia). In 1938, he was killed by a Soviet agent in Rotterdam.

19 ONAC'KYJ, Jevhen: *U vičnomu misti IV*. New Pathway, Toronto 1989, p. 175. Also cited by PAHIRJA, Oleksandr: Jevhen Konovalets' i rozbudova orhanizacijnoji mreži OUN na Podkarpats'kij Rusi u 1930-ch rokach. *Ukrajins'kyj vyzvol'nyj ruch*, 2016, No. 16, p. 177.

20 Cited according to ŠTEFAN, Avhustyn: *Avhustyn Voloshyn, prezident Karpats'koji Ukrajiny*. Karpats'kyj doslidnyj centr, Toronto 1971, p. 64; POP, Ivan: *Dějiny Podkarpatské Rusi v datech /A history of Subcarpathian Rus in dates/*. Nakladatelství Libri, Prague 2005, p. 353; MARKUS, Vasyľ: *Polityčna i deržavno-pravna evolucija ukrajins'koho Zakarpattia*. Gražda, Uzhhorod 1993, pp. 30–31; MAGOCSI, Paul Robert: *The Shaping of a National Identity: Subcarpathian Rus', 1848–1948*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1978, pp. 232–233.

## The end of “divine providence”

even Julian Révay,<sup>21</sup> a post-Munich foreign minister in pro-Ukrainian governments, spreading Czechophobia and pro-German sympathies in the new conditions that prevailed in Transcarpathia, presented Prague with a proposal for the publication of a journal written in Ukrainian, which would be *uncompromisingly critical of both Hungarian and Polish propaganda [...] with respect to the secession of Subcarpathian Rus from the republic and against their servants in this country – it should have the task of combating it with all strength of purpose*. As late as the spring of 1938, even Avhustyn Voloshyn,<sup>22</sup> a prominent politician in the era that was about to arrive,<sup>23</sup> did not hesitate when it came to expressions of loyalty. Except for those who adhered to Rusynism, Ukrainians were the most dynamic quantity here from the 1930s onwards and they had the same enemies as Czechoslovakia – i.e. Hungary and to a large extent Poland. With their affection for a conservative Magyarized clergy and Budapest, and by extension Poland, the autonomists with Russophile leanings were not able by a long chalk to display such impeccable credentials.<sup>24</sup>

In 1937, government efforts to find an at least temporarily satisfactory solution to the status of Subcarpathian Rus culminated in a law amending the position of governor and strengthening the governor’s authority. The government called it a first step toward the autonomy that absolutely everyone had been clamouring for. In fact, a law approved at “five minutes to midnight” no longer satisfied anyone and there was an even greater hankering across the border for an external force to induce Prague to see

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- 21 In Ukrainian historiography, we exclusively encounter the transcription of the surname in its Ukrainian form. Julian Révay (1899–1979) was a Ukraine-oriented Subcarpathian politician. In 1920, he co-founded the social democratic party in Subcarpathian Rus. Between the wars, he was active in the Ukrainian nationalist movement in the region. In the 1930s, he was a social-democrat deputy in the national parliament. He was a minister in the autonomous Voloshyn governments and openly supported a pro-German orientation, which ultimately led to his being dismissed by president Emil Hácha on 6 March 1939. On 15 March, he was appointed foreign minister and premier of the state of Carpatho-Ukraine in his absence. After the war, he settled in the USA, where he also died.
- 22 Avhustyn Voloshyn (1874–1945), transcribed in Czech as Augustin Vološin. A Greek-Catholic cleric, teacher, journalist, and politician. In the 1920s, he was a member of the national parliament for the Czechoslovak People’s Party. He was head of the Ruthenian National Christian Party until 1938. He gradually adopted a pro-Ukrainian orientation. He held the post of prime minister in the autonomous governments until the region was occupied by Hungarian forces. On 15 March 1939, he was elected president of the independent Carpatho-Ukraine. He spent the war in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, where he became rector of the Ukrainian university. He was arrested by SMERSH and taken to Moscow, where he died as a result of interrogations.
- 23 *Archiv Kanceláře prezidenta republiky* (The Archive of the President’s Office, hereafter referred to as AKPR), f. Kancelář prezidenta republiky (The Office of the President of the Republic, hereafter referred to as KPR) –01/1919–1947, Box 161, inv. (inventory) No. 1080, Věc: vydávání rusínského denního časopisu Podkarpatské Rusi v řeči lidové (ukrajinské) /Re: publishing a daily Ruthenian journal for Subcarpathian Rus in the people’s (Ukrainian) language/, p. 3; MAGOCSI, Paul Robert: *The Shaping of a National Identity: Subcarpathian Rus’, 1848–1948*, p. 233.
- 24 SUŠKO, Ladislav: Podkarpatská Rus ako autonómna krajina pomníchovskej – druhej ČSR /Subcarpathian Rus as an autonomous region of the post-Munich/Second Czechoslovak Republic/. In: *Česko-slovenská historická ročenka /Czecho-Slovak Historical Almanac/*, 1997, p. 147. The tensions between youths of a Russophile and Ukrainian inclination is depicted in the memoir by MATHAUSEROVÁ, Světa: *Cesty a křižovatky. Podkarpatská Rus, Morava, Čechy /Roads and crossroads. Subcarpathian Rus, Moravia, Bohemia/*. Břeh, Prague 2011, pp. 94–95.

## David Svoboda

reason.<sup>25</sup> In the end, it was opponents of democracy, regardless of political hue, who accomplished autonomy, and they were primarily opponents of Czech rule. After the autonomy of Slovakia was declared in October 1938, Russophiles were now threatening Prague with revolution if the government were to keep dragging its feet.<sup>26</sup>

Each existing part of the state inhabited by a non-Czech population suddenly became a participant in an anarchic game without rules and the OUN had already been expecting it a year ahead of time. With respect to Subcarpathian Rus it had shown greater foresight than Prague from around the mid-1930s. Convinced that the region would soon play an important role against Poland and the U.S.S.R., Konovalts had pushed for the Subcarpathian OUN to have its own organizational staff at the organization's meeting in Munich in November 1937.<sup>27</sup> At the same time, the importance of the region also began to be emphasized in the pamphlets of the movement's military theorists. Orest Chemerynsky (1910–1942) seriously broached the subject in his *Zakarpátí (Transcarpathia)*, in which he assessed the region in terms of the OUN's strategic objectives within the context of anticipated geopolitical changes. In his work, which was published in Paris in 1938, he expressed concern that the territory would become the object of a power-politics solution that was externally dictated (which was exactly what happened) and that this could only be avoided by the breakup of Czechoslovakia into three state units – the Czech lands, Slovakia, and Transcarpathian Ukraine. They would establish a favourable alliance among themselves and not even Hungary and Poland would get a raw deal: Chemerynsky accepted that the country on the Danube would have territory with a majority Hungarian element (he did not specify whether this would also concern part of Subcarpathian Rus) and that the Poles would have a Polish one – on condition that Poland allowed the unification of its Ukrainian territories with Transcarpathia into one unit (sic). Both states were meant to forget about a common border – Germany would not allow it.<sup>28</sup>

25 MOSNÝ, Peter: Vývoj právnej úpravy autonómneho postavenia Zakarpatskej Ukrajiny v predmníchovskej ČSR /The development of the legal regulation of the autonomous position of Transcarpathian Ukraine in the pre-Munich Czechoslovak Republic/. *Nové obzory. Vlastivedná ročenka Prešovského kraja* /New Horizons. National Historical Almanac of the Prešov Region/, 1988, pp. 45–47; SUŠKO, Ladislav: Nemecká politika voči Slovensku a Zakarpatskej Ukrajine v období od septembrovej krízy 1938 do rozbitia Československa v marci 1939 /German policy towards Slovakia and Carpathian Ukraine in the period from the September crisis of 1938 to the breakup of Czechoslovakia in March 1939/. *Československý časopis historický* /Czechoslovak Historical Journal/, 1973, Vol. 21, No. 2, pp. 163–164; PEŠKA, Zdeněk: *Nové zřízení Podkarpatské Rusi* /The new regime of Subcarpathian Rus/. Orbis, Prague 1938, pp. 44–49; ŠVORC, Peter: *Zakletá zem. Podkarpatská Rus 1918–1946* /Cursed Land Subcarpathian Rus 1918–1946/. Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, Prague 2007, pp. 232–238.

26 ŠVORC, Peter: *Zakletá zem*, p. 243. There were many similar threats. In June 1938, the Czechoslovak representation in Brussels reported that *Karpatskaja Rus*, a (manifestly pro-Russian) journal that was published there and which received money from the Germans, threatened in its first issue to welcome Hitler's troops to the Czechoslovak Republic if the Carpathian Ruthenians were not given autonomy. *Archiv Ministerstva zahraničních věcí* (Archive of the Foreign Ministry, hereafter referred to as the AMZV), f. III. sekce (Third Section), Box 645, inv. No. 22, not numbered.

27 POSIVNYČ, Mykola: *Vojenno-polityčna dijal'nist' OUN u 1929–1939 rokach*. NAN Ukrajiny et al., Lviv 2010, p. 76. Well-known leaders of the movement were already on a “working” sojourn in Subcarpathian Rus. Cf. MOHORYTA, Mychajlo: *Za kraj ridnyj*. Kolo, Uzhhorod – Drohobych 2003, p. 34.

## The end of “divine providence”

As we know, it was “allowed” but this outcome after some turbulent months did not bring Poland any luck.

Chemerynsky’s paper was meant to attract the attention of the Third Reich’s military and intelligence groupings at a time when Europe was engaged with the Sudeten German issue. According to this paper, the defeat of Czechoslovakia’s minority policy was an important prerequisite for the rise of the Ukrainian question, whose political focus was meant to be the very region under discussion. The *Platforma Zakarpattí* (*Transcarpathian Platform*) was therefore a ten-point programme for how the OUN should proceed, and an article by the military theorist Mykhailo Kolodzinsky<sup>29</sup> again clarified the importance of Subcarpathia from a military point of view based on its natural characteristics.<sup>30</sup>

Under these circumstances, the conviction that it was an early stage of state independence led domestic Ukrainian nationalists to push for autonomy and this itself would become a prelude to the unification of all pieces of Ukraine into one state.<sup>31</sup> Indeed, the Ukrainian idea was not foreign to the region. It had already come into play in 1918 as a propensity to join Hungarian Rus (as this unit was known) with western Ukraine.<sup>32</sup> In the spring of 1938, representatives of the Ukrainian current in Subcarpathian Rus agreed on a common approach with Carpathian Rusyn Russophiles, which Prague perceived as an expression of unity that would henceforth have to be taken into account.<sup>33</sup>

In any event, more democratically leaning Ukrainians wished for existence within a fair federation while the radicals yearned for independence and the Russophiles for autonomy within a state other than Czechoslovakia – most likely within Hungary’s bor-

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- 28 ORŠAN, Jaroslav: *Zakarpattia*. Paris 1938, pp. 26–28. See [https://docs.google.com/viewer?url=https://www.1.chtyvo.org.ua/Orshan\\_Yaroslav/Zakarpattia.doc](https://docs.google.com/viewer?url=https://www.1.chtyvo.org.ua/Orshan_Yaroslav/Zakarpattia.doc) (quoted version dated 22. 7. 2019). Cf. POP, Ivan: *Dějiny Podkarpatské Rusi v datech*, p. 354.
- 29 Mykhailo Kolodzinsky (1902–1939) was a military officer in the Home Executive of the OUN in the West Ukrainian Territories in 1932–1933. He was imprisoned in Poland. He took part in military exercises in Italian camps alongside Croatian Ustashe. He became friends with their leader Ante Pavelić. He was the author of a well-known study, *Ukrainian Military Doctrine*, in which he urged a policy of Ukrainian imperial expansion and the ethnic cleansing of Poles and Jews. He was the head of staff for the Carpathian Sich. After the declaration of an independent Carpatho-Ukraine in March 1939 he faced the invasion by Hungarian forces. He was killed by the Hungarians near Solotvyno.
- 30 PAHIRJA, Oleksandr: *Jevhen Konovalets’ i rozbudova orhanizacijnoji mreži OUN na Pidkarpats’kij Rusi u 1930-ch rokach*, p. 189. UCHAC, Vasyl’: *Sučasna istoriohrafija roli ukrajinskych nacionalistiv u stanovlenni Kapats’koji Ukrainy*. *Archivy Ukrainy*, 2016, vyp. 3–4 (traveň-serpeň), p. 49.
- 31 CHYMYNEC’, Julijan: *Ternystyj šljach do Ukrainy*, p. 233.
- 32 GAJDOŠ, Milan et al.: *Rusíni/Ukrajinci v zrkadle polstoročia. Niektoré aspekty ich vývoja na Slovensku po roku 1945* /Ruthenians/Ukrainians in the mirror of a half-century. Some aspects of their development in Slovakia after 1945/. Universum, Prešov – Uzhhorod 1999, p. 27; IVANENKO, M.: *Čyn Karpats’koji Ukrainy*. In: *Karpats’ka Ukrainina. Materijaly dlja vidznačennia 10-ji ričnyci deržavnosti Karpats’koji Ukrainy 1939–1949*. 1949, p. 2.
- 33 LEPISEVYČ, Petro: *Nacional’ni sily v rozbudovi deržavnosti Karpats’koji Ukrainy v 1938–1939 rr.* Bona, Lviv 2014, p. 65; CHYMYNEC’, Julijan: *Ternystyj šljach do Ukrainy*, p. 240. Cf. PLACHÝ, Jiří: *K činnosti některých negativistických stran na Podkarpatské Rusi v roce 1938* /The activities of some negativist parties in Subcarpathian Rus in 1938/. *Slavanský přehled* /Slavonic Review/, 2012, Vol. 98, No. 1–2, pp. 117–136.



## David Svoboda

ders based on the logic of things.<sup>34</sup> Only the first group mentioned remained loyal to Czechoslovakia in addition to people with a Rusyn profile who were wedded to the political climate of the First Republic, but whose opportunities to address the indifferent mass of the population were limited compared to the other movements mentioned.

The energetic Ukrainian camp was militarized during the dramatic developments at the beginning of September 1938. In this sense, its combat training in effect served the military interests of the republic. The paramilitary Ukrainian National Defence (known in Ukrainian as the UNO – Ukrajinska nacionalna oborona) was established at the Uzhhorod congress of the First Russian-Ukrainian National Council on 4 September. This evolved into the celebrated Carpathian Sich in November. Those who were behind it, however, were aiming a lot higher. The UNO emerged from the tireless activity of Roman Shukhevych,<sup>35</sup> who operated here under the nickname “Shchuka,” Zenon Kossak (“Tarnavsky”) (1907–1939) and Mykhailo Kolodzinsky (“Colonel Hussar”), who for years had been working in the background to take the initiative.<sup>36</sup> This body was headed by Rosokha while the anti-Czech radical and OUN member Ivan Rohach (1914–1942), who was killed in the war by the Nazis at Babi Yar, became his deputy along with other Czechoslovak citizens, because the law naturally did not allow the membership of foreign nationals. Kolodzinsky underwent combat training and headed the first UNO platoon. Shukhevych spent most of the autumn in Galicia, from where he supplied all that was needed to ensure the viability of this formation.

The UNO was tasked with protecting the prime minister of the autonomous government, defending national property and, in particular, demonstrating the dynamism and determination of the pro-Ukraine movement. It soon made its mark during the dramatic defence of Transcarpathia against armed Hungarian-Polish invasions. Young students had a significant presence in the organisation. Two divisions were formed from Uzhhorod seminarians and grammar school students, who were soon amalgamated into the first Kolodzinsky platoon, which played an important role in evacuating government authorities from the ceded city of Uzhhorod to a new seat in Khust following the First Vienna Award.<sup>37</sup>

34 PROCHÁZKA, Theodore: *The Second Republic. The Disintegration of Post-Munich Czechoslovakia (October 1938 – March 1939)*. Columbia University Press, New York 1981, p. 64.

35 Roman Shukhevych (1907–1950) was a Ukrainian nationalist and legendary leader of the UPA. From 1930, he was a combat officer in the Home Executive of the OUN in the West Ukrainian Territories (KE OUN on ZUZ). He was imprisoned for a short time at the Polish Bereza Kartuska concentration camp. At the end of the 1930s, he built up an underground OUN network in Subcarpathian Rus. He took part in the fight with the Hungarians in March 1939. He was the political leader of the Nightingale (Nightingale) Battalion and deputy commander of the 201st Schutzmannschaft Battalion sent by the Germans to Belarus. He went underground at the start of 1943 in order to soon become one of the organizers of the UPA. He was its high commander and a military officer of the OUN-b. He took part in the anti-Soviet resistance and died in the spring of 1950 when being arrested near Lviv by MGB agents.

36 LEMAK, Vasyl': *Karpats'ka Ukraïna 1938–1939 rokiv: deržavno-pravovyj aspekt*. Uzhhorods'kyj deržavnyj universytet, Uzhhorod 1993, p. 52; SYTNYK, Oleksander: *OUN i Zakarpatt'a*, p. 219. For more on the establishment and objectives of the UNO, see for example STERČO, Petro: *Karpato-ukrajins'ka deržava. Do istoriji vyzvol'noji borotby Karpats'kych Ukraïnciv u 1919–1939 rr.* Naukove tovarystvo im. Ševčenka, Toronto 1965, p. 51.

## The end of “divine providence”

Other OUN activities took place against the backdrop of the political changes that altered politics in the easternmost part of the country in the weeks following the Munich disaster. The rapid alternation of three autonomous Subcarpathian governments resulted in the vigorous onset of an autonomous Ukrainian regime. Even though autonomy represented the fulfilment of a 20-year dream, nobody was under any illusions about the permanence of this new sovereignty. That which in the hearts of patriots was held to be a legitimate part of the federation and seen as a Ukrainian “Piedmont” in the plans of nationalists, smelled to others like a dish that was ready to be eaten.

The Ukrainophiles did not achieve primacy at first. On 29 September, *Amerikan-skij russkij vestnik* (*Russian-American Bulletin*) could joyfully acknowledge that *previously the local authorities had hoped for Ukrainization, now the Ukrainophiles have been deprived of all support*, and a speedy end to Ukrainian tendencies is on the cards.<sup>38</sup> This all suddenly changed when the Russophile and pro-Hungarian autonomist, the prime minister Andrej Brody,<sup>39</sup> came up with a provocative and unconstitutional initiative for a plebiscite for all of Subcarpathian Rus, which was meant to decide whether it should remain in Czechoslovakia. This was meaningful for Prague, because a similar action had had a propensity for falsification and could easily culminate in the consecration of Hungarian claims on the entire country. *Naučný slovník aktualit* (*Encyclopaedia of Current Affairs*) then laconically states that, while travelling to Budapest, Brody was *suddenly stripped of the premiership and arrested and imprisoned on suspicion of treason* [by the Czech authorities]. *This also meant an end to the Greater-Russia movement.*<sup>40</sup>

The background to this reversal remains vague. In any event, the prime minister's apartment with incriminating evidence was in Vienna and the Reich's criminal

37 LEMAK, Vasyľ: *Karpats'ka Ukrajina 1938–1939 rokiv: deržavno-pravovyj aspekt*, pp. 52–53; SYTYNYK, Oleksander: *OUN i Zakarpattia*, p. 218; ROSOKHA, Stepan: *Vijsko Zakarpats'koji Ukrainy*. In: DAŠKEVYČ, Jaroslav (ed.): *Istorija ukrajins'koho vijska 1917–1945*. Svit, Lviv 1996, p. 469; MAGOCSI, Paul Robert – POP, Ivan: *Encyklopedija istoriji ta kul'tury karpats'kych rusyniv*. Vydavnytvo V. Paďaka, Uzhhorod 2010, pp. 210–211; MAGOCSI, Paul Robert: *The Shaping of a National Identity. Subcarpathian Rus', 1848–1948*, p. 236.

38 Cited according to ŠEVČENKO, Kirill: *Deržava baťki Vološina. Rodina*, 2008, No. 9, p. 84.

39 Ukrainian historiography gives his surname in the Slavonic form Brodij. In the Magyarized form, which has also been picked up in Czech papers, it is most often Bródy. In view of the complex intersection of identities that come into contact with each other in this area, for the original Czech text of this article, I have chosen a transcription for each name corresponding to the birth certificate of the individual.

40 *Naučný slovník aktualit 1939* /Encyclopaedia of Current Affairs 1939/, Vol. II. Nakladatelství L. Mazáč, Prague 1939, p. 64. Also FEDINEC, Csilla: *A kárpátaljai magyarság történeti kronológiája 1918–1944*. Fórum Intézet – Lilium Aurum Könyvkiadó, Galánta – Dunaszerdahely 2002, pp. 293–294; VIDŇANS'KYJ, Stepan: dictionary entry Andrij Brodij. In: LYTVYN, Volodymyr et al.: *Encyklopedija istoriji Ukrainy*, Tom I. Naukova dumka, Kyiv 2003, p. 379. DANILÁK, Michal: *Podkarpatská Rus v politike susedných štátov (1918–1938)* /Subcarpathian Rus in the politics of neighbouring states (1918–1938). In: ŠVORC, Peter et al.: *Veľká politika a malé regióny: malé regióny vo veľkej politike, veľká politika v malých regiónoch: karpatský priestor v medzivojnovom období (1918–1939)*. /Great politics and small regions: small regions in great politics, great politics in small regions: the Carpathian space in the interwar period (1918–1939). Department of Slovak History and Archival Science, Faculty of Arts, Prešov University, Department of General History, Faculty of Arts, Prešov University – Institut für Geschichte der Universität Graz, Prešov – Graz 2002, p. 69.

## David Svoboda

police conducted a search of it.<sup>41</sup> The fact that the Russian establishment was replaced immediately by the Ukrainian side leads one to consider whether there was an alliance of interests between Berlin and the Ukrainian nationalists. The Rusyn historian Ivan Pop writes about an emphatic “recommendation” from Berlin that the Ukrainians be put into power, which was conveyed to the Czechoslovak government by the chargé d'affaires of the German embassy Andor Hencke.<sup>42</sup> In his memoirs, Hencke himself did not deny that Prague and Berlin shared an interest in removing Brody, because the steps the prime minister had taken opened the way for Hungarian adventurism at a time when Hitler still wanted peace in the region. When Hencke was asked for his opinion by the Czechoslovak foreign minister František Chvalkovský, he did not hide his positive attitude to Voloshyn for his personal qualities, although he allegedly added that he couldn't say anything concrete about his having the prerequisites for being prime minister.<sup>43</sup>

The Czechs, however, didn't need any encouragement to take decisive action as the crippled republic intended to vigorously assert its remaining authority over the remnants of its territory, and Brody had provocatively declared a fight against the alleged Czechization of the country. In addition, he advocated – as the Ukrainophiles had previously – for the secession of all Rusyn areas in eastern Slovakia, which threatened the stability of the entire post-Munich federation.<sup>44</sup> The rejection of the risky plebiscite and the failure of negotiations with Hungary in Komárno in September 1938 opened the way for international arbitration. This took place in Vienna at the start of November and it gave the Ukrainians, led by the now autonomous government of the prime minister Avhustyn Voloshyn, which had hitherto been exploiting Prague's weakness, a taste of their own Munich-esque upheaval. Three important cities in the region, Uzhhorod, Mukachevo, and Berehove, were lost along with an industrial and agricultural base of enormous value.<sup>45</sup>

41 MORÁVEK, Jan: Podzim 1938 na Podkarpatské Rusi /Autumn 1938 in Supcarpathian Rus/. In: *Historie 1995. Celostátní studentská vědecká konference Ostrava, 27.–29. listopadu 1995 /History 1995. Ostrava Nationwide Student Academic Conference 27–29 November 1995/*. Faculty of Arts, University of Ostrava, Ostrava 1996, p. 88; ŠVORC, Peter: *Zakletá zem*, p. 245.

42 POP, Ivan: *Dějiny Podkarpatské Rusi v datech*, p. 367. According to Hencke, if Prague had wanted to ensure a more positive outcome to the arbitration, it should have taken account of the fact that Berlin's opinion was clearly closer to the Ukrainian one. The eminent diplomat Hubert Masařík also recalls the event in a similar vein, although we don't find it expressed so explicitly in his memoirs. POP, Dmytro: *Istória Podkarpatskoji Rusy*, p. 192. In his recollections, Masařík goes on to write more generally about Voloshyn, Révay, et al. as operetta statesmen trying to mask their foreign connections and resources from us. MASARÍK, Hubert: *V proměnách Evropy. Paměti československého diplomata /In the transformations of Europe. The memories of a Czechoslovak diplomat/*. Paseka, Prague – Litomyšl 2002, p. 282.

43 HENCKE, Andor: *Augenzeuge einer Tragödie. Diplomatenjahre in Prag 1936–1939*. Fides Verlagsgesellschaft, München 1977, p. 204. Ladislav Suško denies that the change would have transpired under pressure from the Reich, although it would have welcomed the rise of the Ukrainophiles. SUŠKO, Ladislav: *Podkarpatská Rus ako autonómna krajina pomnichovskej – drubej ČSR*, p. 158. Not even Ladislav Karel Feierabend, as a valuable witness of the events of this time, makes any mention of German pressure, but instead underlines Brody's treachery and points to Voloshyn's good will even though he was helpless and couldn't assert himself even with the support of Czech officials. See his *Politické vzpomínky I /Political Memoirs I/*. Atlantis, Brno 1994, pp. 43, 78.

44 FEDINEC, Csilla: *A kárpátaljai magyarság történeti kronológiája 1918–1944*, p. 293.

## The end of “divine providence”

The conviction that there was a pro-Hungarian background to Russophile politics, which was confirmed by the Brody case, turned the Czech government in favour of the Ukrainian current.<sup>46</sup> If the Rusyns had failed and betrayed “Carpathian Rusyns,” the Ukrainians’ programme appeared the most perspicuous. Unlike all the abandoned Czechs, whose diplomatic relations had collapsed, the Ukrainians were soothed by the hope that the worst was behind them, because the same guarantees, which in Munich had overlooked the crippling of the Czech lands, guaranteed the protection of Subcarpathian Rus’s borders after the Vienna arbitration. The warmth towards Germany reached its peak shortly before the cold shower of Munich when Voloshyn in the presence of Hencke in Prague praised Hitler as the liberator of Subcarpathian Ukrainians. Thus it was assumed after the arbitration in Khust that the Führer would not tolerate Hungarian attempts at territorial expansion contrary to Berlin’s ideas.<sup>47</sup> This submission to the will of a Nazi dictator was also conditioned by the internal specifics of the autonomous regime.

At the same time, Hitler constantly dangled Subcarpathian Russia in front of the Hungarians and strived to get Budapest to join the Anti-Comintern Pact. He had also been deluding the Poles. They had long laid claim to a common border with Hungary at the expense of Subcarpathian Rus, but Hitler kept his counsel and gradually adopted a negative standpoint.<sup>48</sup> The Poles should also have been alarmed by the hotbed of Ukrainian irredentism in neighbouring Galicia, which was seemingly being cosseted by Berlin but whose exponents were actually being deceived just like everyone else. The Führer continued his longstanding effort to bind Warsaw to him and he demanded the handover of Danzig (Gdansk) and a free corridor to East Prussia with a view to getting Poland to join the Axis.<sup>49</sup> The Carpatho-Ukraine episode brought

45 RYCHLÍK, Jan – RYCHLÍKOVÁ, Magdalena: *Hospodársky, sociálny, kultúrni a politický vývoj Podkarpatské Rusi 1919–1939* /Economic, social, cultural, and political developments in Supcarpathian Rus 1919–1939/. Národohospodársky ústav Josefa Hlávky, Prague 2013, p. 47; KENNAN, George F.: *From Prague after Munich. Diplomatic Papers 1938–1940*. Princeton University Press, Princeton 1968, p. 62.

46 VEHEŠ, Mykola et al.: *Avbustyn Voloshyn. Žytta i pomysly prezidenta Karpats’koi Ukrainy*. Karpaty, Uzhhorod 2005, p. 128.

47 KOZEŃSKI, Jerzy: Wokół Rusi Podkarpaciej 1938. In: ORLOF, Ewa (ed.): *Stosunki polsko-czesko-słowackie w latach 1918–1945*. Wyższa szkoła pedagogiczna w Rzeszowie, Rzeszów 1992, p. 50; VEHEŠ, Mykola – ZADOROŽNYJ, Volodymyr: *Velyč i trahedija Karpats’koi Ukrainy*. Zakarpats’ke tovarystvo Znanňa, Uzhhorod 1993, p. 15; POP, Dmytro: *Istoriya Podkarpats’koi Rusy*, p. 195.

48 He did not relinquish it even after assurances from Hungarian diplomacy that the common border should strengthen the anti-Bolshevik ring of Poland, Hungary, and Romania, and that it was not in the least at odds with Berlin’s interests. KOZEŃSKI, Jerzy: *Wokół Rusi Podkarpaciej 1938*, p. 45; *Akten zur deutschen Auswärtigen Politik (1937–1945)*. Band IV, Serie D. *Die Nachwirkungen von München (Oktober 1938 – März 1939) aus dem Archiv des Deutschen auswärtigen Amtes*. Imprimerie Nationale, Baden-Baden 1951, p. 63. According to a Soviet report, Beck’s double game sent Hitler into a rage. On the one hand he told Hitler that the border with the Hungarians would be a barrier against Bolshevism. In private, however, he revealed that the real reason was protection from Germany. BONDARENKO, A. P. et al.: *God krizisa 1938–1939. Dokumenty i materialy v dvuch tomach*, Tom I. Izdatel’stvo političeskoj literatury, Moscow 1990, p. 129.

49 BROZAT, Martin: Die Reaktion der Mächte auf den 15. März 1939. *Bohemia*, 1967, Band 8, pp. 257–258. BONDARENKO, A. P. et al.: *God krizisa 1938–1939. Dokumenty i materialy v dvuch tomach*, Tom I, p. 164.

## David Svoboda

the issue of an eastern alliance between Poland and Germany to the forefront for the last time.<sup>50</sup> Hitler improvised and put off making a decision until the last moment while the rest nervously watched him carefully to see which way he'd turn. The foreign office was more sympathetic to Subcarpathian Rus than the Reich's foreign ministry and the Ukrainians interpreted Hitler's silence as de facto support for their cause. Things proceeded at their own pace until the most powerful of the powerful simply said "enough of this" after due consideration.

With Voloshyn's knowledge, a Carpatho-Ukraine delegation left for Vienna in September 1938. It was led by Khymynets and shortly thereafter as with Wrocław and Leipzig, Poland's brows were furrowed by Ukrainian broadcasts full of slogans concerning the resurrection of a historic chance for Ukrainians. The Ukrainian Press Service (Ukrajinska presova sluzhba) in Berlin, which was operating at the Reich's Foreign Ministry took on the role of representing the OUN in terms of diplomacy and publicity. Its chief Volodymyr Stachiv (1910–1971) emerged as the result of an agreement between the PUN and Voloshyn. The Ukrainians had their own publishing house for literature in foreign languages so that they could draw the world's attention to their efforts.<sup>51</sup> Thanks primarily to Hitler's temporary tolerance, the Ukrainian question met with an unprecedented response, even though the delegation's activity was halted after the Vienna arbitration. For several months, it held true that "the last were first" and the backward province was now enjoying lively interest from the international press. This issue would not have been followed so closely abroad if it hadn't been so closely tied to the uncertain plans of the most powerful man in Europe.<sup>52</sup> In a state of suspense, the world waited to see whether Hitler would allow the establishment of a Greater Ukraine. Prevailing opinions internationally oscillated between the sudden realization that Ukraine's freedom was one of the conditions needed for a just European order and calls for the Ukrainian problem to be quickly settled before the Nazis seized the initiative.<sup>53</sup> Just a month after the evacu-

50 Since 1938, Beck had been encouraging the Hungarians to be more bold in making their territorial claims. For more on the German offers to Poland, see ZABROVARNYJ, Stepan: Zakarpattia v polityci II. Rečipospolitoji. In: *Zakarpats'ka Ukrajinna u skladi Čechoslovaččyny (1919–1939): zbirnyk materialiv 6-oji naukovoji karpatoznavčoji konferenciji. Prjašiv 2–4 veresňa 1998*. Filozof's'kyj fakul'tet Prjašiv's'koho universytetu, Prjašiv 2000, p. 173; STERČO, Petro: Ukrajins'ka sprava v mižnarodnij polityci 1938–1939. *Sučasnist'*, 1964, No. 4, p. 90. For more on Hungarian-Romanian relations and Polish considerations of them, see KOZEŇSKI, Jerzy: *Wokół Rusi Podkarpackiej 1938*, p. 46.

51 POSIVNYČ, Mykola – PAHIRJA, Oleksandr: *Vojenno-polityčna dijal'nist' OUN u Zakarpatti (1929–1939)*, p. 55. For more on the Vienna delegations, see CHYMYNEC, Julijan: *Ternystyj šljach do Ukrajinny*, pp. 241–242; SKOCKO, Jevhen: Na perelomi – 1938–1939. In: *Na zov Kyjeva. Ukrajins'kyj nacionalizm u drubij svitovij vijni*. Novyj Šljach, Toronto – New York 1985, pp. 15–16. Vienna became a kind of secondary foreign centre for the OUN after Berlin and Prague. This fact was affirmed by the Austrian Anschluss in March 1938. TORZECKI, Ryszard: *Kwestia ukraińska w polityce III Rzeczy (1933–1945)*. Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa 1972, p. 144.

52 HAJVAS, Jaroslav: *Koly kinčalasja epocha*. Nakladom Ukrajins'ko-Amerykans'koji Vydavnyčoji Spilky, Chicago 1964, p. 11; STERČO, Petro: *Ukrajins'ka sprava v mižnarodnij polityci 1938–1939*, p. 90. LUCIUK, Lubomyr – KORDAN, Bohdan (eds.): *Anglo-American Perspectives on the Ukrainian Question 1938–1951*. The Limestone Press, Kingston – Vestal 1987, p. 25.

53 *Berliner Börsen Zeitung* (17. 12. 1939), *Daily Telegraph* (19. 12. 1939), *Le Moment* (21. 12. 1939). Zakordonna

## The end of “divine providence”

ation of the Uzhhorod authorities and their transfer to the remote town of Khust, 24 journalists managed to visit this corner of Europe (mostly German, but also French, Swiss, Italian, and British reporters).<sup>54</sup> It is patently obvious that some of them were fulfilling an intelligence role here. Hitler briefly touched upon the fate of Ukrainians in Czechoslovakia just a few days before the Munich Conference and the OUN watched with pleasure as a wave of interest in Subcarpathian Rus poured forth from the media of the Third Reich.<sup>55</sup> Everyone somehow failed to grasp that Hitler was not interested in Ukraine as a partner but as an object of his psychological warfare.<sup>56</sup>

The last involuntary participant in Hitler’s game was Stalin. He was particularly alarmed by the idea of Subcarpathian Rus as a magnet that would foster hope in his Soviet slaves that liberation was close at hand. He himself even deemed it necessary to touch on this matter at the 18th Congress of the Communist Party in March 1939. He sparkled with fake self-assurance: He noticeably downplayed the entire matter with a parable about an elephant and a gnat (Carpatho-Ukraine), which sought to annex the giant mammal (i.e. Soviet Ukraine).<sup>57</sup> But Stalin went further. The fuss that journals in the capitalist world had made over Hitler’s planned march eastwards ushered in the empty hope that the Führer would listen to the “madmen” who dreamt of conquering the East while playing the Ukrainian card. Now the bourgeoisie were disappointed that the Nazis had shown less willingness for this than had been expected, even though Czechoslovakia had been thrown down before them like bait in Munich.<sup>58</sup>

presa pro Karpats’ku Ukrajinu. *Nova svoboda*, 3. 1. 1939, p. 2. Cf. KOSYK, Volodymyr: *Ukrajina i Nimeččyna u druhij svitovij vijni*. Naukove tovarystvo im. Ševčenka, Paris – New York – Lviv 1993, pp. 59–60.

- 54 HRENDŽA-DONS’KYJ, Vasyľ: *Ščastia i bore Karpats’koi Ukrajinny. Ščodennyk*. Karpats’kyj Sojuz, Washington 1987, p. 97; BIRČAK, Volodymyr: *Karpats’ka Ukrajinna. Spomyny i perežyvannya*. Nacija v pochodi, Prague 1940, p. 7. Communications from the Ukrainian Information Office in London with Khust in regard to a visit by journalists from the *Daily Express*. *Deržavnyj archiv Zakarpats’koi oblasti* (hereafter referred to as *DAZO*), f. 3, op. 1, spr. 49, ark. 1–3. ŠČERBIJ, V.: Zenon Kossak-Tarnavskij – poručnyk Karpats’koi Siči. In: *Kossak, Ochrymoryč, Turas’*. Liha vyzvolenna Ukrajinny, Toronto 1968, p. 74.
- 55 Promova Hitlera j Zakarpattá. *Holos*, 16. 10. 1938, p. 3; Zakarpattá u vyrišnych dňach. *Ibid.*, p. 6. The difficulties that the Czech armed forces had in implementing a general mobilization in September 1938 were also underlined here, including desertion and active resistance. However, by and large, Subcarpathian recruits willingly submitted to the mobilization order. See PLACHÝ, Jiří: Průběh zářijové mobilizace v roce 1938 na Podkarpatské Rusi /The course of the September mobilization in 1938 in Subcarpathian Rus/. *Historie a vojenství* /History and Military Affairs/, 2011, Vol. 60, No. 4, pp. 24–28.
- 56 ILNYTZKYJ, Roman: *Deutschland und die Ukraine 1934–1945*, Bd. I. Osteuropa Institut, München 1958, p. 127.
- 57 FLEISCHHAUER, Ingeborg: *Der Pakt. Hitler, Stalin und die Initiative der deutschen Diplomatie 1938–1939*. Ullstein Verlag, Berlin – Frankfurt am Main 1990, p. 88; ULAM, Adam B.: *Expansion and Coexistence. Soviet Foreign Policy 1917–1973*. Praeger Publishers, New York – Washington 1974, p. 262.
- 58 STALIN, Iosif: *Očėtnyj doklad na XVIII sjezde partii o rabote CK VKP(b). 10 marta 1939 goda*. Moscow. Gosudarstvennoje izdatel’stvo političeskoj literatury, Moscow 1949, pp. 35–36. Stalin’s words were interpreted in his own way by FIERLINGER, Zdeněk: *Ve službách ČSR. Paměti z druhého zahraničního odboje, díl I* /In the service of the Czechoslovak Republic. Memories of the second foreign resistance, part I/. Dělnické nakladatelství, Prague 1947, p. 179. RUSNAČENKO, Anatolij: Nimeččyna i SSSR: peredumovy stosunkiv ta vidnosyny u mižvojenyj čas i v roky vijny. In: KVIT, Serhij (ed.): *Spivpracija SSSR i Nimeččyny u mižvojenyj period ta pid čas druhoji svitovoji vijny: pryčyny i naslidky*. NaukMA et al., Kyiv 2012, p. 32.

David Svoboda

The Poles eventually saw through the trap of depending on a tyrant's whims, which they could get stuck in if they yielded to Hitler's bidding. In the given circumstances, Beck had no other option but to clearly distance himself from the Germans sometime around February 1939.<sup>59</sup> In finally throwing off the weight of concerns over developments in Transcarpathia, the Poles' troubles were only beginning. If Warsaw did not want to march on Ukraine and Belarus with Hitler, the Nazi dictator began to play with the possibility of allying himself with the other side against Poland.

### In the shadow of a "genius"

Apart from actual events in the submontane region, the post-Munich era went down in history as a period of unprecedented prestige for fascism, as a theory and in practice. The problem was that with the defeat of the Versailles system, Hitler was not seen as the embodiment of a rapacious morality and totalitarian ethnocentrism, but as a liberator. The newly vanquished cursed Hitler in their defeat, the victors hailed him as a gift from the heavens.<sup>60</sup> But it now seemed to everyone that the future belonged to him. It was not noble supranational institutions who had shown themselves to be the guarantor of justice, but a brutal devotee of force. The main Polish newspaper for Ukrainians, *Dilo*, wrote that Germany owed its diplomatic successes to the fact that there was a genius in Berlin and his minority agenda was correct. The idea was aired that the shared trauma of the oppressed had now brought the German and Ukrainian nations closer to each other than it had seemed, and that both would be victorious together.<sup>61</sup>

The autonomists who took over the government with Volosyhn don't have a very sympathetic role in history. It has to be kept in mind that the undemocratic processes they resorted to were a response to the noose of threats that were still tightening around their semi-sovereign state. In this they were no different to the Czech elites of the Second Republic, even if the Czechs were well aware of the burden of their defeat whereas the Ukrainians celebrated.<sup>62</sup> One fundamental difference strikes us: the Czech government tamed the extremes through its authoritarianism while Voloshyn as it turned out was powerless against the radicals, because they also had a fighting potential that Carpatho-Ukraine could lean on in the face of attacks by the Hungari-

59 In January, Beck conferred with Hitler in Berchtesgaden, where he told the Führer that the Polish distaste for Carpatho-Ukraine was dictated by a fear of Ukrainian irredentism. STERCHO, Peter G. (Petro Sterčo): *Diplomacy of Double Morality. Europe's Crossroads in Carpatho-Ukraine 1919–1939*. Carpathian Research Center, New York 1971, pp. 326–327; PATRYLJAK, Ivan – BOROVYK, Mykola: *Ukrajina v roky druhoji svitovoji vijny: sproba novoho konceptual'noho pohljadu*. PP Lysenko M. M., Kyiv 2010, pp. 28–29; LIPINSKI, Jan: *Das Geheime Zusatzprotokoll zum deutsch-sowjetischen Nichtangriffsvertrag vom 23. August 1939 und seine Entstehungs- und Rezeptionsgeschichte von 1939 bis 1999*. Peter Lang Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 2004, p. 186.

60 Cf. TROFYMOVYČ, Liliya: *Pidkarpats'ka Rus u konteksti jevropejs'koji polityky (žovteń–hrudeń 1938 r.)*. *Naukovi zapysky Nacional'noho universytetu Ostroz'ka akademija. Istoryčni nauky*, 2009, Vyp. 14, p. 339.

61 *Naši pryrodni sojuznyky*. *Holos*, 13. 11. 1938, p. 2.

62 Cf. PASÁK, Tomáš: *Český fašismus 1922–1945 a kolaborace 1939–1945 /Czech fascism 1922–1945 and collaboration 1939–1945/*. Práh, Prague 1999, pp. 225–226.

## The end of “divine providence”

ans and the Poles. Therefore, in the case of Subcarpathian Rus, the extreme elements were also a state-forming element and, as we shall see, they were even temporarily accepted by Prague as an auxiliary force in defence of the republic.

Voloshyn, whose signature adorns all the authoritative measures of the autonomous government was himself – in the words of the Rusyn-leaning historian Ivan Pop – a politician *with a Central European mentality* and coexisting with advocates of a radical nationalist tendency left him with a painful dilemma. He had originally hated Ukrainism for a long time as an aggressive import from Galicia. He was a staunch Hungarian patriot and already as a respected pedagogue and Greek-Catholic cleric in 1910 he had written about *the terrible disease of Ukrainism and radicalism, which had recently spread from Galicia, bringing constant strife with them and alienating the Rusyn from his church, language, and name*.<sup>63</sup> He was still pursuing pro-Hungarian objectives in 1919 before the manner in which the international situation developed ruled out this eventuality.<sup>64</sup>

Now, there was an awareness that democratic processes had failed and that there was a need to consolidate a society surrounded by hostile forces, which provided the impetus for the activities of all political parties to be suspended and Masonic lodges to be disbanded along with pro-Russian dailies and gymnastics associations. The Russophile Central Russian National Council (Centralna Ruska Narodna Rada) was outlawed, while the German minority's clubs and associations were able to flourish without hindrance. Hitler's *Mein Kampf* could be freely disseminated, and German associations were able to freely promote Hitler's world view. We cannot see any evidence that there was anything specifically Ukrainian about these arrangements. The Czech government eased the censorship of Nazi publications in the same way.<sup>65</sup> Voloshyn also signed a decree outlawing paramilitary Russophile associations such as the so-called Kurtyak's Guards, who were loyal to Brody, and the “black shirts,” who were loyal to his rival Stepan Fencik (1892–1946), a figure who was sustained by Polish and Hungarian money who was already in Budapest by this time, on the run from Czechoslovak justice.<sup>66</sup>

63 MAGOCSI, Paul Robert: *A History of Ukraine*. University of Toronto Press, Toronto 1996, p. 456. Conversely, Voloshyn was dubbed a consistent lifelong Ukrainian by BEDNARŽOVA, Taťana: *Avbustyn Voloshyn – deržavnyj dijač, pedahob-myslytel'*, pp. 47, 58. Similarly, Révay underwent a notable evolution from communism to a pro-German oriented Ukrainian nationalism. Cf. A report by the Abwehr officer Robert Nowak on a journey through the territories annexed to Hungary by way of the Vienna arbitration. In: SCHVARC, Michal – SCHRIFFL, David (eds.): „Tretia ríša“ a vznik Slovenského štátu. *Dokumenty II* /The “Third Reich” and the establishment of the Slovak state. Documents II/. Slovak National Memory Institute – Institute of History of the Slovak Academy of Sciences – Museum of Carpathian German Culture, Bratislava 2010, p. 108.

64 KREMPA, Ivan: *Připojení Zakarpatské Ukrajiny k Československu* /The merging of Transcarpathian Ukraine with Czechoslovakia/. *Československý časopis historický*, 1978, Vol. 26, No. 5, p. 715.

65 Hitlerovská literatura u nás volná /Hitler's literature available in our country/. *Národní osvobození* /National Liberation/, 30. 10. 1938, p. 1; Další zákroky na Podkarpatské Rusi (Other measures in Subcarpathian Rus). *Národní osvobození*, 1. 11. 1938, p. 1; VEHEŠ, Mykola – ZADOROŽNYJ, Volodymyr: *Velyč i trahedija Karpats'koji Ukrajiny*, p. 38. The Germans appreciated that after a number of long years they were finally able to freely admit their adherence to Adolf Hitler, which also meant that Voloshyn ensured their goodwill for the first elections to a legislative assembly. *DAZO*, f. 19, op. 3, spr. 64, ark. 5.

66 ŠVORC, Peter: *Zakletá zem*, p. 241.



## David Svoboda

Eventually, the Dumen u Rachova and Perečín concentration camps came into play. They became an involuntary place of residence for unreliable people, particularly Russophiles and “Magyarons,” village teachers, and people without documents who were suspected of belonging to hostile states. Biased literature and journalism depicts them as facilities that were established at the behest of the Sich and controlled by them. In fact, the running of the camps was completely subordinate to Czechoslovak administration and situational reports were signed by the headquarters of the provincial gendarmerie. At least one of the Dumen inspections was carried out by among others Captain Josef Janovský, who subsequently became infamous as the commandant of the labour and Roma camp in Lety.<sup>67</sup> Mortality rates in Dumen, however, were minimal. Nobody was intentionally killed there and we also have no evidence that internal conditions in the camp were akin to those that prevailed at a similar centre established by the Poles in 1934 at Bereza Kartuska (perhaps there was not even enough time for this). A large number of inmates sought in vain to ascertain the grounds for their detention. Of course, it was also precipitated by the need to neutralize people suspected of being enemy agents sent from Poland and Hungary.<sup>68</sup>

The government didn't waste any time with legal regulations. The introduction of Ukrainian as an official language and making the name Carpatho-Ukraine equivalent to the existing Subcarpathian Rus was at variance with the constitutional law of 22 November 1938 as well as the international provisions of the Treaty of Saint-Germain, according to which these issues were meant to be decided by an autonomous legislative body ensuing from democratic elections.<sup>69</sup> In this sense, the entity named Carpatho-Ukraine only existed legitimately for less than 24 hours after the convening of parliament on 15 March 1939.

67 A record of an inspection of the Rachov and Dumen concentration camp carried out on 12 and 13 December 1938 by Colonel Jaroslav Vit and Captain Josef Janovský. A copy of the document from the Berehove branch of the DAZO is in the possession of the author, who is obliged to the late Alexander Onysko for getting it. In keeping with the practices of the Second Republic, Czechoslovak gendarmes willingly participated in the transportation of suspects to these camps. See Na Podkarpatské Rusi /In Subcarpathian Rus/. *Dnevník*, 22. 12. 1938, p. 3.

68 VEHEŠ, Mykola et al.: *Vony boronyly Karpats'ku Ukrajinu. Narysy istoriji nacional'no-vyzvol'noji borobly zakarpats'kych ukrajinciv*. Karpaty, Uzhhorod 2002, pp. 311–312; WINCH, Michael: *Republic for A Day. An Eye-Witness Account of the Carpatho-Ukraine Incident*. Robert Hale Limited, London 1939, p. 41. For more on the devastating impression of the camp, albeit from a middle distance, see pp. 95–96. Also see POP, Dmytro: *Istorija Podkarpats'koji Rusy*, p. 199; FISCHER, Zsolt: *Avgusztin Volosin haláltábor. Kárpátalja*, 11. 3. 2011 – see: <http://www.karpataljalap.net/?q=2011/03/11/avgusztin-volosin-halaltabora> (quoted version dated 22. 7. 2019). The camp was not liberated until the arrival of Hungarian troops, although calling it a “death camp” as the author does in the title is completely out of place. This article also underlines the role of Sich members in arresting suspects and serving as the camp guards. It completely overlooks the fact that after March 1939 for an indefinite period and in very inhospitable conditions, the Sich found themselves defeated in Hungary for a change. Cf. NA, f. Zahraniční úřad Berlín (Berlin Foreign Office, hereafter referred to as AA), Box 28, inv. No. 136 – 28/15, l. 437 986. Bohuslav Chňoupek's classic historical fiction *Banderovci* /Banderites/ turns the Sich into the direct founders of the Dumen camp. CHŇOUPEK, Bohuš: *Banderovci*. Bratislava, Smena 1989, p. 153.

69 BOLDYŽAR, Mychajlo: *Zakarpat'ta miž dvoma svitovymy vijnamy*. Uzhhorod 1996, pp. 29, 35. AKPR, f. KPR – protokol PR, Box 15, inv. No. 924.

## The end of “divine providence”

Needless to say, all similar steps had considerable resonance in Subcarpathian society. It was a period full of demonstrations and for the first time the masses here participated in public affairs in such numbers.<sup>70</sup> To a major extent, their mobilization had been aided by external factors, i.e. constant Hungarian pressure, which in conjunction with Poland manifested itself as a well-known subversive anti-Czechoslovak campaign. Not even a week after the Munich Conference, the Hungarians launched the first of the operations that became a central theme in the east of the republic in subsequent months when one of their military units invaded Czechoslovak territory near the Slovak town of Rimavská Sobota.<sup>71</sup> Soon, the Czechoslovak defence forces had to engage in lengthy skirmishes with specially trained Hungarian and Polish saboteur units that had claimed the lives of 17 of their members by the end of the military emergency in February. The purpose of these incursions was to destabilize the target environment and to try and present the situation to Europe as the spontaneous expression of dissatisfaction among the Hungarian minority. Consequently, this operation came to a head after the unsuccessful Komárno negotiations, but continued – with meagre results – until the winter months.<sup>72</sup>

Poland also intended to prevent the consolidation of a pro-Ukrainian regime in Subcarpathian Rus and to bring it closer to being handed over to Horthy. The elaborate scenario of a diversionary campaign from the Polish side of the Carpathians bore the codename “Crow-Bar” (“Łom” in Polish) and it involved up to 700 men, who had been hardened by similar activities in Těšínsko (Cieszyn Silesia). It came at a time when Warsaw and Budapest hoped that Hitler would toss the unfortunate territory to Hungary within an accelerated deadline (counting on 20 November as the date).<sup>73</sup> The saboteurs engaged in four major clashes with Czechoslovak forces. They destroyed railway and road bridges and telegraph lines, and eventually attacked gendarmerie stations, post offices, and the enemy’s manpower.<sup>74</sup> Many of them had

70 Zakarpattá vitaje. *Holos*, 30. 10. 1938, p. 1. Podkarpatské strany rozpuštěny /Supcarpathian parties disbanded/. *Lidové noviny* (morning edition), 23. 1. 1939, p. 2. Manifestacija v Rachovi. *Nova svoboda*, 22. 1. 1939, p. 3.

71 AMZV, f. III. sekce, Box 619, inv. No. 22, l. 4.

72 This undeclared war is described, for example, by LÁŠEK, Radan: *Obrana Podkarpatské Rusi* /The defence of Subcarpathian Rus/. *Paměť a dějiny* /Memory and History/, 2009, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 21–29. Details on the fallen are given on p. 24. The captured saboteurs were also used for propaganda purposes by the Czech side. SHANDOR, Vincent: *Podkarpatská Rus od vzniku ČSR po sovětskou anexi*, p. 77 and sporadic crimes were evidently committed against them. PAWŁOWSKI, Tymoteusz: *Łom na Czechów*. *Historia Do Rzeczy*, 2014, No. 2, p. 56. A list of incidents caused by the Hungarian commandos in November and up to January 1939. NA, f. AA, Box 28, inv. No. 136 – 28/10, l. 437 685–437 686.

73 SUŠKO, Ladislav: *Podkarpatská Rus ako autonómna krajina pomníchovskej – druhej ČSR*, p. 159.

74 *Vojenský ústřední archiv – Vojenský historický archiv* (Central Military Archives – Historical Military Archives, also referred to as VÚA – VHA), f. MNO – hlavní štáb (Ministry of National Defence – General Staff), 2. oddělení zpravodajské (Second Intelligence Department), Box 282, inv. No. 131, Souhrnná zpráva o činnosti polských teroristů na Podkarpatské Rusi v roce 1938 (A summary report of the activities of Polish terrorists in Subcarpathian Rus in 1938); MAREK, Jindřich: *Operace „Łom“*. *Polské diverzní a teroristické útoky na Podkarpatské Rusi na podzim roku 1938* /Operation “Łom”. Polish diversionary and terrorist attacks in Subcarpathian Rus in the autumn of 1938/. *Historie a vojenství*, 2013, Vol. 62, No. 4, pp. 28–38; DĄBROWSKI, Dariusz: *Kwestia Rusi Zakarpaciej w stosunkach między Czechosłowacją, Polską, Węgrami przed wybuchem II wojny światowej*. In: HRODEK,

## David Svoboda

a command of Czech and they also had a good knowledge of Ukrainian, which was meant to turn the unwanted attention of Czechoslovak units towards the main object of their efforts – Ukrainian nationalists. To this end, on the one hand, the saboteurs deliberately spoke Ukrainian among themselves in places, and on the other hand they tried to bring a third party, Romania, into play with the aid of inflammatory pamphlets.<sup>75</sup> This fact ultimately leads us to something that Czech historiography has almost overlooked: The Polish raids on Czechoslovak territory were also a spark that came over here from Warsaw's conflict with turbulent Ukrainian Galicia. In this way, Czechoslovak territory became a secondary arena for the OUN's clash with the Polish government, for which Hungarian assistance in removing the Subcarpathian problem was a logical strategic goal.<sup>76</sup>

The Carpathian Sich, which evolved from the Ukrainian National Defence immediately after the First Vienna Award and became a separate element within the framework of Subcarpathian autonomy, was a source of difficulty, but also militant determination. It was not a force that would act confrontationally toward Prague in every situation.<sup>77</sup> The Sich aimed to be a shield *to protect the state and national interests of Subcarpathian Rus, to cultivate a defensive spirit among our population, to fend off enemy propaganda and to defend the government of Subcarpathian Rus*. It was also meant to maintain public order.<sup>78</sup> Organizationally, it was divided into ten sections and it spread to most inhabited localities. It organized military exercises, but it arranged ideological training to no less an extent as well. It was also devoted to other issues of public life. It was an export of the organized nationalism that had arisen in Eastern Galicia.<sup>79</sup> It was headed by Dmytro Klympush (1897–1959), with Ivan Roman (?–1939) as his deputy. Once again, Rohach was the general secretary and Rosokha was the link between its leadership and the government of Carpatho-Ukraine. Only Czechoslovak citizens could be in its leadership, but the OUN was able to take this in its stride: it filled a parallel General Staff with its top people from Galicia, such as Kolodzin-

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Dominik (ed.): *Česká a polská historická tradice a její vztah k současnosti* /Czech and Polish historical traditions and their relationship to the present day/. Faculty of Arts, Charles University, Prague 2003, pp. 151–155; BORÁK, Mečislav: *Obrana Podkarpatské Rusi (říjen 1938 – březen 1939)* /The defence of Subcarpathian Rus (October 1938 – March 1939)/. *Česko-slovenská historická ročenka*, 1997. Masaryk University, Brno 1997, pp. 172–173.

- 75 BIRČAK, Volodymyr: *Karpats'ka Ukrajinna*, p. 48; KOBAL', Josyp: „Hvardiia obidranciv“ i „Lom“ proty Karpats'koi Ukrajinny. *Zakarpattia onlajn*, 17. 4. 2008 – see <http://zakarpattia.net.ua/News/21043-Hvardiia-obidranciv-i-Lom--proty-Karpatskoi-Ukrainy> (quoted version dated 22. 7. 2019).
- 76 KASPAREK, Józef: *Przepust karpacki: tajna akcja polskiego uwywiadu*. SIGMA NOT, Warsaw 1992, pp. 8–10; Novi pryčynky do ukrajins'ko-čes'kych vidnosyn. *Svoboda* (New Jersey), 4. 10. 1938, p. 2.
- 77 VEHEŠ, Mykola: dictionary entry *Karpats'ka sič*, Orhanizacija narodnoji oborony Karpats'ka sič. In: SMOLIJ, Valerij et al.: *Encyklopedija istoriji Ukrajinny*, Tom IV. Naukova dumka, Kyiv 2007 pp. 121–122; ROSOKHA, Stepan: *Vijsko Zakarpats'koi Ukrajinny*. In: DAŠKEVYČ, Jaroslav (ed.): *Istorija ukrajins'koho vijska 1917–1945*. Svit, Lviv 1996 p. 470; PAHIRJA, Oleksandr: *Karpats'ka Sič: vijs'kove formuvannja Karpats'koi Ukrajinny*. Tempora, Kyiv 2010.
- 78 *DAZO*, f. 3, op. 1, spr. 19, ark. 19. Different wording is provided by a former member of the Carpathian Sich and exiled historian. STERCHO, Peter G.: *Diplomacy of Double Morality*, p. 125.
- 79 KANDYBA, Oleh: *Neznanomu Vojakovi. Zapovidane žyvyim*. Fundacija imeni O. Ol'žyča, Kyiv 1994, p. 274.

## The end of “divine providence”

sky (as its leader), Shukhevych, Zenon Kossak, the commander of its reconnaissance Yevhen Vretsnyona (1905–1975), and others.<sup>80</sup> The writer Oleh Olzhych (1907–1944) was an influential PUN figure in Voloshyn’s government apparatus. Since 1937, he had been entrusted with the role of cultural officer in the PUN by Konovalets. At the same time, he was a member of the General Staff of the Sich. As in Galicia, members were widely recruited from local scout organizations.<sup>81</sup>

If we take account of the fact that the aforementioned expression, Subcarpathian Rus, was despised by nationalist Ukrainians for good reason as a new formation established by Czechs, then the words mentioned above also reflect a period when the Czech-Ukrainian relationship was more comfortable than relations between the Czechs and autonomous Slovakia, which was completely dependent economically on the Czech lands.<sup>82</sup> In his opening speech after the appointment of his new government in December 1938, Voloshyn said that the link between Czechs and Slovaks was *divine providence*. *In the course of 20 years, our nation has emerged from deep humiliation and today in a federal state it has become an equal among equals and it is equally free.*<sup>83</sup> Even in the winter of 1939, when the relationship between the central government and the autonomists had already come to a head, voices of reconciliation could still be heard on an official Czech level praising the Ukrainian awakening. Writing for Voloshyn’s *New Freedom (Nova svoboda)*, the Czech prosecutor in Khust, Rudolf Pospíšil, said that the Ukrainian relationship with the Czechs was friendlier than the Slovak one and that the anti-Czech demagoguery had been inspired from outside.<sup>84</sup> Again, in reportage on his trip through the Czech lands, a Ukrainian author compared the Chods to the Hutsuls and blamed the Czechs for allegedly hampering the Ukrainian movement and constructing an artificial Rusynism in Transcarpathia that was dependent on Prague. Czech society, however, had apparently finally realised its guilt and intended to undo the damage *caused by Czech chauvinists.*<sup>85</sup> *Ukraine – a word that is today being uttered by millions of people – is of immense importance to us and we have to pursue a resolution to the question of a nation of more than 50 million with the greatest interest*, said *Carpathian-Ukrainian Freedom (Karpato-ukrajinská svoboda)* at the time, a publication whose subtitle was *a weekly for the cultural and economic convergence of Czechs, Slovaks, and Ukrainians.*<sup>86</sup>

80 HIRŇAK, Ljubomyr: *Na stežkach istoryčnych podij. Karpats'ka Ukrajina i nastupni roky*. New York 1979, pp. 34, 36; PAHIRJA, Oleksandr: *Karpats'ka Sič*, p. 33.

81 PAHIRJA, Oleksandr: *Karpats'ka Ukrajina u spohadach očevydciv, 1938–1939 rr. Terytorija teroru – see <http://www.territoryterror.org.ua/uk/publications/details/?newsid=462> (quoted version dated 22. 7. 2019).*

82 RIPKA, Hubert: *Munich: before and after*. Victor Gollancz, London 1939, p. 262; KENNAN, George F.: *From Prague after Munich. Diplomatic Papers 1938–1940*, p. 63.

83 SHANDOR, Vincent: *Podkarpatská Rus od vzniku ČSR po sovětskou anexi*, p. 88; VEHEŠ, Mykola – TOKAR, Marian: *Karpats'ka Ukrajina na šljachu deržavotvorenja*. Karpaty, Uzhhorod 2009, p. 393.

84 POSPÍŠIL, Rudolf: *Lyst prokuratora-čecha. Nova svoboda*, 22. 1. 1939, p. 4.

85 TARKOVYČ, Jurij: *Podorož republikoju vid Jasiňa do Domažlic na Šumavi. Nova svoboda*, 11. 1. 1939, p. 3.

86 *O Karpatské Ukrajině /About Carpathian Ukraine/. Karpato-ukrajinská svoboda /Carpatho-Ukrainian Freedom/, 13. 1. 1939, p. 1.*

## David Svoboda

The ambivalence of this policy was evident, for example, in the uneasy coexistence between Voloshyn and members of the OUN, who operated a policy with considerably harder edges behind his back. Shortly before Brody's fall, on the headed paper of the Carpatho-Ukrainian delegation, a long litany made its way to Berlin calling for the departure of Subcarpathian Rus from the federal Czechoslovak union and demanding the removal of Czechs together with the Jews who had apparently made their way there after the secession of the Sudetenland to the Third Reich. Guards corps symbolically sent by all four signatories of the Munich Agreement were meant to maintain law and order together with the UNO, while all Czech forces were supposed to be withdrawn (in practice, without them the region would have been left to the mercy of Hungarian and Polish saboteurs.).<sup>87</sup>

The number of armed Sich members was probably around 2,000 and the lack of weapons was a clear limiting factor.<sup>88</sup> This time around, a shared predicament forced the central government to join forces with Khust in repelling Polish-Hungarian aggression. Sich members frequently fought Polish diversionists alongside Czechoslovak units.<sup>89</sup> Both temporary allies were defending the state, but this word meant something different to them: a miniature Ukraine for the Sich, a post-Munich republic for the Czechs. The Sich could not have had any illusions about defensive capabilities. It is hard to accept the opinion that occurs among Ukrainian historians that the Sich made up for the lack of interest among Czechoslovak units in combatting Hungarian-Polish saboteurs.<sup>90</sup> Given the uncertain situation, the Czechs could not risk too much and supply arms to gadabouts who were obviously pursuing their own objectives. Only rarely did the gendarmerie, which itself had nothing to distribute, resort to dispensing weapons and munitions. Often arms and ammunition were only lent out by the gendarmerie and then they reported with shock how they had been misappropriated by the Sich who had no intention of giving them back to their enforced allies.<sup>91</sup>

In fact, the legal status of the Sich was not nearly as clear as it was in the case of the Hlinka Guard in Slovakia. Its members could not be foreign nationals, but the legal regulations were not rigidly enforced and the gendarmerie passively acknowl-

87 The letter is dated 24 October 1938 and besides the representative of American emigration and Klymynets it is also signed by Ivan Rohach. NA, f. AA, Box 28, inv. No. 136 – 28/2, l. 438015–438016.

88 VEHEŠ, Mykola: dictionary entry: *Karpats'ka sič*, p. 121. A German report from February 1939 spoke of 8,000 members, which is clearly an exaggeration. NA, f. AA, Box 28, inv. No. 136 – 28/1, l. 437994.

89 SARVADIJ, Ivan: *Zmova proty urjadu Karpats'koi Ukrajinjy*. Nakladom Karpats'koho Sojuzu, New York 1984, p. 17.

90 VEHEŠ, Mykola – ZADOROŽNYJ, Volodymyr: *Velyč i tratedija Karpats'koi Ukrajinjy*, p. 42; ŠČERBIJ, V.: *Zenon Kossak-Tarnavs'kyj – poručnyk Karpats'koi Siči*, pp. 72–73. Also indirectly HRENDŽA-DONS'KYJ, Vasyľ: *Ščasta i bore Karpats'koi Ukrajinjy*, p. 89.

91 There is more on this, for example, in a report by Lieutenant Slovák, *Poměry v pohraničí* (The situation in the borderlands) dated 12 December 1938. DAZO, f. 18, op. 1, spr. 66, ark. 9. For more on Voloshyn's concerns PAHIRJA, Oleksandr: *Karpats'ka Sič*, pp. 79–80. Also KANDYBA, Oleh: *Neznanomu Vojakovi. Zapovidane žyvyj*, p. 275; HRENDŽA-DONS'KYJ, Vasyľ: *Ščasta i bore Karpats'koi Ukrajinjy*, p. 137. A report from a trip to Subcarpathian Rus by the German official and future consul in Khust, Hamilkar Hofmann: *Akten zur deutschen Auswärtigen Politik (1937–1945)*. Band IV, Serie D, *Die Nachwirkungen von München (Oktober 1938 – März 1939) aus dem Archiv des Deutschen auswärtigen Amtes*. Imprimerie Nationale, Baden-Baden 1951, p. 151.

## The end of “divine providence”

edged Galician Ukrainians as members.<sup>92</sup> The close interconnectedness with events in Poland was clearly evident from the start and the OUN, which became the spiritual spine of this formation, turned it into a firm part of their objectives. The results were logical and unavoidable: youths who often only had a basic education cruised through Subcarpathian towns and with arrogant fervour they imposed new mores on what had hitherto been a politically lukewarm environment. They arbitrarily vetted the loyalty of local people, got into conflict with local bodies occupied by Czechs, proclaimed anti-Czech slogans, and tore down Czech signs and inscriptions. In places, the population resisted (Horní Apša), elsewhere, such as in Rakhiv, they adopted an attitude of passive disapproval. At the same time, police reports sent to Prague do not indicate any aversion on the part of the writers to the Ukrainian idea, but conversely they reflect concerns of its being possibly discredited to the delight of Hungarian and Polish propaganda: *Such random and violent illegal acts committed by these people – foreign nationals – in Jasiňa, Velký Bočkov, and other cities outrage people, undermining confidence in the Ukrainian national empowerment of the population of Subcarpathian Rus...*<sup>93</sup>

The amount of knowledge that has been preserved is not enough to make an unequivocal judgement on the role of the Sich. In the border zone with Poland, besides their bravery Sich members also excelled at infamous braggadocio. They liked taking credit and they exaggerated the failures of official armed units. We have reports that say they gossiped without restraint on the borderline with Polish financial guards whom they fed with calumnies about uniformed Czechs who apparently didn't dare to go so close to the border themselves. On the other hand, the Sich's high commander Dmytro Klympush had prohibited going nearer than one and a half kilometres to the border, a move dictated by Polish complaints about the Sich's subversive activities in Galicia.<sup>94</sup> The ranks of the Sich were filled with adventurists and criminals of every kind and it's likely the misdemeanours described can be attributed to them. And the most serious thing was that Poland and Hungary had an interest in infiltrating their ranks using agents and provocateurs, whom the Sich intelligence service was striving to fight against.<sup>95</sup> The police directorate even recommended closing the Polish consulate in Sevljuš (Vynohradiv), *from where all operations were undoubtedly being directed.*<sup>96</sup>

92 For the legal statutes, see DAZO, f. 3, op. 1, spr. 19, ark. 19. For a complaint about the behaviour of foreign nationals in the Sich and a proposed solution – Ibid., f. 18, op. 1, spr. 66, ark. 4–5.

93 DAZO, f. 18, op. 1, spr. 66, ark. 5, 7, spr. 78, ark. 1. This is also confirmed by the nationalist BIRČAK, Volodymyr: *Karpats'ka Ukrajina*, p. 38–42. The locals often perceived the nationalist avant-garde of the Sich as a reckless attempt to use their region for the purposes of an alien Greater Ukraine construct. BOLDYŽAR, Mychajlo: *Zakarpattia miž svitovymy vijnamy. Fakty. Podiji. Ljudy. Ocinky*. Uzhhorod 2001, p. 54; NA, f. AA, Box 28, inv. No. 136 – 28/4, l. 438 150.

94 For more on Sich calumnies, see a report by the Federal Gendarmerie Command (Zemské četnické velitelství) dated 15 December 1938. DAZO, f. 18, op. 1, spr. 66, ark. 10. For more on the grandiloquence that did not correspond to real actions: Ibid., ark. 12. For more on Klympush's order concerning the border zone ROSOKHA, Stepan: *Vijsko Zakarpats'koji Ukrajiny*, p. 470. For his justification of the raid into Poland, also see PAHIRJA, Oleksandr: *Karpats'ka Sič*, p. 75.

95 For more on the criminal risks of people in the Sich DAZO, f. 18, op. 1, spr. 66, ark. 5. *Every scoundrel thrown out of Poland come to Subcarpathian Rus, where he becomes a bigwig – see A report by the Abwehr officer Robert Nowak on a journey through the territories annexed to Hungary by way of the Vienna arbitration*, p. 107. For more on the foreign agency, also see a report from the Carpatho-Ukraine Interior Ministry dated

## David Svoboda

The infiltration of dubious elements into this formation was facilitated by a lack of funds for uniforms, which meant that most Sich members were walking around in civilian clothing, supplemented at most by partial elements of official regalia.<sup>97</sup> As a sharp observer of events during this period, the British journalist Michael Winch, discerned, it was not easy to distinguish each detained civilian Ukrainian immigrant from a Polish diversionist. As one Czech gendarme apparently told him at the time: *It's a pity we can't just shoot all the suspects. That would save us a lot of problems.*<sup>98</sup>

But there is also another side to this matter and it came to the fore during the last days of Carpatho-Ukraine in March 1939. Unlike Slovakia, Voloshyn's proto-state did not have regular armed forces at its disposal. With the arrivals from Galicia, a spirit of enthusiasm and sacrifice percolated into the backwards province – in short, modernity in its aggressive form, which replaced the fragmented and diverse initiatives of 1918 and 1919. In the days of the Hungarian invasion, this manifested itself in all its heroic tragedy.<sup>99</sup> And so the Sich were not without their own historical significance.

Consequently, the lexicon of those building a new Ukraine on a territory which for centuries had only been home to a “wounded brother” (as the celebrated Ukrainian historian Mykhailo Drahomanov once described the region) reached lyrical heights. Whereas Voloshyn was restrained in relation to Prague, the press platform of the autonomous order *Nova svoboda* emphasized that with the name Carpatho-Ukraine, which established itself in November 1938, the entity was claiming to be one ethnic unit stretching from Poprad to the Caucasus. The Sich newspaper *Nastup* praised the *great chancellor Hitler* and guaranteed that the Ukrainian nation would go hand in hand with the Germans until the emergence of the *Ukrainian empire*. It ended with a characteristic proclamation of the glory of OUN leader Andriy Melnyk<sup>100</sup> and *Voloshyn's father*.<sup>101</sup>

3 February 1939. *DAZO*, f. 19, op. 3, spr. 64, ark. 2. SHANDOR, Vincent: *Podkarpacká Rus od vzniku ČSR po sovětskou anexi*, p. 130; POSIVNYČ, Mykola: *Vojenno-politična dijal'nist' OUN u 1929–1939 rokach*, p. 200; BIRČAK, Volodymyr: *Karpats'ka Ukraïna*, p. 48.

96 *DAZO*, f. 19, op. 3, spr. 100, ark. 5, 7–8.

97 PAHIRJA, Oleksandr: *Odnostrij ta vidznaky Orhanizaciji narodnoji oborony „Karpats'ka sic“*. In: TYNČENKO, Jaroslav et al.: *Vojenna istorija Ukraïny. Halyčyna ta Zakarpatt'a*. Nacional'nyj vijs'kovo-istoričnyj muzej Ukraïny, Kyiv 2014, p. 305.

98 WINCH, Michael: *Republic for A Day*, p. 263.

99 STERCHO, Peter G.: *Diplomacy of Double Morality*, p. 378; BIRČAK, Volodymyr: *Karpats'ka Ukraïna*, p. 33.

100 Andriy Melnyk (1890–1964) was a Ukrainian nationalist, soldier, and politician. In the First World War, he fought with the Ukrainian Sich riflemen in the Austro-Hungarian Army and was captured by the Russians. After Russia's February Revolution, he participated in Ukrainian events and was an officer in the army of the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR), fighting against Bolsheviks and the White movement for Ukrainian Independence. In the 1920s, he was commander of the Ukrainian Military Organization, a terrorist group that continued the fight against victorious Poland. After the OUN leader Yevhen Konovalets was killed by a Soviet agent in Rotterdam in 1938, he stood at the helm of the OUN. A distaste for his personality was one of the reasons why this organization split into so-called Melnykites and Banderites. He was the only OUN official to die a natural death, in Luxembourg.

101 For more on Voloshyn's restraint POP, Dmytro: *Istorija Podkarpacky'koho Rusy*, pp. 202–203. Also see S. D.: *Naša deržava – Karpats'ka kraïna. Nova svoboda*, 3. 1. 1939, p. 1; Svjato sobornosty Ukraïny v Chusti. *Nastup*, 1. 2. 1939, p. 1.

## The end of “divine providence”

Two weeks before Voloshyn emphasized with appreciation the Czech role in the Subcarpathian awakening, he introduced German journalists with equal warmth to the fact that *the world is already counting on a Ukrainian nation and its efforts to create a Ukrainian state*.<sup>102</sup> By this time, the German legation councillor Hamilkar Hofmann was in Subcarpathian Rus. He had come to examine the turbulent situation caused by the Polish-Hungarian sabotage campaign and Voloshyn clearly adapted the tone of his words so as to strengthen the bond with the Third Reich.<sup>103</sup> He never neglected to add, however, that Greater Ukraine was the music of the future and a station that the Ukrainian train was not going to arrive at immediately.<sup>104</sup>

It is necessary to resist coming to the conclusion that only the pro-Ukrainian camp was characterized by an attachment to Germany. As soon as the local Russophiles, exposed to a Ukrainizing campaign, began to feel abandoned by the central government, they turned to Berlin with their demands.<sup>105</sup> Until Prime Minister Rudolf Beran intervened in January 1939 by appointing General Lev Prchala<sup>106</sup> minister of the autonomous government, few took the central government seriously. But there was also no shortage of those who didn't take the legitimate Voloshyn government seriously either. Voloshyn could not become a statesman overnight and sail over all pitfalls. Although he himself was a convinced federalist, who was well aware of his country's shaky position, he was bound to have been troubled by the feeling that he was encumbered by supporters of a separatist programme from the lower levels of the OUN, who as a last resort did not intend to even take the Nazis into consideration. On the contrary, Julian Révay fulfilled the role of a reliably pro-Nazi element in his autonomous governments. His energetic pro-German diplomacy was virtually in

102 Cited according to a report by Lieutenant Colonel Antonín Barovský (proper name Infantry Lieutenant-Colonel Antonín Zeman) on events in Subcarpathian Rus in March 1939. NA, f. Interior Ministry – London (MV-L), Box 114, sign. 2-10-3, inv. No. 1446, p. 9. Also see PLACHÝ, Jiří: Zpráva pplk. Antonína Zemana – Barovského o událostech na Podkarpatské Rusi v březnu 1939 / A report by Lieutenant-Colonel Antonín Zeman/Barovský on events in Subcarpathian Rus in March 1939/. *Securitas Imperii*, 2015, No. 26, pp. 170–190.

103 BORÁK, Mečislav: *Obrana Podkarpatské Rusi (říjen 1938 – březen 1939)*, p. 172. Among other things, Germany provided an opportunity to alleviate unemployment and the crisis-stricken region by taking workers from Transcarpathia. VEHEŠ, Mykola et al.: *Avbustyn Voloshyn*, p. 134.

104 Besuch bei Woloschin. *Fränkischer Kurier*, 1. 3. 1939, cited in GRELKA, Frank: *Polityka III Rzeszy wobec ukraińskich zmagani niepodległościowych w latach 1939–1941. Biuletyn Ukrainoznawczy*, 2006, No. 12, p. 66.

105 See a record by Dr. Parkányiho on a visit by the prominent Russophile functionary Štefan Antalovský to the Office of the President of the Republic, dated 28 January 1939. AKPR, f. KPR – protokol PR, Box 15, inv. No. 925.

106 Lev Prchala (1892–1963), a Czech general. In September 1938, he was a staunch opponent of capitulation. From January 1939, he was a minister of Subcarpathian Rus in the autonomous government with the secret task of suppressing the Greater Ukraine nationalist movement. He caused considerable resentment among local autonomists and Ukrainian nationalists. He was a principled opponent of Edvard Beneš in British wartime exile. After liberation, his name was defamed by the communists. Prchala never returned to the country and continued with émigré activities. He founded the Czech National Committee in London and established contacts with representatives of the Sudeten Germans and the Anti-Bolshevik Bloc of Nations, which was paradoxically initiated by Ukrainian nationalists.



David Svoboda

agreement with the orientation of the PUN.<sup>107</sup> The Germans promised the Carpatho-Ukraine representatives that they would establish a consulate in Khust, which was what Révay had been working hard on – and this was the only way in which they kept their promise. This was followed by a further loosening of the region's union with a Czech core. In contrast with other bombastic proclamations, Voloshyn even revealed to them that he was not at all sure about the local consolidation of Ukrainianism: *Today, the expression of German interest in their country would make a strong impression on a not very conscious Ukrainian population, which is firmly under Hungarian influence, particularly the older generation.*<sup>108</sup> It is thus characteristic of the situation that meanwhile, in the Reich, those in charge urged the press to show extreme restraint when it came to Carpatho-Ukrainian issues. Any mentions of a Greater Ukraine were also meant to be suppressed in view of Carpatho-Ukraine's unsettled relationship with Poland and Hungary.<sup>109</sup> Consequently, Khust did not get its consulate until February 1939.<sup>110</sup>

Even though the Poles with their aggression contributed to a rise in the Sich's prestige, they did not hesitate to bombard Prague with complaints about the operations of Ukrainian "terrorists." *Subversive anti-Polish elements – as one official Czech record of a complaint was worded – have now got a territorial base [...] and with complete freedom they are pursuing actions that are directly and indirectly targeting Poland.*<sup>111</sup> The Poles reminded the Czech side of their longstanding sin of tolerating the OUN (Czechoslovakia had previously been accused by Warsaw of backing Ukrainian irredentism) and it saw continuing Czech perfidy in the current events. In view of the silent war that its north-eastern neighbour was waging against Czecho-Slovakia, this was highly cynical on the one hand and, on the other hand, the central government would have had difficulty in exercising thorough control over a distant and destabilized region.<sup>112</sup> When called upon to do so, Voloshyn responded almost mockingly, saying that the only Melnyk who could be on the list of undesirable names was either an apolitical teacher in Korolevo or a retired prison guard living in Uzhhorod before the evacuation. He was not aware of any anti-Polish propaganda, but he also reminded the complainants of their sabotage campaigns.<sup>113</sup>

In fact, he wasn't telling the truth. Andriy Melnyk had probably been in Subcarpathian Rus several times in these months. It has been established that his secret

107 FEIERABEND, Ladislav Karel: *Politické vzpomínky I*, p. 78. With regard to the question of the prospects for a Greater Ukraine, Voloshyn pointed to the minuscule influence of Subcarpathian Ukraine, which had been placed at the mercy of the powerful. En Ukraine Carpathique. *Le Matin*, 3. 1. 1939, p. 5. For more on Révay, see, for example PLACHÝ, Jiří: *K činnosti některých negativistických stran na Podkarpatské Rusi v roce 1938*, p. 121, note 20.

108 SUŠKO, Ladislav: *Nemecká politika vůči Slovensku a Zakarpatskej Ukrajině v období od septembrové krízy 1938 do rozbitia Československa v marci 1939*, p. 187; *Akten zur deutschen Auswärtigen Politik (1937–1945)*. Band IV, Serie D, pp. 137–138. A report by Andor Hencke on the meeting with Voloshyn in Prague, dated 30 October 1938. NA, f. AA, Box 28, inv. No. 136 – 28/2, l. 438 024.

109 NA, f. AA, Box 28, inv. No. 136 – 28/4, l. 438 155.

110 *Ibid.*, l. 438 074. *Akten zur deutschen Auswärtigen Politik (1937–1945)*. Band IV, Serie D, p. 138. For date of establishment of consulate see ŠVORC, Peter: *Zakletá zem*, p. 248.

111 DAZO, f. 3, op. 1, spr. 9, ark. 1.

112 *Ibid.*, f. 18, op. 1, spr. 51, ark. 3.

113 *Ibid.*, f. 3, op. 1, spr. 9, ark. 2.

## The end of “divine providence”

meeting with Hofmann among others, in the presence of Rosokha in Perechyn, had already been preceded by a meeting in Vienna with representatives of the Abwehr. It took place the evening before Brody was deposed and accused of spying for the Hungarians. He also secretly travelled to Prague to get a supply of weapons for the Sich.<sup>114</sup> Not much is known about the course and outcome of these proceedings, but Melnyk as the new leader of the OUN openly commented on the great historical hour in an appeal from Geneva, urging Ukrainians to do their utmost to build a Ukrainian state. It is notable that this document is missing in volumes on Melnyk's life and work.<sup>115</sup> Maybe it's not a coincidence – Melnyk's sluggishness, which so irritated the radicals, soon manifested itself when he suddenly turned his back on building an armed hinterland in Carpatho-Ukraine in respect of how the Germans had cooled on the Ukrainian nationalists. He now didn't see the obstacles, however. He urged the independence of Transcarpathia as a precursor to a Greater Ukraine stretching to the Caspian Sea and he called for their kinsmen to be helped in throwing off the Muscovite, Polish, and Romanian yoke. *God has appointed us to lead our nation to freedom!* was how he concluded his proclamation.<sup>116</sup>

Perhaps the new head of the OUN adapted his initially combative stance to the fact that Transcarpathia had mobilized the Ukrainian diaspora on a global scale. It wasn't just the OUN but also Ukrainians in the USA, Canada, Brazil and elsewhere who were overflowing with determination and they spared no expense and wrote lots of petitions in support of Carpatho-Ukraine. As early as the start of 1938, groups from the Ukrainian People's Republic (UNR – Ukrayinska narodna respublika) in exile were perhaps the first to bring the issue of emancipating Subcarpathian Ukrainians to an international forum, and less than a year later they even promised to strengthen the region's armed forces with 4,000 veterans.<sup>117</sup> And first and foremost, in October and November, Hitler still seemed outwardly inclined towards the Ukrainian project.

- 114 SYTNYK, Oleksander: *OUN i Zakarpatt'a*, p. 219; POP, Ivan: *Dějiny Podkarpatské Rusi v datech*, p. 366; VEHEŠ, Mykola: *Storinky istoriji OUN-UPA v Zakarpatti (1929–1939)*. *Sučasnist'*, 2001, No. 2, pp. 96–97. This is ultimately confirmed by the aforementioned Polish note intended for Prague.
- 115 KNYŠ, Zynovij (ed.): *Nepohasnyj ohoň viry. Zbirnyk na pošanu polkovnyka Andrija Mel'nyka holovy provodu Ukrajins'kych Nacionalistiv*. Nacionalistyčne Vydavnytvo v Evropi, Paris 1974; KUČERUK, Oleksandr – ČERČENKO, Jurij: *Andrij Mel'nyk. Spohady. Dokumenty. Lystuvann'a*. Vydavnytvo im. Oleny Telihy, Kyiv 2011.
- 116 STERČO, Petro: *Karpats'ka sič i ukrajins'kyj nacionalistyčnyj ruch*. In: *Na zov Kyjeva. Ukrajins'kyj nacionalizm u druhij svitovij vijni*, p. 25. Cf. *Následník Konovalcŭv /Konovalets's Successor/*. *Dnevnik*, 22. 12. 1938, p. 4. *Someone called Melnik (sic) has appeared in Subcarpathian Rus and is passing himself of as the successor to Konovalets, who died this year at the hands of terrorists. The Czechs have left him to lead terrorist groups against the Carpathian Rus population. Melnik is spreading a message among the population, calling for a Greater Ukraine to arise out of Subcarpathian Rus, saying that this will grow into a massive state, stretching from the Carpathians to the Black Sea.*
- 117 VEHEŠ, Mykola – TOKAR, Marian: *Karpats'ka Ukrajina na šljachu deržavotvorenn'a*, pp. 371–387; SKOCKO, Jevhen: *Na perelomi – 1938–1939*, pp. 13–15. About UNR see LIVYČ'KYJ, Mykola A.: *DC UNR v ekzyzli miž 1920 i 1940 rokamy*. Ukrajins'ke Informacijne Bjuro, München – Philadelphia 1984, pp. 55–56; VEHEŠ, Mykola: *Solidarnisť ukrajinciv schidnoji Halyčyny z nacional'no-vyzvol'noju borotboju zakarpats'kyh ukrajinciv (1938–1939)*. *Sučasnist'*, 1995, No. 2, p. 87.

## David Svoboda

Time was to show that in the case of Carpatho-Ukraine, Melnyk's realism manifested itself in a way that Galician revolutionary activists could not understand in the least. For now, he had been acting independently of the PUN's attitudes. The Munich defeat of the victors of the last world war had confirmed to the OUN that Europe was in flux and that the Ukrainian card was acquiring a high value. In the autumn of 1938, Polish Ukrainians commemorated the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the West Ukrainian People's Republic (ZUNR – Zachidnoukrajynska narodna respublika), holding services for a sacred lost war over Lviv that hovered over everything as a fresh reminder of the insidious murder of Konovalets. There were huge demonstrations in Lviv, where slogans could be heard saying *Away with Poland and Hungary! We want a free Ukrainian state.*<sup>118</sup> We can already talk about this period as a time when the dynamics of the Ukrainian legal representatives' negotiations with governments were buried for good. On 11 October in Lviv, some 20,000 Ukrainians marched on the Hungarian consulate. The police intervened and began making arrests. Poles attacked march participants and ceremonial masses on the streets, while the Ukrainian militia gave as good as they got and went on the counteroffensive.<sup>119</sup> The situation did not calm down in the following weeks and there was also unrest in the smaller towns, where there were sharp clashes with police while, in the countryside, conscripted border guard units cracked down indiscriminately on the population.<sup>120</sup>

After two decades of wounded Ukrainian pride, an unexpected dawn on the other side of the Carpathians came as a revelation.<sup>121</sup> Polish media more often than not described Carpatho-Ukraine as a tiny trifle in foreign hands, which was broken and unviable. And Poland, directly neighbouring Hungary, was portrayed as the only viable way out.<sup>122</sup> The last parliamentary elections of the Second Rzeczpospolita were held against this backdrop. Ukrainians took part in them in large numbers and 15 mandates for the Ukrainian National Democratic Alliance (UNDO – Ukrajinške nacionalno-demokratyčne objednanňa)<sup>123</sup> on a joint government list of candidates was an expression of confidence in their own parliamentary representation,

118 KEDRYN, Ivan: Najblyžči nimec'ki cily. *Dilo*, 30. 10. 1938, p. 1; Ukrajin's'ki demonstraciji u L'vovi. *Svoboda* (New Jersey), 28. 9. 1938, p. 1. Report from the German embassy in Poland on the mood in eastern Galicia. NA, f. AA, Box 28, inv. No. 136 – 28/2, l. 438048.

119 *Narodowcy i Ukraїнcy: narodowa demokracja wobec mniejszości ukraińskiej w Polsce 1922–1939*. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, Gdańsk 2007, p. 280. A report from the German embassy in Warsaw, dated 15 November 1938. NA, f. AA, Box 28, inv. No. 136 – 28/2, l. 438048. VEHEŠ, Mykola: *Solidarništ' ukrajinciv schidnoji Halyčyny z nacional'no-vyzvol'noju borot'boju zakarpats'kych ukrajinciv (1938–1939)*, p. 84.

120 For smaller towns riots see REBET, Lev: *Svitla i tyni OUN*. Ukrajin's'kyj Samostijnyk, München 1964, p. 90.

121 ROMANYŠYN, Natalja: Prohološenna avtonomiji Karpats'koji Ukrajinny j Halyčyna. *Naukovi zapysky Ternopils'koho nacional'noho pedahohičnogo universytetu im. Volodymyra Hnatuka*. Serija Istorija, 2014, Vyp. 1, pp. 51–52.

122 Ukrajinská menšina v Polsku, řeč poslanců Mudrého a Witwického (The Ukrainian minority in Poland, a speech by deputies Mudrý and Witwický). Embassy of the Czechoslovak Republic in Warsaw, 9. 12. 1938. AMZV, f. III. sekce, Box 616, inv. No. 22, pp. 1–3. ILNYTZKYJ, Roman: *Deutschland und die Ukraine 1934–1945*, Bd. I., p. 177.

123 The main democratic force of Ukrainians in interwar Poland. It was a centre-right nationalist party, which stood on a platform of independence and consolidating all Ukrainian territories, but it flexibly adapted its programme due to the need to come to an understanding with the government in Warsaw.

## The end of “divine providence”

which was now rhetorically based on a clear and uncompromising position. In the atmosphere that had emerged Vasyl Mudry indicated at the start of December that a compromise with the government was no longer on the cards. The unwillingness of the government to accede to the fundamental demand for Ukrainian autonomy was meant to be to blame for this.<sup>124</sup> In this sense, the Polish reluctance must have intensified after the autonomist demands of the Sudeten Germans in the Czechoslovak Republic culminated in a fatal crisis for the state. Incidentally, during his mission in Czechoslovakia, the notorious British negotiator Lord Runciman also expressed outrage over the privations of *the best and most conscious* [Ukrainian] *nation in the grip of megalomania*, and he promised that the land of the white eagle would be the place for his next inspection visit.<sup>125</sup> The fact that the government refused all negotiations on autonomy helped settle disagreements in the heart of the UNDO. It also helped to consolidate the party and restore its authority after its reputation had been shaken by the unsatisfactory compromise with the government in previous years.<sup>126</sup>

The OUN was the main driver behind this frenetic enthusiasm, but it was also shared by several groups. A celebratory gathering was organized by the Front of National Unity politician Dmytro Paliiv – a representative of the Polish-Ukrainian extreme right, which, like the UNDO itself, declared Subcarpathian Rus to be the only part of the Ukrainian body that was voluntarily allying itself with a foreign state and it demanded that the Polish government refrain from plotting with Hungary against the self-determination of Transcarpathian Ukrainians.<sup>127</sup>

By this time the phenomenon that Yaroslav Hayvas (1912–2004), a Ukrainian nationalist and participant in events of that era, described in his memoirs as the *psychosis of the transitions to Carpatho-Ukraine* reached its peak. Hundreds of young people set off on a pilgrimage across mountain ridges to their “Holy Land” so as to help it become the embryo of a Ukrainian resurrection.<sup>128</sup> Warsaw was increasingly nervous about the fact that Hitler had still not given the Hungarians freer rein and had not left Transcarpathia to them.<sup>129</sup> Czech state border guards sympathetically overlooked the Ukrainians’ expeditions from Poland, meaning that the concern of the bilious Ukrainian-oriented Subcarpathian journalist Vasyl Hrendzha-Donsky over whether

124 *Sprawy Narodowościowe*, 1938, Nr. 6, p. 636.

125 *Nova svoboda*, 4. 9. 1938, cited according to VEHEŠ, Mykola et al.: *Vony boronyly Karpats’ku Ukrajinu*, p. 327.

126 KOMARNYC’KYJ, Jaroslav: Rol’ Vasylya Mudroho v provedenni polityky „normalizacij” ukrajins’ko-pol’s’kych vidnosyn (1935–1939). *Ukrajina: kul’turna spadščyna, nacional’na svidomist’, deržavnist’*, 2008, No. 17, p. 209.

127 VEHEŠ, Mykola – TOKAR, Marian: Halyčyna i Karpats’ka Ukrajinu. In: VEHEŠ, Mykola et al.: *Zakarpatt’a 1919–2009 rr. Istorija, polityka, kul’tura*. Lira, Uzhhorod 2010, p. 118. For more on the call of UNDO see NA, f. AA, Box 28, inv. No. 136 – 31/1, l. 448735.

128 They also came from Bukovina, but Poland overwhelmingly predominated. They numbered in the hundreds, with a possible total of around 800. STERČO, Petro: *Karpato-ukrajins’ka deržava*, p. 97. Estimates given by HALAJKO, Bohdan: *Sytuacija na pol’s’ko-čechoslovac’komu prykordonnju u 1938 r. Ukrajins’kyj vyzvol’nyj ruch*, 2007, No. 9, p. 54.

129 HAJVAS, Jaroslav: *Koly kinčalasja epocha*, p. 12; PUŠKAŠ, Andrej: *Civilizacija ili varvarstvo. Zakarpatt’e 1918–1945*. Jevropa, Moscow 2006 p. 205; ZGÓRNIK, Marian: *Ukraina Zakarpatska 1938–1939. Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego*, 1993, No. 103, p. 159.

## David Svoboda

the Czech authorities wouldn't return the refugees back to where they came from turned out to be completely unfounded, despite the undesirable phenomena that accompanied their visit.<sup>130</sup> They travelled individually and in groups and the risk of capture was considerable and costly. In the spring of 1939, several trials were held in Galicia of participants in these "tours" and their organizers, which resulted in sentences of up to eight years. Needless to say, in cases where the OUN was proven to have been involved, this resulted in harsher sentences.<sup>131</sup>

The Home Executive of the OUN responded to a call for help, which was conveyed from Transcarpathia by a courier in Galicia, by sending Hayvas, who was supposed to acquaint himself with the needs of the region and submit his impressions for discussion in Galicia. Roman Shukhevych would have been a better choice, but he didn't hold any post in the executive and he was wanted at home in Poland, where he helped promote Carpatho-Ukraine and in organizing militia against chauvinist Polish students.<sup>132</sup> The risk of police surveillance also hung over him, although he was only imprisoned for a short time in the first two weeks of November (it's surprising that the Poles didn't keep an eye on him for longer).<sup>133</sup> Before he finally travelled over the mountains at the end of the year, he succeeded on the basis of contacts that he accumulated as the owner of the Fama firm in Lviv to get Ukrainian businesses and the public to provide financial aid for Carpatho-Ukraine. He also arranged for small arms, textbooks for military training, and even managed to get hold of some valuable intelligence information on preparations for the Polish sabotage campaign against Czechoslovakia. We do not know whether the Czech side benefitted from this. It appears, however, to be almost out of the question that the Sich would have shared knowledge of this type. In December, he was finally appointed as the OUN's chief commissioner for Carpatho-Ukraine, where he became an officer for special tasks in the Sich's General Staff.<sup>134</sup>

However, clouds were already gathering over the internal relationships within the autonomous power centre, which were hidden from the naked eye. It is understood

130 HRENDŽA-DONS'KYJ, Vasyľ: *Ščast'ia i bore Karpats'koi Ukrajinny*, p. 80. The accommodating Czech approach is confirmed by many memoirs. ONUFRYK, Vasyľ: *Spomyn z Karpats'koi Ukrajinny 1938–1939*, pp. 19–21; STACHIV, Jevhen: *Kriz' ťurmy, pidpillja j kordony*. Rada, Kyiv 1995, pp. 44–45; VEHEŠ, Mykola – ZADOROŽNYJ, Volodymyr: *Velyč i trahedija Karpats'koi Ukrajinny*, p. 68.

131 VEHEŠ, Mykola – TOKAR, Marian: *Halyčyna i Karpats'ka Ukrajinna*, p. 119; VEHEŠ, Mykola: *Solidarnisť ukrajinciv schidnoji Halyčyny z nacional'no-vyzvol'noju borotboju zakarpats'kych ukrajinciv (1938–1939)*, p. 85; ROMANYŠYN, Natalja: *Prohološennja avtonomiji Karpats'koi Ukrajinny j Halyčyna*, p. 53.

132 MIRČUK, Petro: *Roman Šuchevyč*, p. 77; HAJVAS, Jaroslav: *Volja ciny ne maje*. Sribna Surma, Toronto 1971, p. 57.

133 Vyjšly z ťurmy. *Holos*, 16. 11. 1938, p. 1. It is interesting that Mirčuk doesn't write about this, even though he records the *first days in November* after Shukhevych's arrival in Lviv. MIRČUK, Petro: *Roman Šuchevyč*, p. 76.

134 PAHIRJA, Oleksandr: Roman Šuchevyč u Karpats'kij Ukrajinny 1938–1939. *Ukrajins'kyj vyzvol'nyj ruch*, 2007, No. 10, p. 174; HAJVAS, Jaroslav: *Volja ciny ne maje*, p. 57. For more on the self-help and funds for Carpatho-Ukraine, see a confidential report from the office of the Tarnopol Voivodeship, cited according to KNYŠ, Zynovij: *Jaroslav Baranovs'kyj*. Perše ukrajins'ke nacionalistyčne vydavnytvo v Jevropi, Paris 1990, p. 49. For Shukhevych's intelligence activity, see HAJVAS, Jaroslav: *Volja ciny ne maje*, p. 62.

## The end of “divine providence”

that the radical nationalists were keeping a close watch on their prime minister. They did so through his secretaries, Rosokha and Ivan Rohach. The latter was given the rank of lieutenant-colonel in the Carpathian Sich despite his lack of military training and he did not hesitate to clash with Voloshyn in the presence of representatives from the Third Reich.<sup>135</sup> The problem with emigrants started to become urgent. As their numbers grew, the autonomous government strived to keep them far away from public posts and to favour Czechoslovak citizens. The OUN successfully confronted this by setting up a Ukrainian Emigration Office at the instigation of the OUN writer and member Oleh Olzhych and this was generous in providing residency permits if it concerned brothers from the Galician nursery.<sup>136</sup>

The beginning of the last year of the rump Czechoslovakia's existence was marked by a misunderstanding that was a harbinger of things to come. The sudden appointment of the Czech general Lev Prchala as a minister of the autonomous government in Khust was strident as was the reaction if provoked. Once again, divisions that were barely perceptible from the outside were bubbling up beneath the surface in the OUN between Melnyk's cautious Provid (leadership council) and the Galician masses. In practical terms, this manifested itself in the fact that the PUN rejected a plan to arm 6,000 men, who were meant to transfer to a new area of activity and form the core of a regular Carpatho-Ukrainian army. The upper echelons of the OUN used the adverse international situation to justify distancing themselves from this, namely there was a growing conviction that Hitler was moving away from the plan to restitute Ukrainian statehood (and they were not wrong in thinking this). Their unwillingness to give migration from Galicia free rein was compounded by a fear of chaos and a belief that the manpower from domestic Carpatho-Ukrainian resources would be sufficient for the time being.<sup>137</sup>

Yaroslav Baranovskyi (1906–1943) was entrusted with representing Melnyk's foreign leadership. He had come to the east to request fulfilment of the leader's order that all members of the OUN leave Transcarpathia. He justified this demand by pointing to the need for unreserved obedience to Hitler, who had to be won over for the Ukrainian issue exclusively through orderly cooperation. There is at least a lot of oral testimony, whose reliability may be devalued by the political engagement of the respondents.<sup>138</sup> Nonetheless, all of those who were approached resisted and decided to act off their own bat. Mykhailo Kolodzinsky was supposed to declare that the Transcarpathian question was now *moving from a diplomatic to a military level*.<sup>139</sup> This

135 BIRČAK, Volodymyr: *Karpats'ka Ukraïna*, pp. 30–31. Despite this, he wrote a praising article about Voloshyn. ROHAC', Ivan: Jak žyve j pracuje batko vidrodženňa Karpats'koji Ukraïny. *Nova svoboda*, 7. 1. 1939, p. 8.

136 LEMAK, Vasyl': *Karpats'ka Ukraïna*, p. 53; BOLDYŽAR, Mychajlo: *Zakarpat'ta miž svitovymy vïjnamy. Fakty. Podiji. Ljudy. Ocinky*, p. 52

137 *Bila knyha OUN. Pro dyversiju-bunt Jary-Bandera*. Krakow (?) 1940, p. 58.

138 MIRČUK, Petro: *Revoljucijnyj zmah za USSR. (Chto taki „banderivci“, „mel'nykivci“, „dvijkari“)*, Tom I. Sojuz Ukraïns'kych Polity'jazniv, New York – Toronto – London 1985, p. 94.

139 STACHIV, Volodymyr: Počalosja v Uzhhorodi, a zakinčylosja v Marmaros'komu Syhoti. *Visti kolyšnych vojakiv IDA*, 1955, No. 1–2, p. 9.

## David Svoboda

meant a revolt against the disciplined wait-and-see tactics of the PUN, and the different approaches to Carpatho-Ukraine contributed to the subsequent split of the OUN into so-called Melnykites and radicals who assembled under Stepan Bandera. The builders of the Sich, many of whom due to their dedication and ferocity later became Banderites, remained on hard ground till the bitter end, which was brought about by the Hungarian invasion with Hitler's blessing. In reaction to what for them was an unacceptable turnaround by the PUN, the analogy of a war *by nationalists against nationalists* took root in their ranks.<sup>140</sup>

Prchala's appointment shook the Ukrainian-Czech relationship, for which there was less than three months to go before the pleasing development. Public opinion in the region was skilfully mobilized by the protests of autonomous government officials and radical activists tied to the OUN, which intervened in the form of the autonomists' main press platform, *Nova svoboda*. The whole affair was overblown and served to self-define those who heralded the Ukrainization of Carpatho-Rus. The purpose of the general being posted to an unsettled province, i.e. to tame the overly emboldened autonomists with openly separatist Ukrainians in the background, was not successfully achieved.<sup>141</sup> The obstacle here was Prchala's unstable position, but above all the advent of another dramatic act, which precipitated a Hungarian invasion in the last days of the republic. The growing tensions between the Czech administration and the Sich that preceded it would be published in a separate study.

140 MIRČUK, Petro: *Narys istoriji OUN*, Tom I. Ukrajins'ke vydavnytvo, München – London – New York 1968, pp. 550–551.

141 With reference to an interview for the Polish newspaper *Miecz*, see Šče pro podvyhy Prchaly. *Svoboda*, 24. 8. 1939, p. 2.