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A NEW EDITION ON THE HISTORY OF CARPATHIAN UKRAINE (1938 – 1939)
Review of the monograph: Michał Jarnecki, Piotr Kołakowski. “Ukraiński Piemont” (“Ukrainian Piedmont”) on the Political Arena. Zakarpattia during the Period of Autonomy in 1938 – 1939 / Translated from Polish by Ivan Zymomria. Uzhhorod: Polygraph Center “Lira”, 2022. 384 p.

НОВЕ ВИДАННЯ ДО ІСТОРІЇ КАРПАТСЬКОЇ УКРАЇНИ (1938 – 1939)
Рецензія на монографію: Ярнецькі Міхал, Колаковські Пьотр. “Український П’ємонт” на політичній шахівниці. Закарпаття в період автономії 1938 – 1939 / Переклад із польської Івана Зимомрі. Ужгород: Поліграфцентр “Ліра”, 2022. 384 с.

Modern historiography has been enlarged by a new collective monograph on Carpathian Ukraine (1938 – 1939), written by two renowned Polish scholars, Michał Jarnecki and Piotr Kołakowski this year. It should be noted that it is a translation of their Polish-language edition “Ukraiński Piemont”. *Ruś Zakarpacka w okresie autonomii 1938 – 1939* (Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza RYTM, 2017. 384 p.).

We should put emphasis on a high professional level of translation of the above-mentioned monograph by Ivan Zymomria, Doctor of Philology, Professor of Uzhhorod National University.

In 2018, the book was awarded the prestigious prize of the Polish Historical Society and the Waclaw Felczak and Henryk Wiereszzyk Jagiellonian University Prize (Poland). The authors of the text are experienced historians, who have written dozens of scientific studies – Michał Jarnecki, Dr. Hab. (Ph. D.) in History, Professor at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan (the author of two monographs: “Irredenta ukraińska w relacjach polsko-ukraińskich w latach 1918 – 1939” (Kalish-Poznan, 2009) and “Stefan Szolc-Rogoziński” (Kalish, 2013); Piotr Tadeusz Kołakowski, Dr. Hab. (Ph. D.), Professor, Head of the International Relations Department of the Institute of History and Political Science of the Pomeranian Academy in Słupsk (the author of 16 monographs).

Zakarpattia (Transcarpathia) is a typical borderline territory or a region that is considered to be a transitional territory, where for many centuries in various forms (peaceful, armed) interacted various political, social and ethnocultural forces. That is why, the scholars of the Humanities (domestic and foreign) tried to cover the history of Zakarpattia (Transcarpathia) in the first half of the XXth century. Instead, in the Polish historiography, the above-mentioned issue did not find a comprehensive solution (despite the presence of a number of important publications that elucidate some aspects of the history of the region). It was the main argument for Michał Jarnecki and Piotr Kołakowski in preparing the monograph ““Ukrainian Piedmont” on the Political Arena. Zakarpattia during the Period of Autonomy in 1938 – 1939”. The purpose of the work was outlined by the authors as the following: “presenting the history of Zakarpattia (Transcarpathia) during the interwar period with special emphasis on 1938 – 1939, as well as filling a significant gap in the Polish historiography, regardless of the significant efforts of other authors”.

It should be also noted that the source base of work is extensive. The source base includes materials from the Polish, the Slovak, the Ukrainian, the Czech and the Hungarian archives. In particular, the documents from the National Archives (Prague), the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic in Prague (Archiv Ministerstva zahraničných věcí České Republiky), from the diplomatic mission of the Czechoslovak Republic in Warsaw were subject to analysis (Narodni archiv) (Politické zpravy. Vyslanectví Varšava 1919 – 1939), the Cabinet of Ministers (Kabinet Ministra 1918 – 1939) and Section II of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (II Sekce 1918 – 1939), Masaryk Institute, Archives of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague (Masarikův ústav a Archiv Akademie věd ČR), Military Historical Archive in Prague (Vojenský ústřední archiv – Vojenský historický archiv), Funds of the Presidium of the Ministry of National Defense (Presidium Ministerstva národní obrany), General Staff of the Ministry of National Defense (Ministerstvo národní obrany – Hlavní Štab 1919 – 1939), from the Archives of the Office of the President of the Republic in Prague (Archiv Kanceláře prezidenta republiky), Department of the Archives of the Ministry of the Interior in Kanica (Archiv Ministerstva vnitra), the State Archives of Zakarpattia Region, the Central State Archives of the Supreme Bodies of Government and Administration of Ukraine, the State Archives of Ivano-Frankivsk Region, the Archives of New Acts in Warsaw, the Central Military Archives in Warsaw-Rembert, and the others. In addition, numerous periodicals (the Czechoslovak, the Polish, the Ukrainian, the Hungarian and the British magazines), as well as memoirs, were used.

In its style, the presentation of the monograph is more reminiscent popular science style, and not purely scientific. It is clear and logical. The work consists of an introduction, thirteen chapters, epilogue, bibliography and index. In particular, the authors singled out the following parts: “Historical Outline of Transcarpathia before 1918” (Chapter 1, pp. 19–46);

“An Unexpected Gift of Fate. Accession of Transcarpathia to Czechoslovakia” (Chapter 2, pp. 47–66); “Difficult Management of the Unexpected Acquisition. Subcarpathian Rus’ as Part of Czechoslovakia before the Munich Tragedy” (Chapter 3, pp. 67–98); “Subcarpathian Rus’ in the International Politics of the Interwar Period” (Chapter 3, pp. 99–116); “Autonomy *ante* and *intra portas*. On the Way to the Realization of the Ruthenian dream of Giving Autonomy to Subcarpathian Rus’” (Chapter 5, pp. 117–134); “Under the Boiling Volcano – the Beginnings of Autonomy. The First Government of the Autonomous Region and the Division of Subcarpathian Rus’ by a Decision of the Vienna Arbitration” (Chapter 6, pp. 135–152); “Everyday Autonomy. Building the Foundations of Statehood” (Chapter 7, pp. 153–184); “Is it Game with Rus’ or Game for Rus’? “Ukrainian Piedmont” (Autonomous Subcarpathian Rus’ and Carpathian Ukraine) in International Politics” (Chapter 8, pp. 185–208); “Elections to the Sejm, that is, the Appointment of the Owner of the Region” (Chapter 9, pp. 209–218); “Tensions in the Czech-Slovak-Ukrainian Relations, the March Crisis and the Conflict among the Transcarpathian elite Representatives” (Chapter 10, pp. 219–240); “The Place and Role of Subcarpathian Rus’ in the Plans and Actions of the Polish Military Intelligence” (Chapter 11, pp. 241–274); “Once again about the Subversive Activities of Poland in Subcarpathian Russia” (Chapter 12, pp. 275–310); “Above Khust Crows Croak...”. Memorable March Days and the Liquidation of Carpathian Ukraine” (Chapter 13, pp. 311–338). At some points, the authors go beyond the established chronological boundaries.

The titles of the chapters seem to us to be too journalistic. With these titles, the authors direct the reader to the conclusion that it is necessary to establish a constructive dialogue among different cultures. The authors elucidate the history of Transcarpathia until 1918, outline the circumstances of the region’s accession to the Czechoslovak state after World War I, analyze the activities of the Czechoslovak administration in Transcarpathia, in Subcarpathian Rus’ before the Munich Conference (1938), describe the role of Transcarpathia in European politics during the interwar period, reveal the essence of the crisis in Czechoslovakia (1938) and the process of granting autonomy to Transcarpathia, the implementation of this autonomy, adjustment of domestic and foreign policy; at the same time the role of Subcarpathian Rus’ in international politics is analyzed, features and work directions of the Polish military intelligence in Transcarpathia (the 1920s – the 1930s) are elucidated, the Polish sabotage operation “Lom” is analyzed (as a sharply negative reaction, and hence, a set of measures to eliminate the danger of the Carpatho-Ukrainian State formation), which was implemented in Transcarpathia (the autumn of 1938) and, finally, the collapse of Czechoslovakia and the occupation of Transcarpathia by the Hungarian army are analyzed (March of 1939).

The authors outline the essence of Poland’s policy towards Carpathian Ukraine with the following quote: “National interests, as they were understood in Warsaw, could not allow the consolidation and domination of the Ukrainian factor in the lands of Subcarpathian Rus’”. The diplomacy of the Second Republic of Poland was not limited to observing the processes taking place on the other side of the Eastern Beskids. It tried to pursue an active policy, strengthening anti-Ukrainian sentiment and supporting the creation of another Russophile party the RNAP in the 30s of the twentieth century, taking care of its leader, the Uniate priest (*notabene* led a secular life) Stepan Fentsyk” (p. 341).

There should be noted a well-chosen illustrative material (submitted at the end of each chapter and properly designed), which allows a reader to visualize the described events and not even expressed opinions, to some extent to unload the text from the facts. It allows to show the context of historical processes by interpreting a specific fact.

Indeed, this book combines at the same time the image of “the greatness and tragedy of Carpathian Ukraine”. The authors made an attempt to fully elucidate the main trends in socio-political development of the region in 1938 – 1939 and include them into the context of foreign policy events. In particular, they specified the contradiction of the general policy of the great powers through the prism of their personal, carpet agreements to spread their influence in this area and its invasion. At the same time, the authors manage, sometimes too detailed, the review of international events, focusing less on internal Transcarpathian processes.

Undoubtedly, the work would have benefited if the authors had highlighted more about the peculiarities of an everyday life of the local population, which was held hostage in the struggle of great powers for the territory of Transcarpathia. It would also be appropriate to provide a geographical indication. Although this does not significantly diminish the importance of the peer-reviewed publication. Therefore, the monograph allows you to get a holistic view of the research subject research, to reveal some unknown or little-known circumstances in the history of Transcarpathia in 1938 – 1939 properly. Undoubtedly, the peer-reviewed work will be of interest to both average reader and the professional circle of historians. In this regard, the attempt to reproduce objectively (through the prism of interpretation in the language of the goal) the facts and events by Professor Ivan Zimomri as an interpreter deserves a high praise. This is served by his numerous reasoned notes, which illustrate his competent training, in fact, the professional qualifications of the interpreter. It is worth noting that the translation of the monograph by the Polish researchers is not the only one in the amount of translation works of Ivan Zymomria. He translated the important work of John Paul II “Get up, Let’s Go” (Drohobych, 2005, 200 p.), exceptionally original – philosophically closed – reflections of His Holiness the Pope (a co-author of the translation – Mykola Zymomryia). The above-mentioned leads to the conclusion: the monograph of Michał Jarnetski and Piotr Kolakowski ““Ukrainian Piedmont” on the Political Arena. Transcarpathia during the Period of Autonomy of 1938 – 1939” will enrich the arsenal of historiographical research to study the fate of the Ukrainian lands, and hence, will strengthen the cultural interaction of the Ukrainian and Polish neighbouring nations.

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