

## РЕЦЕНЗІЇ / REVIEWS

UDC 94(477.87)(092)  
DOI 10.24919/2519-058X.22.253736

### **Halyna PRYSTAI**

*PhD (Philology), Associate Professor, Department of the Comparative Pedagogy and Methods of Teaching of Foreign Languages, Drohobych Ivan Franko State Pedagogical University, 24 Ivan Franko Street, Drohobych, Ukraine, postal code 82100 (hprystai@gmail.com)*

**ORCID:** 0000-0003-0356-6635  
**ResearcherID:** AAL-9037-2021

### **Галина ПРИСТАЙ**

*кандидатка філологічних наук, доцентка, доцентка кафедри порівняльної педагогіки і методики викладання іноземних мов Дрогобицького державного педагогічного університету імені Івана Франка, вул. Івана Франка, 24, м. Дрогобич, Україна, індекс 82100 (hprystai@gmail.com)*

### **THE NEED FOR A SPIRITUAL LEADER**

**Review of the monograph: Stepan Vidnianskyi, Mykola Vehesh: Avgustyn Voloshyn and Carpathian Ukraine in the History of the Ukrainian State-Building. Kyiv: National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Institute of History of Ukraine, 2021. 372 p.**

### **ПОТРЕБА ДУХОВНОГО ЛІДЕРА**

**Рецензія на монографію: Віднянський С. В., Вегеш М. М. Августин Волошин і Карпатська Україна в історії українського державотворення. Київ: НАН України, Інститут історії України, 2021. 372 с.**

Under the conditions of increasingly rapid globalization, intensive linguistic and cultural contacts the problem of the preservation of unity and identity of the nation arises. Ukraine, which has celebrated the 30th anniversary of its independence recently, faces the task of impartially assessing the contribution of politicians, military, artists, educators, scientists, and clergy – those whose names have been concealed, distorted or banned. Reliable recommendations for protecting the identity of the state and the possibility of its development in new, often unfavourable socio-political circumstances are given by an objective historical analysis of the Ukrainian statehood over a certain period of its development through the prism of understanding the role and significance of great historical figures, their life experience, beliefs and actions, understanding their fate in the context of a particular historical epoch. Such a complex, laborious, but at the same time relevant and tempting both theoretically and practically task was set by S. V. Vidnyansky and M. M. Vehesh in a peer-reviewed monograph.

The versatility and influence of Avgustyn Voloshyn's figure on the history of statehood in Ukraine, in general, and Transcarpathia, in particular is difficult to overestimate: a priest, a teacher, a scientist, a writer, a publicist, a publisher, a generous benefactor, an organizer of cultural and educational movement, a public and political figure and statesman. A number of Ukrainian and foreign scholars studied the pedagogical views of A. Voloshyn (M. Zymomria, V. Homonnai, M. Vehesh, V. Rosul, M. Talapkanych, I. Senko), his cultural and educational activities (Yu. Baleha, V. Nimchuk, B. Halas, P. Chuchka, V. Turyanytsia, Y. Yusyp), literary works (O. Myshanych), his activity as a politician (O. Bohiv, M. Boldyzhar, V. Lemak, V. Zadorozhnyi, P. Chuchka, O. Myshanych, I. Chavarga, R. Ofitsynskyi, V. Hanchyn). However, the view on the life and calling of Avgustyn Voloshyn in such a thorough and detailed elaboration has not yet been the subject of a special research in the Ukrainian historiography. Thus, the work of S. V. Vidnyansky and M. M. Vehesh eliminates this significant gap in the Ukrainian history.

The peer-reviewed monograph consists of Preface, 9 Parts (Chapters), Epilogue and Applications.

Chapter I, "Silver Land: the Historical Destiny of Homeland of the Future President of Carpathian Ukraine" (pp. 12–72), contains a detailed description of the historical background, the events that unfolded in Transcarpathian region over the centuries. The authors, in particular, note that the favourable geographical location of historical Transcarpathia (from the upper reaches of the Tisza in the south to Poprad in the west and surrounded by the Carpathian ridges to the east and north) determined the invasion of various conquerors. Indigenous people (the East Slavic tribe of white Croats) who settled here in the 2nd century AD were subjugated. These lands were under the influence of Kyiv once in a while until the middle of the tenth century, and then they were delimited by the borders of neighbouring states – Hungary, Bulgaria, Poland, Transylvania, Austria-Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Romania. The researchers have carefully analyzed why this small stateless nation did not disappear or wasn't finally assimilated. They are convinced that religious separateness helped to preserve the identity and unity of Transcarpathian region. The scholars claim that the formation and development of culture was facilitated by living vernacular, having the same customs, way of doing business, having close religious ties with other Ukrainian lands as well as the migration movement of prominent figures such as Fedir Koriatovych, the defender of the Orthodox in the region (p. 17).

The authors of the book S. V. Vidnyansky and M. M. Vehesh have done a diachronic analysis of historical events, circumstances and figures that had a great influence on Transcarpathia over the centuries. Moreover, the researchers highlight the problem of national self-identification of the region as a key issue. Particular attention is paid to the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries when the language policy of Magyarization reached its apogee, Russophile propaganda spread among the intelligentsia, and the common people accepted themselves as "the Hungarian Ruthenians", "the Ruthenians", "the Rusyns" (p. 20) or "the Carpatho-Rusyns" (p. 24). According to the scholars, World War I as an "important geopolitical factor" was the reason for the movement to determine the region's affiliation: the rise of national self-awareness was evidenced by decisions and resolutions of the majority of Transcarpathian people's councils demanding withdrawal from Hungary and unification with Ukraine and some with Russia (p. 27); the Hungarianized population of Uzhhorod, Mukachevo, and Berehove sought to remain the part of Hungary; the western regions advocated accession to Czechoslovakia, and the eastern regions to Romania (p. 29). The indigenous population of Subcarpathian Rus' as the part

of the Czechoslovak Republic (1919 – 1939) gained political freedom which led to the intensification of the socio-political movement, the emergence of a number of political parties and cultural and educational societies. Ethno-national consciousness continued to divide the Transcarpathians and resulted in the confrontation of Russophile, Ruthenian and Ukrainian directions (p. 54). The authors of the monograph have made a scrupulous analysis of scientific sources on the characteristics of international circumstances and internal features of life in the region (political, economic, social and spiritual) while being part of Czechoslovakia.

In Chapter II, “Formation of Avgustyn Voloshyn’s Worldview” (pp. 72–96), is devoted to the study of the life of the President of Carpathian Ukraine. Sacrificial love of his native land and respect for people were instilled to little Avgustyn in the clergy family, his views and convictions were honed by reading books and archival documents, and his intelligence grew through encounters with great men of the time, such as the Metropolitan of Galicia Andrei Sheptytsky or the first President of Czechoslovakia Tomas Masaryk. Avgustyn Voloshyn was convinced that the reasons for the state of culture, family relationships, social and national system should be explained through the prism of history; he was sure that admiration for the prominent people's ideas to be possible through the interest in their life and work (p. 81). In our opinion, the peer-reviewed monograph by S. V. Vidnyansky and M. M. Vehesh proves the truth of A. Voloshyn’s beliefs. After all, this historical figure inspires love for the motherland, the desire to become better and work for the welfare of the native people.

Chapter III, “On Service of the Native People: Cultural and Educational, Socio-Political Activities” (pp. 96–125), deals with the analysis of A. Voloshyn's influence on various spheres of a political, religious, scientific, cultural and social life of Transcarpathia in the first half of the 20th century. Energetic and tireless, he worked for the victory of the Ukrainian idea in the region: he published political works (for example, “What the Ugric-Rus’ People Strive for” (1918)) and he defended the right of the Ruthenians to their church rite and preservation of the Cyrillic alphabet (such as “Defense of the Cyrillic Alphabet. How did the Subcarpathian Ruthenians Defend themselves against the Latest Attack of Madyarization before the Coup?” (1937)); he edited annual calendars, newspapers, magazines; he was the author and published textbooks for schoolchildren and teachers’ seminaries (42 books); he was a famous writer, playwright, poet (“Robinson”, “Forty Fairy Tales”, “Ilko-Yatsko”, “Fabiola”, drama “Maryika-Verkhovynka”); he was the initiator of the founding of “Enlightenment” in Uzhgorod in 1920; he was a founder and honorary chairman of the Teachers’ Community (1930 – 1938) as well as one of the organizers and leaders of the “Pedagogical Society of Subcarpathian Rus’”; he was the initiator of the creation of unions, societies, factories, cooperatives (in particular, the “National Cooperative Union” (1920), “Subcarpathian Bank” (1920)); he was a founder of the People’s Christian Political Party (1924) and representative in the Czechoslovak Parliament. Owing to hard work, Avgustyn Voloshyn gained great authority among the people, that’s why, he was called “Father”.

Chapter IV, “A. Voloshyn’s Political Activity in the Czechoslovak Republic” (pp. 125–158), outlines the formation and development of the political career of a leader Avgustyn Voloshyn in 1918 – 1938: from the time of the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy due to the formation of the Czechoslovak Republic until the election of the Prime Minister of the Autonomous Government. Thus, in 1918 Avgustin Voloshyn as an educated and influential man was a member of Uzhgorod “Council of Hungarian Ruthenians”, in 1919 he participated in the establishment of the Central Rus’ People's Council, in 1919 – 1921 he was a member of the Directory of the Provisional Government of Subcarpathian Rus’, in 1920 he was one

of the initiators of the Rus' Agricultural Party, in 1924 he was the organizer of the Christian-People's Party, from 1925 to 1929 he was ambassador to the parliament of the Czechoslovak Republic, in April 1938 he headed the First Rus' (Ukrainian) Central People's Council, in October of the same year he joined the first autonomous government and became the prime minister of the second autonomous government of Subcarpathian Rus'. The researchers draw attention to A. Voloshyn's diplomatic gift "to unite forces of different orientations around him" (p. 130), at the same time defending his convictions such as Christian faith, truth, justice, strengthening among the people "Rus' spirit and people's consciousness" (p. 137).

In Chapter V, "From the Prime Minister of the Autonomous Government of Subcarpathian Rus' to the President of Carpathian Ukraine" (pp. 158–205), there are covered 5 months chronologically. The authors of the monograph analyze the extreme conditions in which the government of A. Voloshyn had to work. Firstly, according to the decision of the Vienna International Arbitration, Subcarpathian Rus' lost 97 settlements and 175 thousand people. Secondly, the deep economic crisis led to low living standards, rising prices, unemployment and persistent budget deficits. Thirdly, the unstable domestic political situation was due to attacks by the Hungarian and Polish terrorists, information warfare of neighbouring states, conflicts between local people and the Czech officials. The government paid special attention to political and propaganda work, in particular, the organization of national defense "The Carpathian Sich" was formed under the leadership of Dmytro Klympush; a rigid vertical structure of executive power had been created; citizens were restricted in their constitutional rights (for example, all political parties were dissolved; some opposition publications were closed) (pp. 186–191). Elections to the Sejm of Carpathian Ukraine took place on February 12, 1939 and showed the support of 92.4% of voters in favour of the UNO ("Ukrainian National Union") – the pro-presidential party.

The scholars S. V. Vidnyansky and M. M. Vehesh step by step describe the events of the beginning of March of 1939: A. Hitler decided to liquidate Czechoslovakia on March 6, 1939, Slovakia declared its independence on March 14, 1939, on the same day A. Voloshyn officially declared Carpathian Ukraine as an independent state. On March 15, 1939, the Sejm of Carpathian Ukraine began its work in Khust. It passed laws on independence, state system, state name, language, coat of arms, flag and anthem of Carpathian Ukraine. The President of the newly created Ukrainian State, Avgustyn Voloshyn, was elected by secret ballot. On the same day, March 15, 1939, the Hungarian troops launched a general offensive which, "despite the heroic armed resistance of a small number of the Carpathian Sich units, ended on March 18 with its full occupation and annexation to Hungary" (p. 201). The authors conclude that the autonomous Carpathian Ukraine was objectively unable to function due to difficult domestic political and economic circumstances. On the other hand, the fate of Transcarpathia as an object of international politics in 1918 – 1939 was determined by the geopolitical interests of stronger neighbouring states.

Chapter VI, "In exile: from Professor to Rector of the Ukrainian Free University" (pp. 205–218), is devoted to the analysis of a large number of documents. They are the diary of a colleague of Fr. Avgustin, Vasily Grendzha-Donsky, protocols of interrogations of the Moscow TsAMGB (the Russian Federation), the State Archives of Baia Mare (Romania), as well as publications of the press of that time (Bulletin of the Ukrainian Society of Education in Zagreb, Nova Zoria, Women's Will in Galicia) and eyewitness accounts. They are gradually recreating Avgustyn Voloshyn's route abroad and his last years of life in Prague. According to the documents, until 1945 Prague remained one of the largest and most active centers of

the Ukrainian emigration in Europe with a number of scientific institutions and organizations (p. 212). A. Voloshyn “entered the service” at the Ukrainian Free University (nowadays, *Ukrainische Freie Universität in München*) as head of the Department of Pedagogy, later he received a doctorate in law. Besides, he fruitfully worked both on textbooks and manuals on the theory of education, pedagogical teleology, and pedagogical psychology. Moreover, A. Voloshyn cared for the Ukrainian orphans who lived abroad. In 1939 – 1940 he held the position of Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy. After the Soviet troops entered Prague, the head of the Ukrainian Free University and most of the professors went abroad, and Professor Voloshyn was assigned the duties of rector (p. 217).

In Chapter VII, “Imprisonment by the Soviet Special Services and the Last Days of Life of the President of Carpathian Ukraine” (pp. 218–233), there is described in detail the acquaintance of A. Voloshyn with SMERSH employees (counter-intelligence unit of the People’s Commissariat of Defense of the USSR). The researchers S. V. Vidnyansky and M. M. Vehesh by quoting Avgustyn Voloshyn’s Personnel file, memoirs of Ivan Mondich (the SMERSH translator), Fr. Zoreslav (S. Sabola), E. Dutka (the niece of Fr. Augustine) try to recreate a clear picture of arrest and interrogations (pp. 219–221). Memoirs of the Soviet spy L. Trepper, military prosecutor M. Ushov, and other prisoners testify to the formidable atmosphere of the Lefortovo Prison, a stronghold of the Ministry of State Security (p. 223). His cellmate V. Marchuk talks about the circumstances of Avgustyn Voloshyn’s stay in prison (p. 225). On the basis of archival materials (the indictments, medical opinion on complaints of weakness and pain in the heart and the act of forensic medical examination of the corpse of A. I. Voloshyn) the authors convey the tragic events of the last two months of the life of the President of Carpathian Ukraine (pp. 224–227).

It is of special interest to a reader to analyze and reflect on the “Testament” made by Fr. Avgustyn Voloshyn a year before his death, on August 19, 1944. It testifies, first of all, to deep and strong faith in God and love for his neighbours since the priest donated all his property for the benefit of the church and orphans (p. 229). In addition, as a far-sighted politician and spiritual leader, Avgustyn Voloshyn expressed the wish of the church union of all Ukrainians, which would certainly bring political freedom to the Ukrainian people (pp. 231–232).

Chapter VIII, “Avgustyn Voloshyn in the Memoirs of Colleagues and Contemporaries” (pp. 233–276), contains the evidence and reflections on the life, activities and actions of a man of flesh and blood and, at the same time, an extraordinary man, “Moses” of Subcarpathia (p. 237), “Father” of a national revival (p. 275), he who “with his national consciousness ... was ahead of his time” (p. 233), he who “gave all the fervor of his great heart and his talent to the service of the people near the Carpathians” (p. 242). A. Voloshyn’s ardent sense of belonging to his native land, his efforts to develop the national identity of Transcarpathian Ukrainians were noted by Fr. Dmytro Popovych, V. Grendzha-Donsky, his student and follower A. Shtefan, his close friend V. Birchak, writer V. Bazhansky, members of Organization of the Ukrainian Nationalists Yu. Khymynets, S. Efremov, O. Olzhych, etc. All the researchers and eyewitnesses help to make a true portrait of Avgustyn Voloshyn, a political and public figure who was destined to be a leader and take the historical responsibility for the fate of his beloved people.

Chapter IX, “A. Voloshyn and Carpathian Ukraine in the Historical Sources and in Domestic and Foreign Historiography” (pp. 276–321), focuses on the analysis of a significant source base of the research. For example, the archival documents from the funds of Ukraine, Russia, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania allowed the authors to characterize

the socio-economic, political and cultural situation of Carpathian Ukraine objectively and impartially. In addition, the examined diaries and press publications allowed to illustrate the historical events of those times properly. Modern domestic and foreign scholars are trying to comprehend A. Voloshyn's legacy as a teacher, scientist, writer, philologist, historian or politician. The authors of the book S. V. Vidnyansky and M. M. Vehesh reasonably prove their own vision of the activities and deeds of Avgustyn Voloshyn as a politician, while encouraging us to further research.

With our remarks and wishes we urge the authors of the peer-reviewed monograph to reflect on the following: Chapter I describes the features of the development of the region in certain areas (political, national and cultural, socio-mental) analyzing diachronically each in particular. It is worth noting that sometimes it is difficult for the reader to follow, to say, the 19th century events in one paragraph (which describes the process of Magyarization) and switch to the events of the 13th and 14th centuries in the next paragraph (which describes the features of the conquest of Transcarpathian lands by Hungary) (p. 21). Furthermore, in our humble opinion, it would be appropriate to use photos of the mentioned historical figures and / or events related to them to make the monograph more illustrative.

These remarks do not diminish the originality of the peer-reviewed monograph, as the meaningful material provides food for thought and further discussion. The authors of the book S. V. Vidnyansky and M. M. Vehesh have made an important contribution to the Ukrainian historiography with their assessment of Carpathian Ukraine as an important stage of the Ukrainian State-building.

*The article was received November 02, 2021.  
Article recommended for publishing 23/02/2022.*