

MASTERARBEIT | MASTER'S THESIS

Titel | Title

Minority rights in global perspective: The question of Rusyn autonomy 1918-1939

verfasst von | submitted by

Ivana Prigancová BA

angestrebter akademischer Grad | in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts (MA)

Wien | Vienna, 2025

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt |
Degree programme code as it appears on the
student record sheet:

UA 066 805

Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt | Degree
programme as it appears on the student
record sheet:

Masterstudium Globalgeschichte und Global
Studies

Betreut von | Supervisor:

Borbála Zsuzsanna Möller Török Privatdoz. MA PhD

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT.....	1
INTRODUCTION	2
1 RUTHENIAN MIGRATION AND THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT.....	15
1.1 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF RUTHENIAN MIGRANTS	15
1.2 RUTHENIAN DIASPORA AND MINORITY RIGHTS IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD	24
1.3 POLITICAL DIVERSITY WITHIN THE RUTHENIAN MINORITY	32
2 THE INTERWAR WORLD	37
2.1 RUSSIA, THE UNITED STATES, AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE INTERWAR MINORITY RIGHTS	37
2.2 RUTHENIANS IN CZECHOSLOVAK REPUBLIC	43
2.3 BOLSHEVISM, FRAGILE STABILITY, AND SUSPENDED AUTONOMY	54
2.4 THROUGH AUTONOMY TO INDEPENDENCE	60
CONCLUSION	67
BIBLIOGRAPHY	71
PRIMARY SOURCES	77

ABSTRACT

Die Arbeit vermittelt ein Bild der Minderheitenrechte der Zwischenkriegszeit mit Schwerpunkt auf der ruthenischen Minderheit aus einer globalen Perspektive. In der Zwischenkriegszeit entwickelte sich die Notwendigkeit des Schutzes der Minderheitenrechte zu einem politischen und gesellschaftlichen Thema auf nationaler, internationaler und ethnischer Ebene. Ein starkes Interesse verschiedener Akteure an der Schaffung von Regeln zum Schutz von Minderheiten führte zu einer Bewegung, die von individuellen Motivationen verschiedener Gruppen, dem Bedürfnis nach politischer Stabilität und Sicherheit, der Legitimation neu gegründeter nationaler Regierungen sowie anfänglichen Idealen Wilsons angetrieben wurde. Daher wird die Minderheitenrechtsbewegung als dynamischer Austausch zwischen Vertretern einer Minderheit, Heimat und Diaspora, nationalen Regierungen und internationalen Organisationen dargestellt. Die dynamische Perspektive wird durch den Multiskalenaspekt dieses Austauschs unterstützt, wenn er transnational (innerhalb von Organisationen und/oder transatlantisch), international (nationale Regierungen spielen eine wichtige Rolle), auf staatlicher Ebene (zwischen ethnischen Gruppen innerhalb eines Nationalstaats) sowie intra-Minderheit (innerhalb einer bestimmten ethnischen Gruppe) Kommunikation war gleichermaßen signifikant. Verstärkte globale Verbindungen, die im 19. Jahrhundert durch kolonialen Handel und Migration im Kontext effizienterer Kommunikations- und Reisemöglichkeiten nach einer Zeit des beschleunigten technologischen Fortschritts geschaffen wurden, hatten zweifellos Auswirkungen auf das soziale und kulturelle Denken. Ruthenen beteiligten sich an der Schaffung dieser globalen Verbindungen, insbesondere durch transatlantische Migration, während sie gleichzeitig den Kontakt zu ihrem Heimatland aufrechterhielten. Angeregt durch das fremde Umfeld schuf die beaufsichtigte Diaspora einige Strukturen, die sich später zu einer organisierten Bewegung für ruthenische nationale Rechte entwickelten, die sowohl die Diaspora als auch die Ruthenen im Heimatland der Karpaten-Rus umfasste. Dies führt zu der Frage: Könnte nationale Identität ein Produkt globaler Interaktionen sein? Inwieweit? Und ist das bei der ruthenischen Minderheit der Fall?

INTRODUCTION

Ruthenians or Rusyns in interwar period emerged as one of the many national minorities after collapse of the Habsburg monarchy in 1918. For centuries they had been inhabiting the territory called Carpathian Rus', in the border area between today's Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine and Romania in predominantly sedentary communities. Significant changes in Ruthenian behaviour towards economic migration during 18th and 19th centuries had remarkable impact on the further development of their common identity. Several Ruthenian immigrant communities or diasporas emerged as a result of massive immigration from the region, for example to other parts of Hungary, Serbia, Bohemia or in the Northern America in Canada or the United States.¹ First substantial Ruthenian group migration has taken place in 18th century within Habsburg programme of repopulation of the regions in today's Serbia from Ottoman rule. The Ruthenians in Vojvodina region in Serbia have gone through a national development separate from the Ruthenians in Subcarpathian region. The impact of external factors was much smaller, and the development took place predominantly in local environment among local intellectuals. Unaffected by the anti-Ruthenian policies imposed on the Subcarpathian region after World War II, the community was officially recognized as a minority both during and after the interwar period.² National activities of Ruthenians in Subcarpathian region in the interwar period were intensively influenced by external factors and namely interaction with the United States communities, Czechoslovak government, and world events and political realities like spread of communism, fascism, but also democratic values and Red fear. Because these tendencies were part of world events and are best understood when viewed in their complexity considering their global reach, global approach to the Ruthenian national history would be most fitting.

Globalisation emerged as an important concept since the beginning of institutionalisation of global history in the 1990s introducing the so-called *globalistic turn* in social studies.³ Since the establishment of academic discipline of history in the 19th century, ties to the institutions

¹ Magocsi, Paul R. *With Their Backs to the Mountains: a History of Carpathian Rus' and Carpatho-Rusyns* /. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2015., p. 21

² Fejsa, Mihajlo P. *The Preservation of the Rusyn Language and Culture in Serbia/Vojvodina*. A Jubilee Collection: Essays in Honor of Professor Paul Robert Magocsi on his 70th Birthday. Uzhhorod: Valerii Padiak Publishers. 2015, p. 193–202.

³ Iggers, Georg. Review of *Historiography from a Global Perspective*, by Jürgen Osterhammel. *History and Theory* 43, no. 1 (2004): p. 146–54.

of nation-state played an important role in the perspective of historiography. The contribution of historians to the creation of a “nation” was a significant one.⁴ In the last decades, an increasing academic trend to move away from history within the framework of nation-states gave space to broader comparative studies which would transcend not only the Eurocentric perspectives but also the nationalist narrative.⁵ I believe, that not only inclusion of minorities in the historiography of nation-states, but also critical perspective on their cultural and political development in interaction with diverse actors in diverse environments, gives space to the trans-national perspective on minorities. Including larger, supra-national spaces is an effective strategy of moving from the nation-state perspective. In this context, oceans provide an ideal example of an interactive space facilitating exchange.⁶ The aspect of ocean is present in the topic of overseas migration from Carpathian Rus’ and it shows, how specific messages could be transferred in long distances within a community. This spatial perspective on Ruthenian national movement offers a perspective transcending national borders. Trans-national space refers to a separate social space transcending national borders with social, political, and economic networks, in case of migration, created and used by the migrants. Through these networks specific identities are developed, which belong to several environments but entirely to none. Michael G. Esch argues, that it was migration which contributed immensely to the trans nationalisation of Eastern Europeans. Except this trans nationalisation, migration in the 19th century contributed to the creation of cultural, political, and subsequently national differences.⁷ This perspective on trans-nationalism is specifically useful when examining the effect of migration on Ruthenian community and its national ambitions in the interwar period. In this respect, another important concept is the one of networks. According to Sebastian Conrad large parts of history of cross-border interaction should be imagined as network structures, movement of people often taking form of chain migrations.⁸ Matthias Kaltenbrunner in his book *Das global vernetzte Dorf* explains chain migration patterns of eastern Galicia in the 19th and early 20th century. Like in the Carpathian Rus’, the migrants were usually poor farmers from small villages and migrating overseas to Canada and the United States for better

⁴ Pedersen, Susan. “The Guardians: The League of Nations and The Crisis of Empire.” In *Guardians*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2015, p. 206

⁵ Iggers, Georg. Review of *Historiography from a Global Perspective*, by Jürgen Osterhammel. *History and Theory* 43, no. 1 (2004): p. 146–54.

⁶ Conrad, Sebastian. *What Is Global History?* Princeton Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2016, p. 118

⁷ Esch, Michael G. “2 Migration: Transnationale Praktiken, Wirkungen und Paradigmen.” In *Handbuch einer transnationalen Geschichte Ostmitteleuropas*, 1st ed., 6:131–88. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017

⁸ Conrad, Sebastian. *What Is Global History?* Princeton Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2016, p. 125-126

work opportunities. Most of them were male leaving their families in the homeland and sending them most of the money earned in America.⁹

While “methodological nationalism” is becoming an overpowered narrative within global history, nation states, national minorities and histories of nation-building processes remain important part of our past and many scholars attach special importance to the role of nation states within globalisation itself.¹⁰ It has been proposed, that nations and globalisation process should not be seen as conflicting, but rather mutually complementary and reinforcing.¹¹ In the case of Ruthenians, their homeland never transformed into a nation state, therefore their influence in the League of Nations was and limited. Instead of accentuating role of this specific ethnic group in the interwar discussions I propose a broader perspective on the complex web of multiple actors of the minority rights movement and their mutual interactions. Global history in this context will not be approached as an object of study, but rather as a perspective.

The interwar period opened new possibilities for new global linkages, specifically in the context of national minorities and their rights in the newly emerging successor states in East-Central Europe. Linkages created through migration of significant number of Ruthenians to the United States enabled contact with representatives of other nations and their ideas, and later with Wilsonian principles of national self-determination. If the communication chain between the overseas Ruthenian diaspora and families in the Carpathian Rus’ are perceived as part of the global linkages, then these probably had significant impact on further development of national identities. This leads to the questions: Could national identity be a product of global interactions? To what extent? And is it the case of Ruthenian minority? If global history relies on various scales of interaction¹², then interwar period offers a multi-scale perspective on Ruthenian national movement. This approach allows for drawing connections between trans-national, international, state-level, and intra-minority exchanges to create an image of a dynamic movement. Because global events and communities, like League of Nations, spread of communism, Rusyn-American transatlantic migration and creation of diaspora, Red Fear, Czechoslovak political obligations towards minorities or spread of fascism seemed to play such

⁹ Kaltenbrunner, Matthias, Campus Verlag, and Verlag. *Das global vernetzte Dorf : eine Migrationsgeschichte*. Frankfurt New York: Campus Verlag, 2017, 91-95

¹⁰ Doleshal, Zachary Austin, *In the Kingdom of Shoes*. University of Toronto Press, 2021, p. 110

¹¹ Beckert, Sven, *Empire of Cotton*, Penguin New York, p. 21

¹² Vanhaute, Eric. *World History : An Introduction*, Taylor & Francis Group, 2012. *ProQuest Ebook Central*.

a dominant role in regional politics of Subcarpathian Rus', I propose a combination of global and local approach, a *glocal* perspective, to the topic of Ruthenian national development.

The homeland of Ruthenians, the Carpathian Rus' or Subcarpathian Rus' as sometimes alternatively called, had been itself a place of cultural exchange even before the mass migration in the 19th century. It comprised a considerable number of various distinct ethnic groups, for example Poles, Hungarians, Jews, Romanians or Slovaks or religions, for example Orthodox Christians, Catholics, Roman Catholics, Jews, or Protestants. The term Rus' itself could be sometimes misleading, because historically this name was often given to a territory inhabited by eastern Slavs, the nowadays Russians, Ukrainians, as well as Ruthenians. The term Ruthenians, is also still often confusing, because until 20th century it was used for Ukrainians and Belarusians as well. For this reason, it is common to use the adjective *Carpathian*, when referring to the homeland of Ruthenians and in the 20th century term Rusyns or Carpatho-Rusyns became preferred among the representatives of the community. Carpathian Rus' even though used by some scholars as a term for academic classification of ethnic groups, was never an official region within Habsburg monarchy with clearly defined borders.¹³ After the collapse of the Habsburg monarchy in 1918 and within initial period of political turmoil several Ruthenian councils emerged in diverse parts of Carpathian Rus'. While most of the territory of Carpathian Rus became part of the Czechoslovak republic after agreement between the Czechoslovak government and Ruthenian representatives and with international support, the Lemko region inhabited by Lemkos or sometimes referred to as Lemko-Ruthenians, was united with Poland.¹⁴ When Ruthenian diaspora representatives became more active in international political discussions at the beginning of the 20th century with involvement of global organisations such as the League of Nations, Carpathian Rus' had already become a sensitive topic in the context of post-war reorganisation of European borders. Not only did the territory lay on borders of several successor nation states, each of which was making claims to it, it bordered with the Soviet Union. All these aspects formed international image and position of Ruthenian minority and provided a framework for national movement in the 19th and 20th century. For this reason, orientation towards process and movement transcending borders and limits of nation-state significance is most suitable for this research. Ruthenian identity building

¹³ Magocsi, Paul Robert, *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, Central European University Press, NED - New edition 2015-12-15, p. 179, p. 25

¹⁴ Magocsi, Paul Robert. *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, Central European University Press, NED - New edition 2015-12-15, p. 225-226

in interwar period is a complex process, certainly not a steady movement with unequivocal goal. Diversity of perceptions of Ruthenian future direction is best visible through comparative approach of both internal actors from the community and external actors like national governments, global organisations, and other minority groups. To portray a true image of the Ruthenian interwar situation, including cultural and social point of view seems vital in the context of ideological, cultural, linguistic discrepancies within the national movement itself. Between diverse domestic perceptions of minority rights and international conceptions emerges a dynamic picture of intertwined multifactor processes on multiple levels rather than a traditional linear historical image of national development.¹⁵

When the ethnic division of citizens became politically significant in the 19th century Europe, it wasn't without a previous development - the phenomenon of religious minorities appears in the earliest historiographies. In the 19th century, religious rights were extended to include first conceptions of cultural rights. For instance, at the Congress of Vienna, Poles, who became subjects of Austria, Russia, and Prussia, were guaranteed representative institutions. However, these privileges were based mostly on their political prominence.¹⁶ The term *minority*, in the context of ethno-cultural boundaries, meaning a *national* minority, emerged only after 1918. Anna Adorjáni and László Bence Bari in their article *National Minority: Emergence of the Concept in the Habsburg and International Legal Thought* explored two ideological traditions shaping the intellectual environment in which the new term of minority emerged. The first was the tradition of European international peace treaties, the documents representing the first demonstration of „international minority protection“. The second tradition was the concept of nationality question raised in multinational empires in Europe.¹⁷ However, the minority status wasn't available to just any ethnic group and was exclusive to actors of specific situations. In 19th century Ottoman Empire, protection of Orthodox Christians and Slavs became important topic in Russian politics, while numerous Jewish communities remained unprotected or even subject to pogroms in some parts of Europe, despite several attempts to address the issue at international congresses. European history reinforced the political hierarchization of ethnic

¹⁵ Shestova, Tatyana L.. *Methodological Foundations of Global history, Globalistics and Globalization Studies: Theories, Research and Teaching*, Globalistics and Globalization Studies, 2013

¹⁶ Rosting, Helmer. *Protection of Minorities by the League of Nations*, The American Journal of International Law 17, no. 4 (1923): 641–60.

¹⁷ Adorjáni, Anna, and Bari, László Bence. *National Minority: The Emergence of the Concept in the Habsburg and International Legal Thought*, Acta Universitatis Sapientiae. European and Regional Studies 16, no. 1 (2019): 7–37.

groups some of which were categorized as unable of independent political coordination. This imperial mindset had been prevalent already in the Habsburg monarchy and, after World War I, it was used to delegitimize political demands of emerging minorities as was the case of the Ruthenians. Traces of this imperial mindset reemerged since the 1960s' conceptualizations of 'civic' (Western) versus 'ethnic' nationalism like in Hans Kohn's influential study which has been increasingly criticized since the 1990s.¹⁸

Because of the intercontinental involvement in the WWI, matters concerning security, border policy and stability in Europe became a topic for international discussion with reach outside of Europe. In 1918 American President Woodrow Wilson introduced the 14 points which should have been the goals of the American intervention in World War I promoting the principle of self-determination. The 10th point specifically refers to the former citizens of Austria-Hungary, who would be guaranteed an equal place among all other nations of Europe. It was the last point, which proposed creation of an organisation, the League of Nations, which would guarantee the independence and territorial integrity of all emerging states. The oration promoted equality among nations, safeguarding of which showed later rather complicated.¹⁹ This was mainly because national minority rights depended foremost on the national government of a specific state. The clause on the protection of the rights of national minorities was enshrined in several international treaties that were signed after the end of the war. Initially, these rights were guaranteed either by the League of Nations through international treaties or by a nation state and the laws of the country. Minorities were defined as groups of persons who differ from the titular nation of the country by race, religion or language and were subdivided into citizens of the country concerned and nationals of a foreign country.²⁰ This definition of national minority did not approach any definition of nationality as such or of ethnic, religious, or cultural groups as subjects of collective rights. Instead, the minority protection was based on individual cultural rights, and these were granted in exchange of loyalty to the state. The emergence of the successor states in East-Central Europe between 1918 and 1919 meant a shift from the self-determination initiatives towards a new principle: the protection of politically loyal ethnic, cultural, and religious minorities. The discussions about minority question in the

¹⁸ Kohn, Hans. *History of nationalism in the east*, [S.l.]: Routledge, 2022

¹⁹ DiNunzio, Mario R. *Woodrow Wilson: essential writings and speeches of the scholar president*, New York University Press, 2006, pp 404-406

²⁰ Rosting, Helmer. *Protection of Minorities by the League of Nations*, The American Journal of International Law 17, no. 4 (1923): 641–60.

early 1920s as a trans-national field was in a way adaptation of the previous narrative of self-determination to the multicultural polities in the East-Central Europe.²¹ Nevertheless, the Minority Treaties and implementation of minority rights through the global platform of the League of Nations stirred hope for greater political freedom not only in Europe, but also among citizens of the colonial empires. Some minority groups, under influence of the Wilsonian ideas of national self-determination, were hoping for a more prominent political status and cultural recognition.²² Wide range of ethnic groups globally responded to the Wilsonian moment, mobilizing citizens in Asia, Africa or Middle East. While colonial powers like Britain openly supported Wilsonian politics, they perceived the principles fully compatible with imperial rule, acting as protector of national rights of the citizens in the colonies.²³ Ruthenian national movement reacted to the Wilsonian ideas by advocating their own case in Europe as well as directly in the US through the office of the President Wilson. The role of the Ruthenian American diaspora suggests its importance in connecting this movement to a greater Wilsonian movement with a truly global impact. Similarly to the peoples in colonies, Ruthenians demanded political equality in terms of national self-determination. Their representatives did not view Ruthenian nation as subordinate to the Czechs and Slovaks and persistently demanded autonomy to approach their international political level even after joining Czechoslovak republic.²⁴ However, when self-determination principle was abandoned, several definitions and understandings of nationhood were applied when deciding eligibility of a group for status of a national minority. In this regard, Roger Brubacker distinguishes three types of nationalisms. The “nationalising nationalism” makes claims in the name of “core nation” which defines itself on ethnocultural basis and distinguishes from citizenry. This “core nation” is understood as the legitimate “owner” of the state. “External national homelands” are called by Brubacker the transborder nationalisms, which acknowledge state’s duty to protect “their” ethnonational members also in other states, namely when threatened by other nationalizing nations. The main difference between “homelands” and “nationalising nationalisms” is in the perception of national minorities policy – in the first case it is seen as transcending borders of a nation state

²¹ Núñez Seixas, Xosé M. *Home-rule Versus Non-territorial Autonomy? Western European National Movements and Their Views on the Minority Question, 1919–1939*, Nations and Nationalism 29, no. 2 (2023)

²² Núñez Seixas, Xosé M., *Home-rule Versus Non-territorial Autonomy? Western European National Movements and Their Views on the Minority Question, 1919–1939*. Nations and Nationalism 29, no. 2 (2023)

²³ Pedersen, Susan. *The Guardians: The League of Nations and The Crisis of Empire*, In Guardians. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2015, p.24-25

²⁴ Holubec, Stanislav, *New state borders and (dis)loyalties to Czechoslovakia in Subcarpathian Rus, 1919–25*, European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire, 27:6, 2020, p. 732-762

while the latter see it as an internal matter of a nation state. “National minorities” typically make claims in terms of nationality rather than merely ethnicity, demanding collective cultural and political rights recognized by national government.²⁵ In the case of interwar Czechoslovakia, the “core nations” would be Czechs and Slovaks. Carpathian Rus’, being part of the Czechoslovak territory, was perceived by Ruthenians as their original homeland and the claims for recognition of their national minority rights was clearly communicated with Czechoslovak representatives since the beginning of cooperation. In this sense, Brubaker’s definition of national minorities and “core nation” seems fitting for distinction between Ruthenians on one hand and Czechs and Slovaks on the other hand. However, the Ruthenian diaspora seems to have played an important role of “external national homeland” in the sense of promoting Ruthenian national rights outside of the Czechoslovak nation state.

In the 1920s and the 1930s global popularity of the principle of Wilsonian self-determination was undermined by the reality of European politics. From the idea of minority rights which would transcend the nation states and become universal, the League of Nations favoured an international approach with nation states playing the most important role as the grantor of these rights upon “their” minorities. However, not only ethnic groups were a subject of colonial mindset, as I mentioned earlier, but also nation states had different hierarchical positions within the international environment. Some scholars argue that the reconstruction of Europe and minority rights system was influenced by the imperialistic view and colonial culture of Europe. Their main argument is, that international discussion on minority rights revolved mostly around the minorities in the Balkans and in East-Central Europe, accentuating ethnic heterogeneity of the citizenship in the newly established successor states and creating perception, that these states were in some respects “less” nation-states than others weakening their rank in international environment.²⁶ The hierarchical approach is visible already in the peace talks after the end of WWI, when the defeated Central Powers were treated as subjects of control and tutelage by the States of Entente. The mandate system of the League of Nations, which put great emphasis on the “level of development” of an ethnic group rather than universal national rights, was part of the peace talks and specifically Minority treaties.²⁷ Similar criteria were

²⁵ Brubaker, Rogers. *Nationalism Reframed*. Cambridge, Mass: Cambridge Univ. Pr, 1996. p. 5-6

²⁶ Robson, Laura. *Capitulations Redux: The Imperial Genealogy of the Post-World War I “Minority” Regimes.*, *The American Historical Review* 126, no. 3 (2021): 978–1000

²⁷ Pedersen, Susan. *The guardians: the League of Nations and the crisis of empire*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015 p.408-409

applied to the people in Europe, Czechs, Slovaks and Ruthenians being all subject to the critical judgment of their level of national development before specific rights were recognized by the League of Nations.

Despite the unequal positions national governments of the successor states were more than able to manoeuvre through the new political rules. Natasha Wheatley in her article *Central Europe as Ground Zero of the New International Order* argues, that the international organisations were dependent on qualified sovereignty of newly emerging states which became legitimate partners in global politics. Therefore, weakening the nation-states would also mean risking international instability.²⁸ National governments were aware of this influence and negotiated a relatively large room for manoeuvre in the field of minority rights to stabilize their sovereign power over a territory. In the end, the representatives of minorities thus remained largely dependent on the state, which became the grantor of national rights, even though they were guaranteed by the League of Nations. International protection of minorities was legally provided not to the international minorities, but to the ethnic groups and their representatives. The national governments persistently refused to grant control over the fulfilment of the treaty obligations to the League of Nations.²⁹ The situation often created tension between national governments and representatives of the minorities. Especially in Hungary the diverse perceptions of national self-identification created confusion about how to approach successor states in interwar East-Central Europe. Duality of identity was best represented already in the 19th century by Lajos Kossuth and István Széchenyi. Kossuth imagined an independent Hungary, where the ethnic Magyar nationality would be privileged over the many non-Magyar minorities. Széchenyi, on the contrary, promoted universal education as opposed to Magyarization believing in a political nation under Magyar leadership. During the Hungarian Revolution in 1848-1849 Kossuth's vision prevailed, and finally three perceptions of self-identifications emerged: loyalty to the Dual Empire of Austria Hungary, loyalty to the multi-ethnic Kingdom of Hungary and loyalty to Hungary as home of ethnic Hungarians. By the 1890s "Hungary of Magyars" came to prominence, which led to curtailment of political rights of non-Magyar citizens. Hungarian restrictive and nationally exclusionary politics, privileging certain minorities and excluding other from political representation, caused mistrust among

²⁸ Wheatley, Natasha. *Central Europe as Ground Zero of the New International Order*, *Slavic Review* 78, no. 4 (2019): 900–911.

²⁹ Degtyarev, Serhii, and Yevhen Samoilenko. *League of Nations and Protection of national minorities in Eastern European states (1919-1946)*, *Східноєвропейський історичний вісник*, no. 12 (2019): 94–107.

many national minorities of former Hungary after the fall of the monarchy. Ruthenians among many others, rejected the idea of further political development under the Hungarian rule. And indeed, even despite the popularity of President Wilson's Fourteen Points in Hungary after his speech in January 1918, many believed in their compatibility with maintaining Hungarian territorial integrity through a system of confederation.³⁰ After disintegration of the Hungarian territory after the war, participation in the League of Nations became the only way to regain some political prominence. However, active participation of Hungary in maintenance of minority rights proved difficult.³¹

When Habsburg monarchy disintegrated, several nations with territorial claims emerged instead. Some of the groups were able to negotiate internationally recognized territorial state, others, like Ruthenians, were granted cultural minority rights within these political entities. The third option would be non-territorial autonomy, a middle way for disappointed ethnic groups which were hoping for a state. In the East-Central Europe autonomy was understood as a strictly non-territorial political concept, which grew out of the long-lasting academic tradition of critique on the notions of ethnicity and territory, nationhood, and statehood. This tradition developed predominantly in the Russian and Habsburg empires, where the multiculturalism of the lands demanded critical thought on facing the diversity. The notions of statehood relied on territory to a much greater extent than those of nationhood, nations being perceived as groups bound together not by a territory but rather by a shared sense of belonging and commitment to a community.³² The non-territorial autonomy principle was meant to allow greater participation of national minorities in society without challenging territorial sovereignty of a nation-state.³³ This concept became specifically important for Carpathian Rus', where independent state could mean a hazard to regional security. Nevertheless, several documents submitted to the League of Nations in the interwar period prove, that representatives of Ruthenian minority repeatedly

³⁰ Nagy, Zsolt. *Great Expectations and Interwar Realities*, Budapest: Central European University Press, 2017. P.85-86, p.78-81

³¹ Becker, Peter, and Wheatley, Natasha. *Hungary and the League of Nations: A Forced Marriage*, In *Remaking Central Europe*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2021.

³² Börries, Kuzmany, Battis, Matthias, and Mulej, Oskar. *Accommodating National Diversity Within States: Territorial and Non-Territorial Approaches Since the Late 19th Century*. Nationalities Papers 50, no. 5 (2022)

³³ Klatt, Martin. *Schleswig and Non-Territorial Autonomy – The Territorial Trap?*, Nationalities Papers 50, no. 5 (2022): 906–22.

demanded independence or at least autonomy within Czechoslovakia, which became an eternal struggle between with the national government.

Documents concerning ethnic Ruthenians appear in relatively large number in the archive of United Nations in Geneva. Most of them date from the interwar period and concern minority rights and national status of Ruthenians. The documents are mostly tied to the specific regions of Subcarpathian Rus ‘, Bukovina and Galicia, but their international reach is obvious. They were submitted to the League of Nations between 1920-1938 by individuals, groups, and national governments. So far, these sources were only marginally used for historical research of Ruthenian ethnic and not at all to embed the Ruthenian development within the wider global context. While most literature focuses on proving that Ruthenians either were/are or were/are not a nation, these sources provide information on the Ruthenian minority rights in the global context and allow for a more international angle to the topic.

Petitions represent a significant part of the documents. Using petitions for advocating national rights of an ethnic group or a minority and its acceptance by the League of Nations was probably influenced by the impact of American politics in the creation of the organisation. The right to petition is part of the First Amendment of the American Constitution and therefore a vital right of American citizens. Ruthenian representatives, being in close contact with the political environment in the US through the immigrant diaspora quickly adopted this practice and used it in favour of their own national claims in interwar period. In 1929 the Rusyn Council of National Defence (USA) submitted a petition for establishment of independent Ruthenian territory including a detailed proposition on territorial demarcation. The solution for demarcation of boundaries is further discussed in subsequent communication with the League of Nations officials. Petitions were often accompanied by detailed complaints on the treatment of Ruthenians in the Czechoslovak Republic. In the *Proposition of the Political Party of Ruthenians in Hungary*³⁴ from 1921 restrictions on political representation and freedom of speech of Ruthenians are emphasized. In this document, the authors opposed union with Czechoslovak Republic and advocated for union with Hungary arguing with Hungarian historical heritage of the region. Czechoslovak government was accused of refusing Ruthenian autonomy and hindering national consolidation in the region. As a reaction to the petition,

³⁴File COL42/21/6 - *Proposition of the Political Party of Ruthenians in Hungary*, Report. from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed August 25, 2024).

League of Nations in its resolution of the Council from June 27th, 1921, determined, that any petition concerning minority rights must be first submitted to the respective national government before the League of Nations office. This was a clear signal, that nation state is an important part of the communication chain. This system respected sovereignty of nation states and disadvantaged the minorities without their own governmental representation.

In order to provide protection to minorities, the League of Nations was in need of detailed information on them. A report about cultural and political life of Ruthenians in Bucovina (Romania) was delivered in 1928. In the document, the Romanian government expressed tolerant position towards Ruthenian identity building activities accepting their minority rights as defined by the League of Nations. An interesting document on European minorities *New Delhi Office - Press Clippings - Minorities section*³⁵ consists of newspaper clippings from American newspapers with articles on the topic. The clippings follow period from 1920s to the outbreak of World War II. The newspaper articles do not concern only Ruthenian minority, but rather the issue of minorities in general context of newly established nation states worldwide providing a room for comparison.

Czechoslovak government took slightly different stand in the matter of Ruthenian minority rights than Romania becoming suspicious of their disloyalty and political intrigues. Facing numerous petitions and complaints from the Ruthenians, a discussion about government's sincerity in fulfilment of minority rights on the Czechoslovak territory followed. In this context, the League of nations received a memorandum from Czechoslovak government in 1927 concerning the Ruthenian rights for autonomy. From the tone of the correspondence, it is clear, that Ruthenians were considered backward, uneducated and immature. In the reports they are directly called „politically immature” and „underdeveloped people” to defend Czechoslovak reluctance to support their independence. However, in another document named *Czecho-Slovakia minorities*³⁶, the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye from 1919 was attached to the other parts. It is a document between Czechoslovakia and Allied and Associated Powers. In article 10 and article 11 of the Chapter II it is clearly stated that Czechoslovakia would

³⁵ File R5375/18A/26911/1426/Jacket20 - *New Delhi Office - Press clippings - Minorities section*, Report. from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed August 25, 2024).

³⁶ File S354/19/3 - *League of Nations - Czecho-Slovakia minorities*, Report. from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed September 7, 2024).

„undertake to constitute the Ruthenian territory south of the Carpathians...as an autonomous unit... and to accord to the fullest degree of self-government... “. Also, there is a mention of a special Diet to be constituted as Ruthenian political expression. This document has already been analysed by Rusyn scholars confirming breach of the agreement by the Czechoslovak government. The League of Nations was able to provide a space for discussion of the issue, however, it was the national government who made the decisions. It would be interesting to compare other cases of minority issues and consider League of Nation's actual ability to influence domestic politics in other member states towards ethnic groups worldwide. A discussion concerning the treaty was recorded and attached to the same document. Interestingly, French Prime Minister Clemenceau proposed, that matters of minorities would be administered directly by the League of Nations. This was immediately opposed by Romanian representative, arguing with sovereign rights of a nation state. An attached commentary by Dr. van Hamel rethinks again the idea of who is to be considered a minority in Czechoslovakia. He refused an idea of Slovaks being a minority, however, he proposed that in the future they might become one. He ascribed a special position and rights to the Ruthenians, who are in his eyes separate from Austrians, Hungarians, or Germans.

If we consider that the biggest Ruthenian minority group in interwar period lived on Czechoslovak territory, the different approach to their rights and partial independence between Romanian and Czechoslovak government makes sense. In Romania, Ruthenians did not pose a threat to the sovereignty of national territory considering small number of them. In Czechoslovakia, the situation was different. Ruthenians were not only a bigger group, almost comparable to the Slovaks (whose minority status had also been discussed) but were also politically active and calling for independence. Fragmentation of territory was a source of constant worry of Czechoslovak government as well as international society. Many feared that Hungary would provoke a conflict over the territory of the former Hungarian crown at the slightest sign of disunity in the Czechoslovak Republic. This fear was further fuelled by some political fractions of Ruthenians themselves, who called for reunification with Hungary. Other political fractions like communists, were looked down at both domestically as well as internationally, fearing Russian/Ukrainian influence in this case. From the documents it is clear, that despite League of Nation's mission to protect minority rights, maintaining peace was the most important task in which nation states and their stability played the major role. Therefore, minority rights were granted only to support this stability and did not make sense by

themselves, despite the fact, that minorities perceived them so. However, the materials do not answer, which aspects were considered stabilizing, and which were considered dangerous.

1 Ruthenian migration and the national movement

1.1 Social and economic background of Ruthenian migrants

By the 1920s, overseas migration already became an important aspect of Ruthenian identity. Ruthenian emigrants started to appear in the Americas only around the 1860s when thousands of them started leaving their homeland. Significant number of Ruthenian migrants settled in Canada or Brazil, but most often in the United States where a relatively numerous diasporas emerged by the 1890s. Technical innovation dropped prices of overseas migration and rising literacy at the end of the 19th century facilitated spread of information on conditions in the destination countries with the help of travel agencies, labour recruiters, and growing social networks. Once peasants and agricultural households became included in the market economy and proletarianization of part of Central European rural citizens became inevitable, the new social context created new cultural values within rural communities.³⁷ Between 1890 to the 1930s, approximately 18 million Europeans left to the United States, majority of them from Eastern and Southern Europe. Records show that citizens of the Habsburg Empire formed the largest group of US-bound migrants between 1902-1911. Due to the new immigration regulations imposed by the US government, transatlantic movement slowed down after the WW1. However, some Europeans did migrate to the US even after 1914 and some scholars suggest, that the Great Depression in the 1930s played a more important role in the decline of the overseas migration to the US in the 20th century.³⁸ Overall, more than 23 million immigrants came to the United States between 1880- 1920. Not all of them settled permanently, many eventually returned to their countries of origin or engaged in a back-and-forth movement depending on the labour demand on both sides of the ocean. Ruthenian immigrants from Austria-Hungary were part of the later period of immigration to the United States, which began

³⁷ Keeling, Drew. *The Business of Transatlantic Migration Between Europe and the USA, 1900–1914*, *The Journal of Economic History* 66, no. 2 (2006): 476–80.

³⁸ Steidl, Annemarie. *On Many Routes : Internal, European, and Transatlantic Migration in the Late Habsburg Empire*, West, Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2021. P. 3-7

in the last decades of the 19th century and reached its peak before the First World War. Unlike the previous periods of immigration, which were dominated by residents of the British Isles, Germans, Scandinavians, Dutch, migrants consisted mainly of immigrants from Southern, Central and Eastern Europe (Italians, Greeks, representatives of various Slavic peoples, Eastern European Jews).³⁹

Within Austria-Hungary, participation in transatlantic migration was regionally and ethnically variegated. The first migrants were those from the eastern regions like Galicia or eastern Hungary.⁴⁰ The first immigrants from Transcarpathia and the Lemko region appeared in the United States in the 1860s. Since the mid-1870s, it began to acquire a mass character (up to half of the inhabitants left some Ruthenian villages of Galician and Subcarpathian Rus'). According to the official registers, the population of Galicia increased at an average annual rate of 0.89 percent between 1773 and 1869, and 0.95 percent from 1869 to the outbreak of the First World War. This made Galicia the most populous region of Cisleithania, the “Western” or “Austrian” half of the double Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, in the constitutional period (1867–1918). Slow socioeconomic changes in Galicia mostly attributed to rapid demographic growth, and lack of industrial job opportunities. Because the investment in the region did not match the liberalization of economy, employment opportunities did not grow accordingly. Galicia, even after relative economic development at the end of the 19th century, was closer to the semi-peripheral Hungarian territories in terms of economic development than to the rest of the Austrian part of the dual monarchy.⁴¹

In the last third of the 19th century, the Ruthenian lands were still an agrarian and raw material supplier of the Austro-Hungarian economic centre, and the Ruthenians themselves remained an agrarian society, practically unaffected by the industrial revolution. The absolute majority of Ruthenians lived in villages and engaged in agriculture. Rusyns from time to time had appeared in cities as seasonal workers, but the geography of their movements had been extremely limited. The growth of the population that arose in the second half of the 19th century, coupled with the permission of the authorities to divide land plots between any number of heirs, led to fragmentation and, as a result, to a noticeable decrease in the already low

³⁹ Portes, Alejandro, and Rumbaut, Rubén G.. *Immigrant America : a Portrait*, 4th ed. Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2014. p. 2-3

⁴⁰ Konečný, Stanislav, *Náčrt dejín karpatských Rusínov*, Prešov university, Ústav rusínskeho jazyka a kultúry, 2015

⁴¹ Komlosy, Andrea, and Musić, Goran, *Global Commodity Chains and Labor Relations*, Leiden; Boston: BRILL, 2021. p. 112-125

standard of living of the Rusyns. At that time, in terms of per capita income, as well as in terms of consumption, the Rusyn lands were several times inferior to other regions of Austria-Hungary. The farmers survived on cultivation of cereals, in the Carpathian Mountains the soil and weather conditions were sometimes too harsh, and peasants there engaged in other activities such as sheep herding, handcrafts, and seasonal work in downhill regions. The intensity of production varied - closer to large cities, cultivation was more intensive. In the southern part of the Carpathian Mountains and further south, grape growing, and wine production developed. In Poland-Lithuania, in most of the Habsburg Empire, and in the Romanian Principalities, peasants had been historically part of a “feudal” economy, land belonging to the crown, the nobility, and the Church. Most of them were tenants, not owners, and in return for the right to use the land they were expected either to pay money rent, or to pay in labour. Serfdom had strengthened all over the region since the sixteenth century; thus, not only did the peasants had to pay rents, but they were not free to travel, and in many places, they fell under the jurisdiction of the lord of the manor.⁴² In the first half of 1780s, Joseph II issued decrees limiting physical powers of nobility over the serfs working their land. It meant, that serfs would be able to marry, move freely or choose an occupation without permission from their lord. However, some economic elements of serfdom remained in force in many parts of the empire, for example the labour service, until the Revolutions of 1848.⁴³ Peasant reforms were often facilitated by revolutionary situations and the threat of uprising. In the Habsburg Empire, peasants were granted both personal freedom and rights to the land ownership after 1848-1849. Even though the paternalistic relations often prevailed, the peasantry gradually switched to wage labour and became legally free to move.⁴⁴

This social change facilitated movement of population after legal freedoms to the citizens were granted, even though financial or other dependencies remained. Peasants from Austria-Hungary became a significant group in transatlantic migration by the second half of the 19th century. Overseas migration was mostly financially motivated and most workers from regions left their families hoping to rejoin them after several months of hard work in America. Because migrating peasant workers usually didn't know the foreign language, often could not read, and

⁴² Kochanowicz, Jacek, and Murgescu, Bogdan. *Rural and Urban Worlds*, In *The Routledge History Of East Central Europe Since 1700*, 1st ed., 81–125, p.87-89

⁴³ Pieter M. Judson. *The Habsburg Empire : A New History*. Belknap Press, 2016. p. 60-74

⁴⁴ Kochanowicz, Jacek, and Murgescu, Bogdan. *Rural and Urban Worlds*, In *The Routledge History Of East Central Europe Since 1700*, 1st ed., 81–125, p.87-89

lacked information or financial resources, the great transatlantic migration became, among, other things, a complex travel business, the costs of travel being probably the most important barrier for many. The transport companies often competed for passengers on price, or, on the contrary, overcharged them if possible. Analysis of travel documents shows that migrant travellers were charged a higher margin than tourists and only after 1900 the cost of migration to the US had significantly dropped.⁴⁵ Information about overseas migration opportunities spread through various channels, shipping companies and emigration agents playing an important role in propagation of job opportunities. Their letters aimed at uneducated people by articulating loud promises and offering advantageous travel conditions within the cheapest offer possible. In Hungary, the emigration agents were often accused of exploitation of human capital. By the end of the 19th century, in some parts of the country, including the Ruthenian inhabited territories, the migration took mass character and the government increased efforts to control emigration rates as reaction to concerns of landowners in certain regions caused by the loss of population. Apparently, mostly Hungarian speaking citizens were discouraged from migration by nationalist narrative in the press. As a possible result, two thirds of emigrants from Hungary were not ethnically Hungarian.⁴⁶ Also, regions like Subcarpathian Rus' or Galicia had wider information networks thanks to multiculturalism and movement of people in the area and therefore their citizens were more likely to migrate overseas. This was thanks to the location of the region on the borders of different states. Ruthenians, were specifically likely to travel for economic benefits to the US, creating wide communication webs and chains. A communication network developed not only within one ethnic community, but rather between them - among Poles, Slovaks, Jews, Hungarians, Ukrainians, and German speakers.⁴⁷ By the end of the 19th century, most western countries developed administrative procedures to collect personal data of their population and migrants. Nationality of the migrants appeared in the official records only since 1899, before this year only country of provenance was asked of the migrants. According to American statistics, the first migrants from Hungary were the ones from eastern part of the country, including Ruthenians. Between 1880-1914 almost 225 000 Ruthenians migrated to the United States, which meant circa half of the Rusyn population in

⁴⁵ Keeling, Drew, *The Business of Transatlantic Migration Between Europe and the USA, 1900–1914*, *The Journal of Economic History* 66, no. 2 (2006): 476–80.

⁴⁶ Stráner, Katalin, *Emigration Agents and the Agency of the Urban Press: Approaches to Transatlantic Migration in Hungary, 1880s-1914*, *Journal of Migration History* 2, no. 2 (2016): 352–74.

⁴⁷ Steidl, Annemarie, *On Many Routes : Internal, European, and Transatlantic Migration in the Late Habsburg Empire*, West Lafayette, Indiana :: Purdue University Press, 2021. P. 165-178

Hungary. This emigration trend mostly concerned men in productive age, more than half of them illiterate when they first came. This suggests that information about working and living conditions spread primarily through oral communication channels within the community. This mass mobility patterns had enormous impact on the relatively small ethnic group – in southern Galicia and north-eastern Hungary, some villages remained almost depopulated because of emigration. Despite their peasant background, Ruthenians settled mostly in industrial areas in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York where they worked in coal mines, gold, silver, lead, and copper mines and in steel mills.⁴⁸ In Figure 1 main concentration of Carpatho-Ruthenian communities is indicated on the map with full dots.

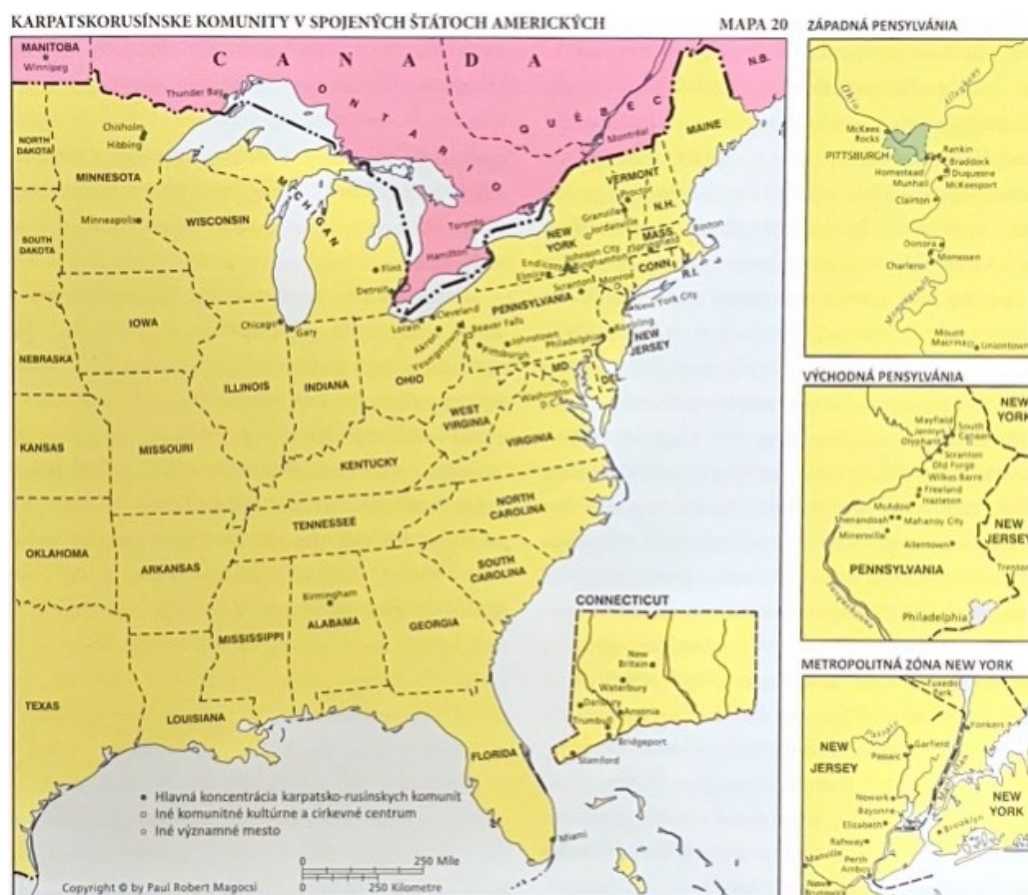


Figure 1: Carpatho-Rusyn communities in the United States of America⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Magocsi, Paul Robert. *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, NED - New edition, 1. Hungary: Central European University Press, 2015, p. 115

⁴⁹ Magocsi, Paul Robert. *Carpathian Rus': A Historical Atlas*. Map 20: Carpatho-Rusyn communities in the United States of America, University of Toronto Press, 2017, p. 42

The main American agricultural areas did not experience an acute need for an influx of labour, only farmhands and seasonal workers were needed in some places. Accordingly, Ruthenians, the vast majority of whom were engaged in rural labour at home, had to change their occupation and look for work in the rapidly developing industrial and mining centres of the Mid-Atlantic states and the states of the Great Lakes region. In the USA of the last third of the 19th century, the coal regions of Pennsylvania (the so-called Anthracite region) became the main centre of attraction of Ruthenians and, more broadly, Slavic immigration from Austria–Hungary and Pennsylvania gradually became known as the "Slavic state"⁵⁰.

In 1800 83% of the American labour force was still engaged in household consumption agriculture, with any surplus of most crops directed towards local markets and density of population was low with few urban areas. Over the nineteenth century, the American economy grew dramatically and as a coincidence labour shifted out of agriculture to manufacture and later industrial production.⁵¹ The main motivation behind the US migration politics at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century was thus the growing demand for low-skilled labour in mines, factories, or construction. These jobs typically depended on temporary employment and short-term jobs soon attracted Europeans, especially those from Eastern or Southern Europe to the American labour-intensive economy.⁵² The Rusyns for the most part came from agrarian regions where many remnants of feudalism were preserved, were poor, often could not read and write in their native language and most of them did not speak English. The values of American society often appeared alien to them - individualism, republicanism, democratic institutions, and Protestant values. Accordingly, they experienced considerable difficulties adapting to new conditions for themselves. Massive arrival of unskilled workers instead of independent and quasi-independent craftsmen from earlier periods of 19th century US-bound migration caused some dissatisfaction between representatives of the *old immigration*, who had already integrated into American society and did not welcome the newcomers enthusiastically. The Ruthenians were often regarded as representatives of not just a certain ethnic group, but also a special “race”, inferior to the Anglo-Saxon, Teutonic, and Celtic “races”. In the late 19th and early 20th century supporters of racial purity in the United

⁵⁰ Matrosov, Leliva E.N. (1897) *Zaokeanskaya Rus' [The Overseas Rus']*, Istoricheskii vestnik. LXVII., p. 478.

⁵¹ Atack, Jeremy, Margo, Robert A., and Rhode, Paul W.. *Industrialization and Urbanization in Nineteenth Century America*, Regional Science and Urban Economics 94, 2022

⁵² Keeling, Drew, *The Business of Transatlantic Migration Between Europe and the USA, 1900–1914*, The Journal of Economic History 66, no. 2 (2006): 476–80.

States argued that the Slavic migrants cannot be equated with "coloured", but still are not "real white".⁵³ The Ruthenians were given an intermediate position of "conditionally white", "not quite white", "dirty white", etc.⁵⁴ According to American nativists, one of the proofs of this was the "immunity to certain types of dirt" allegedly possessed by the Slavs, who "can withstand what will kill a white man".⁵⁵ Emphasizing the backwardness and uncivilization of the Slavic people, they were disparagingly called "Huns" or slang terms "Hunky" and "Bohunk".⁵⁶ The latter came from the names of the countries of origin of immigrants – Hungary and Bohemia and were used in a pejorative sense; later they began to denote a rude, uneducated, and foolish person engaged in physical labour.⁵⁷ However, not all Americans perceived this in a positive way. The Ruthenian immigrants themselves regularly noted a biased and negative attitude towards themselves on the part of a certain part of American society. In the second half of the 1890s, the newspaper *Svoboda* (Freedom), published by the Ruthenian People's Union, repeatedly wrote that the Slavs were "the main victims of American intolerance".⁵⁸ One of the numerous articles on this topic stated: "For a long time we have noted here the hatred of the Anglos (Anglo-Saxons) against Slavic workers – and mainly against those workers who in past years came to America in search of a better life".⁵⁹

Rusyns, like many other new immigrants, had no idea about the situation on the American labour market when they first decided on migration. Therefore, they were often used as strike-breakers, they were underpaid, offered dirty and low-prestige work that was traditionally performed by African Americans. For their part, the trade unions did not seek to accept them into their ranks. On the contrary, since the 1880s The American Federation of Labour (AFL) and other major trade unions have become quite tough in favour of restricting access to the country for the "dirty Huns" from Eastern Europe and the "scum" of the "Old World".⁶⁰ The

⁵³ Brady, Joel. *Transnational Conversions: Greek Catholic Migrants and Russky Orthodox Conversion Movements in Austria-Hungary, Russia, and the Americas (1890–1914)*, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2012, p.60

⁵⁴ Brady, *Transnational Conversions: Greek Catholic Migrants and Russky Orthodox Conversion Movements in Austria-Hungary, Russia, and the Americas (1890–1914)*, p.60

⁵⁵ Brady, p.60

⁵⁶ Brady, p.60

⁵⁷ Brady, p.60

⁵⁸ *Svoboda*. № 38. 1897. 16 sep. p. 4

⁵⁹ *Svoboda*. p. 4

⁶⁰ Keeling, Drew, *The Business of Transatlantic Migration Between Europe and the USA, 1900–1914*, *The Journal of Economic History* 66, no. 2 (2006): 476–80.

latter were accused of taking jobs and at the same time "do not want to become Americans" themselves but come only "for a few years to earn money".⁶¹ In 1897, the AFL supported the Campbell Law, which had an anti-immigrant orientation, according to which any worker who worked in the coal mines of Pennsylvania and did not have American citizenship had to pay an additional tax of a "3-cent-a-day state tax on coal operators for each non-U.S. citizen working in their collieries"⁶². The working conditions at the mines were extremely difficult; elementary safety precautions were not always observed, which often led to accidents. In addition, unlike Native American workers and "old" immigrants, representatives of the third wave could not count on the support and protection of trade unions, which by that time had become a very influential force in the United States. In the mines, Rusyn immigrants, as a rule, began their working life as auxiliary workers. After some time (usually two or three years), they could pass a special exam and get a certificate giving them the right to work as a miner - as they themselves said, "get miner papers"⁶³. The situation began to change only in the early 1900s, when workers of Slavic origin began to be conditionally accepted into trade unions⁶⁴. However, even then, prejudice against Slavic migrants persisted in many unions for a long time, and it was considered normal that they earned less than migrants from other ethnic groups⁶⁵.

However, despite all the negative aspects, the Ruthenians still sought to get a job in the mines of Pennsylvania or in the factories of Chicago, Cleveland, Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, etc., because it still brought earnings which significantly exceeded what they could count on in the Old Region. On average, in terms of Austro-Hungarian money, Ruthenians employed in mines and other heavy industries received approximately 5-6 Austrian Kronen a day and those

⁶⁰ Brady, Joel. *Transnational Conversions: Greek Catholic Migrants and Russky Orthodox Conversion Movements in Austria-Hungary, Russia, and the Americas (1890–1914)*, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2012, p.89

⁶¹ Keeling, Drew, *The Business of Transatlantic Migration Between Europe and the USA, 1900–1914*, *The Journal of Economic History* 66, no. 2 (2006): 476–80.

⁶¹ Brady, Joel. *Transnational Conversions: Greek Catholic Migrants and Russky Orthodox Conversion Movements in Austria-Hungary, Russia, and the Americas (1890–1914)*, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2012, p.89

⁶² Shackel, Paul A., *Remembering Lattimer: Labor, Migration, and Race in Pennsylvania Anthracite Country*, Urbana. University of Illinois Press, 2018., p. 25-28

⁶³ Svistun F.I.. *Carpathian Rus' under the ownership of Austria*, Part 2, Lviv: Printing house of the Stavropol Institute, 2015, p. 732

⁶⁴ Roediger D.R.. *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White: The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs*, New York: Basic Books, 2006, p. 80.

⁶⁵ Morawska E.. *Immigrants, Transnationalism, and Ethnicization: A Comparison of This Great Wave and the Last In E Pluribus Unum? Contemporary and Historical Perspectives on Immigrant Political Incorporation*, Ed. by G. Gerstle, J. Mollenkopf. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2001, p. 181.

employed in agriculture 4-5 guildens. From one third to half of this money they were able to save and send to their families in Europe. For comparison: in Austria-Hungary, Ruthenian farmers at that time earned an average of 0.5 guildens per day⁶⁶. Economic considerations forced Ruthenian immigrants to take on any job, including the hardest one, "selected" for African Americans and therefore considered humiliating, put up with a hostile environment and persevere through difficulties. At the same time, they sometimes openly admitted that they "would never have stayed on the other side of the ocean if there had not been such good jobs".⁶⁷

The interwar years were specifically favourable for Ruthenian identity building and the Carpatho-Rusyn diaspora or immigrant communities in North America developed into a culturally and politically active group and a distinct community during this time. During the wartime immigration to the US dropped to non-existent but after the end of the World War I immigration slowly resumed and continued undisturbed at least until the US restrictions in 1922 and 1924. Majority of the Ruthenian migrants in the initial post-war years were families joining their men who stayed in America during the war years and who decided to not return to Europe.⁶⁸ Some return immigration did take place and was specifically directed towards Czechoslovakia, but most of the pre-war immigrants decided to settle in the US permanently. The migration pattern remained almost unchanged during interwar years, 80 percent of Carpatho-Rusyn migrants settled in the north-east in Pennsylvania (54 percent), New York (13 percent) and New Jersey (12 percent), the rest in Connecticut, Ohio, and Illinois. Coal mines and the steel industry remained the primary sources of employment, however, the American-born second generation, including increasing number of women, worked in light industries, for example soap, shoe, and cigar factories or as shop assistants in stores and waitresses and cooks in restaurants. Because of their strong concentration in specific urban areas, Carpatho-Rusyns were able to maintain a wide range of vibrantly active secular organisations, churches and even schools. The schools were typically attached to either Greek Catholic or Orthodox parishes and

⁶⁶ Kryuchkov, I.V.. *Amerikano-vengerskie otnosheniya vo vtoroy polovine XIX – nachale XX veka i problemy emigratsii Slovakov i Ukrantsev (Rusin) [US–Hungary relations in the second half of the 19th – early 20th century and the problems of Slovak and Ukrainian (Ruthenian) immigration]*, *Amerikanskiy ezhegodnik – American Yearbook* 2003, p. 55.

⁶⁷ Svoboda. (1900) 8th August. p. 1.

⁶⁸ Šprocha, Branislav, and Tišliar, Pavol. *Populačný vývoj Podkarpatskej Rusi*, Vol. I (Bratislava, 2009), p. 196

were known as ruski shkoly, where children also learned their mother tongue, which was usually a form of Russian mixed with Carpatho-Rusyn vernacular.⁶⁹

1.2 Ruthenian diaspora and the emergence of a minority rights discourse in the interwar period

The national movement of the Rusyns at this time was mostly formed outside of their homeland in Austria-Hungary and in the context of socio-political changes both in Europe and outside of it. Both the democratic environment of the United States and internationalism promoted by Woodrow Wilson and the revolutionary Russia and Bolshevik call to the national self-determination formed further development of Ruthenian identity. Magyarization policies and persecution of those accused of Pan-Slavism prevented open discussion about national questions in the Ruthenian homeland. It only makes sense that numerous Ruthenian diaspora in the United States used the opportunity for political development there.⁷⁰

Working together and living together, the absence of family, an unusual new life, and often hostile external environment – all this contributed to the consolidation of immigrants. By the end of the 19th century, Ruthenians of the USA possessed important characteristics of a diaspora: group identity, social homogeneity, confessional organization. Specifically, in the Ruthenian community, the church and religious organizations occupied a significant place in identity-building which distinguished it from the Italian and Polish immigrant groups.⁷¹ As for the Ruthenians themselves, they were also characterized by maintaining close and regular contacts with the country of origin. These contacts were not limited to letters and money transfers; some Ruthenians travelled from America to the home village several times, and such visits became an event. It is no coincidence that Ruthenian immigration is often referred to as "chain immigration", relying on networks of relatives, friends, neighbours on both sides of the Atlantic. All the factors listed above contributed to the fact that already in the first years of their stay in America, Ruthenian immigrants began to create their own organizations there. In a short

⁶⁹ Magocsi, Paul Robert, *Our People: Carpatho-Rusyns and Their Descendants in North America*, 4th rev. ed. (Wauconda, Ill., 2005), p. 15

⁷⁰ Kokaisl, Petr. *Subcarpathian Rusyns in the Debates of the Chamber of Deputies of the Inter-War Czechoslovak Republic*, *Kulturní Studia* 2023, no. 1 (2023): 93–114.

⁷¹ Halina, Natalia, and Pivkina, Nadezda. *American Rusyns: The Slavic motive in the American cultural landscape. The experience of discursive description*, *Limbaj Si Context* 14, no. 1 (2022): 15–24.

time, representatives of the emerging Ruthenian diaspora in the USA and Canada were able not only to significantly improve their financial situation, but also to create several organizations that began to influence their compatriots who remained in Europe. These clubs and organizations later became strongly political in the context of the interwar reorganization of former Habsburg territories.⁷²

Church was not important only from the religious perspective, but also for Ruthenian identity-building and national questions. Because until mid-1880s there wasn't any Greek Catholic priest or church in the United States, some active immigrants wrote to their Greek Catholic bishops in Europe and requested priests to be sent overseas for their communities. By 1894 there were almost twenty Greek Catholic priests in the United States, almost all of them Carpatho-Rusyns from Hungary. The immigrant faithful themselves took the initiative and created committees or councils of lay persons who managed property and built churches legally owning them afterwards instead of the bishop like it was customary in the Catholic tradition. While most Ruthenians remained committed to their Eastern-rite Christianity, in the United States Catholic Church was dominated by Roman-rite and members of the church had little appreciation for any changes in traditions. In 1929 Vatican issued a degree requiring all men eligible to ordination to priesthood to be celibate and all church property turned to the bishop. The situation provoked major dissatisfaction of many priests backed by the Greek Catholic Union forming a special Committee for the Defence of the Eastern Rite (Komitet Oborony Vostochnoho Obrjada). This committee lead the campaign against the Vatican degree, however some priests not only refused to submit to the celibacy requirement, but they even followed Father Chornock of Bridgeport in breaking with the Catholic Church entirely. In 1936, the group around Father Chornock formed called the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Diocese of Eastern Rite Church. This group refused both Catholic Rome and Orthodox Moscow, consecrating the first bishop, Orestes Chornock in 1938 by the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople.⁷³

However, even earlier created were the organizations by the early Carpatho-Rusyn immigrants - the mutual-benefit societies or fraternal brotherhoods. These were originally secular, but

⁷² Brady, J.. *Transnational Conversions: GreekCatholicmigrants and Russky Orthodox Conversion Movements in Austria-Hungary, Russia,and Americas (1890–1914)*, 2012, Ph.D. Thesis. Pittsburg: University of Pittsburg. p. 60.

⁷³ Magocsi, Paul Robert. *Carpatho-Rusyn Diasporas During the Interwar Years, 1919–1938*, In *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, 241–52. Budapest, Hungary: Central European University Press, 2022, p. 161

among the members or officers of the brotherhoods were many priests and therefore these were closely linked to the church. Because in the United States worker social services were practically non-existent, the immigrant workers were left without income in case of illness or if they died in a work-related accident, the surviving family would receive no compensation. Therefore, the immigrant workers grouped into self-help and mutual-benefit societies, the fraternal brotherhoods, to which they contributed a small amount of money weekly or monthly. From this contribution a certain amount of money could be granted to those members who fell ill or to their families in case they died for compensation. One of the oldest influential organisations was the Greek Catholic Union of Rusyn Brotherhoods (Sojedenenje greko-katoličeskich russkich bratstv) established in 1892 by joining 14 local brotherhoods in eastern Pennsylvania. By 1915 it had almost 54 000 members.⁷⁴ Another large organization was the United Societies of Greek Catholic Religion (Sobranije greko-katoličeskich cerkovnych bratstv). The brotherhoods did not only provide social services, but also participated in cultural life of Ruthenian-Americans by publishing in Ruthenian newspapers and annual almanacs. The most significant was probably the *Amerikanskii russkii viestnik* (1892–1952), the official newspaper of the Greek Catholic Union.⁷⁵

Ruthenian Americans took active interest in the national question as well. Those from the Hungarian Kingdom had rejected what they called Ukrainian separatism before World War I, distinguishing themselves from the pro-Ukrainian Ruthenians from Galicia. More specific and unified national identity was still to be defined though. Some Ruthenians considered themselves to be part of a Russian nation, others defended the idea of a distinct Uhro-Rusyn or Subcarpathian Rusyn nationality. The various publications of Rusyn-American fraternal societies played an important role as space for expression of both Russophile and Rusynophile ideas in the 1920s and 1930s.⁷⁶ Ruthenians articulated several diverse state-building ideas. Because Ruthenians were historically part of Austria-Hungary, an autonomous region within Hungary seemed the easiest possibility. However, experience with severe Magyarization of minorities in the second half of the 19th century made Ruthenians question the possibility of

⁷⁴ Magocsi, Paul Robert. *Our People: Carpatho-Rusyns and Their Descendants in North America*, 4th rev. ed. (Wauconda, Ill., 2005), p. 15.

⁷⁵ Magocsi, Paul Robert. *Carpatho-Rusyn Diasporas before World War I.*, In *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, Budapest, Hungary: Central European University Press, 2022. P. 157

⁷⁶ Magocsi, Paul Robert. *Carpatho-Rusyn Diasporas During the Interwar Years, 1919–1938.* In *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, 241–52. Budapest, Hungary: Central European University Press, 2022, p.165

national development under Hungarian government. The only plausible option would be autonomy guaranteed by external allies. Some were hoping for independent Ruthenian state of various sizes and on various territory areas. This idea was very ambitious, but quite vague in details and potentially dangerous to the stability of the region in the eyes of potential allies. Those who based their political opinions on cultural ties with Russia even proposed condominium under Russian empire, however, real political ties between Russia and Ruthenian representatives was practically non-existent and after the Russian revolution in 1917, most Ruthenians opposed Bolshevism as a political direction. Ruthenians from Galicia enforced unification with Ukrainian People's Republic or West Ukrainian People's republic identifying themselves with Ukrainian nationality.⁷⁷ In 1916 two separate Greek Catholic jurisdictions were created: the Ruthenian Greek Catholic exarchate with a seat in Pittsburgh and Ukrainian Greek Catholic exarchate with a seat in Philadelphia. As a result, the Greek Catholic immigrants from Habsburg monarchy formed two separate communities before the end of the First World War, one Ukrainian and one Ruthenian. Their activities, both religious and non-religious were organised mostly independently from each other and both communities participated in political activities in their homelands separately.⁷⁸

It was clear that Ruthenian leaders had minimal political experience and the idea of joining Czechoslovakia emerged only as the last resort when all other ideas proved impossible. Nikolaj Pačuta, journalist from *Russky vystnik* and the chairman of *Greko-katoličesky objedinenij* turned to T. G. Masaryk on 30th May 1918 during his stay in Pittsburgh and asked him to incorporate Ruthenians into the political plans for Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovak concept was initially refused by the most prominent Ruthenian Greek Catholic priests who were pro-Hungarian and who even dismissed Nikolaj Pačuta from the post of chairman on the congress of *Greko-katoličesky objedinenij* in June 1918 in Cleveland (Ohio) and Breddock (Pennsylvania).⁷⁹ Solution to the basic state-building questions depended on the Ruthenian ability to unify significant number of migrants in a common platform and with this aim 23rd June 1918 National Council of Ugro-Rusyns was established in Homestead. This council entrusted G.I. Zhatkovych to conceptualize a memorandum which could be later shown to the

⁷⁷ Magocsi, Paul Robert, *With Their Backs to the Mountains: A History of Carpathian Rus' and Carpatho-Rusyns*, Taschenbuch, 2015, p. 177-181

⁷⁸ Magocsi, Paul Robert, *Carpathian Rus': A Historical Atlas*, University of Toronto Press, 2017

⁷⁹ Švorc, Peter. *Prvá svetová vojna, Rusíni a vznik Československa*, In *Studium Carpato-rutenorum* 2015, Študii z karpatorussnistiky 7, Prešov: Prešovská univerzita – Ústav rusínskeho jazyka a literatúry, 2015, p. 54-55.

President Wilson when asking for political assistance. Zhatkovych was a lawyer of Ruthenian descent who studied at prestigious university in Pennsylvania. The valuable acquaintances from university enabled him to present ideas in the name of Ruthenian people where it mattered the most. American National Council of Uhro-Rusyns asked him to represent Ruthenian people in the summer 1918 even though he had no previous experience in participation in the national movement.⁸⁰ The American National Council of Uhro-Rusyns (Amerikanskaja narodnaja rada Uhro-Rusynyv) in the so-called Homestead Resolution expressed preference for the autonomy of Hungarian Rus within Hungary. The organisation was on one hand predominantly politically pro-Hungarian and, concerned, on the other hand, about conflicts with the Slovaks for Zemplín, Šariš, Abovská, Spiš and Užská counties, which the Ruthenians claimed as well.⁸¹ The organisation representing Ruthenians from Hungary demanded autonomy within the kingdom, or, in case of the alteration of borders, unification with Ruthenians in Galicia and Bukovina. In this first resolution there wasn't any mention of cooperation with Czechs and Slovaks even though their national leaders were politically very active in the United States.⁸² Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, the future president of Czechoslovakia, arrived in the United States in May 1918. At this time, he showed little or no interest in the region of Subcarpathian Rus 'assuming that it would be ceded to Russia. President Wilson and Masaryk shared many opinions, but Masaryk insisted on the succession of the Czech and Slovak lands from the Austria Hungary instead of reforming the monarchy like Wilson initially planned.⁸³ Ruthenians leaders were outraged at the terms of the Pittsburgh Agreement signed in May 1918 which claimed the whole eastern Slovakia including Ruthenian inhabited areas in the north-east and the city of Uzhorod as part of autonomous Slovakia within the new Czechoslovak republic. It became clear, that if they wanted their demands fulfilled, organised and representative communication with the American government was necessary. It was Zhatkovych who met with Masaryk in a couple of days and discussed with him the possibility to include Ruthenians in the new state under the condition of full autonomy.⁸⁴ On the one hand, for Czechoslovakia this would be an

⁸⁰ Magocsi, Paul Robert, *With Their Backs to the Mountains: A History of Carpathian Rus' and Carpatho-Rusyns*, Taschenbuch, 2015, p. 221

⁸¹ Pop, Ivan. *Dějiny Podkarpatské Rusi v datech*. Praha: Libri, 2005, p. 273-275.

⁸² Magocsi, Paul Robert, *With Their Backs to the Mountains: A History of Carpathian Rus' and Carpatho-Rusyns*, Taschenbuch, 2015, p. 221-223

⁸³ Kokaisl, Petr. *Subcarpathian Rusyns in the Debates of the Chamber of Deputies of the Inter-War Czechoslovak Republic*, Kulturní Studia 2023, no. 1 (2023): 93–114.

⁸⁴ Magocsi, Paul Robert, *With Their Backs to the Mountains: A History of Carpathian Rus' and Carpatho-Rusyns*, Taschenbuch, 2015, p. 221-223

opportunity to gain territory of some strategic significance since it bordered with Romania. On the other hand, it was rather economically underdeveloped region which would need a lot of investment.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, Masaryk decided to accept the Ruthenian offer and negotiations about details of cooperation followed quickly. In November, American National Council of Uhro-Rusyns met in Scranton, Pennsylvania, and agreed to strive for unification with Czechoslovakia. Decisive was the promise of Masaryk, that Ruthenians would be granted autonomous territory.⁸⁶ On 1st October 1918 Zhatkovych presented the memorandum proposal to the American National Council of Uhro-Rusyns in Scranton. It also included a map of the state which would be established as the national state of Ruthenians named Uhro-Ruthenia. In the territory regions of Zemplín, Šariš, Abov, Spiš and the whole former Marmarosh county, currently Maramureș in Romania, were included, but not Galicia.⁸⁷ The claimed Ruthenian territory as presented by the delegation at the Paris Conference is marked in green in the Figure 2. An interesting comparison provides another map depicting Ruthenian settlement in the years between 1919 and 1938 as seen in Figure 3.

⁸⁵ Kokaisl, Petr. *Subcarpathian Rusyns in the Debates of the Chamber of Deputies of the Inter-War Czechoslovak Republic*, *Kulturní Studia* 2023, no. 1 (2023): 93–114.

⁸⁶ Švorc, Peter. *Dve periférie v dvoch krajinách október 1918 – január 1919. Východné Slovensko a Uhorská Rus na ceste do Československej republiky*, *Historický časopis* 68, no. 3 (2020): 463–89.

⁸⁷ Onderková, Radka, *Podkarpatská Rus v medzivojnovom období*, *Studium Carpatho-Ruthenorum* 2022, Prešovská univerzita v Prešove, p. 74–84

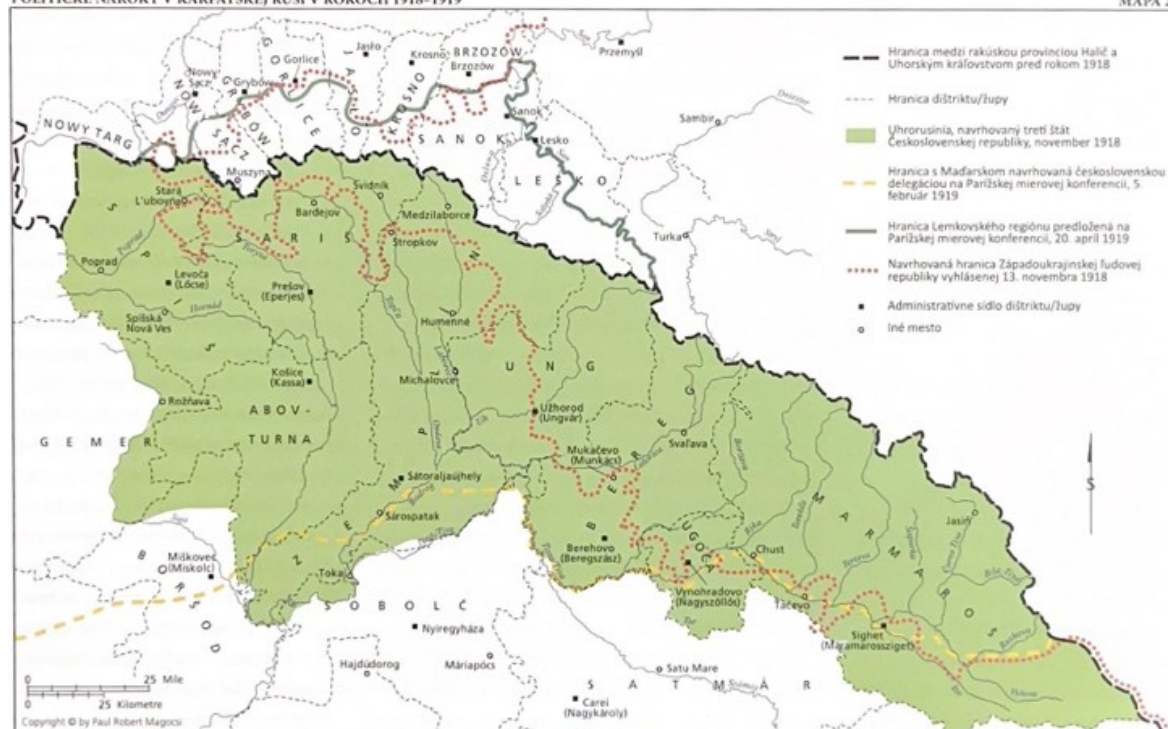


Figure 2: Political claims in Carpathian Rus' in 1918-1919⁸⁸

⁸⁸ Magocsi, Paul Robert. *Carpathian Rus': A Historical Atlas*. Map 23: Political Claims in Carpathian Rus' in 1918-1919, University of Toronto Press, 2017, p. 51

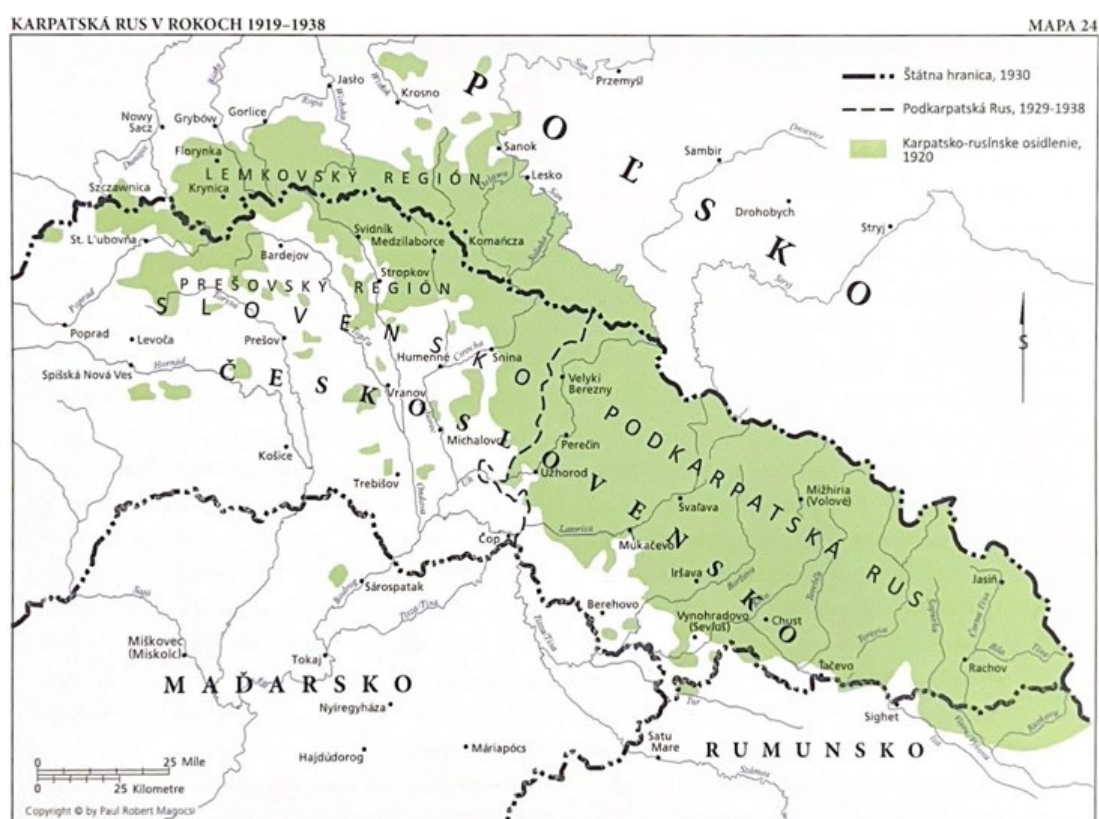


Figure 3: Carpathian Rus' in 1918-1919⁸⁹

Results of the memorandum were presented to the US President Woodrow Wilson in October 1918. The memorandum itself helped Ruthenians to gain seriousness in the eyes of regional and overseas political partners. The results showed that the unification with Czechoslovakia gained major support of 68 percent. Only 2 percent of asked Ruthenians voted for independence and for unification with the then independent Ukraine voted 28 percent. After negotiations with the Czechoslovak leader T.G. Masaryk, on 12th November 1918 the Rusyn Council approved union with Czechoslovakia under condition that the Prešov region would be a subject to future autonomy. This solution, formally presented in Scranton resolution, was approved by both Woodrow Wilson and T.G. Masaryk.⁹⁰ However, it was still necessary to include the local Ruthenian councils in Europe into the negotiations to avoid any doubts about legitimacy of this

⁸⁹ Magocsi, Paul Robert. *Carpathian Rus': A Historical Atlas*. Map 24: Carpathian Rus' in 1918-1919, University of Toronto Press, 2017, p. 53

⁹⁰ Paul Robert Magocsi, *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, Central European University Press, NED - New edition 2015-12-15, p. 177-179

decision. It was clear, that immigrant Ruthenian communities in the United States insisted not only on democratic political direction but also on a certain extent of self-rule in their homeland.

The Czechoslovak delegation at the Peace Conference in Paris included both representatives of the Rusyn-American diaspora and Rusyns from Hungary. Zhatkovych arrived in Paris prepared with the Scranton Resolution and results of the plebiscite meeting with Anton Beskid, head of the council of Prešov. They decided to present also the memorandums issued by those Ruthenian councils in Hungary, which were inclined on joining Czechoslovakia. All these documents were delivered to the conference in March 1919. The memoire explaining the Rusyn question stated that Rusyns of Hungary were a nation very close to the Slovaks living together in a tight bond and among similar circumstances. It further emphasized the logical solution of the union with Czechoslovakia and Ruthenian willingness to follow this choice. Once the conference agreed with the proposal, the delegation travelled to Subcarpathian Rus' to negotiate with the councils in order to come up with a united conception. In May 1919 Central National Council of Rusyns was established in Uzhorod and officially expressed willingness to join Czechoslovakia.⁹¹

1.3 Political diversity within the Ruthenian minority

Despite the common interest in religious and national questions, Ruthenians were far from a politically homogeneous group. In the late 19th century, the small Ruthenian intelligentsia still consisted mostly of Greek Catholic priests, who could not agree upon national orientation. After the 1848 revolution, Ruthenian influential circles supported the idea of political cooperation with both Slovaks and Galician Rusyns. Ruthenian intellectuals were seeking partners sympathetic to their national ambitions. Slovaks were in a similar situation of struggling national development under Hungarian rule. In case of Galician Rusyns, Hungarian Subcarpathians considered them part of Ruthenian community and counted on them in discussions about their common future even though their predominantly Ukrainian orientation. For local intellectual needs Russian language was often adopted. The intelligentsia had rejected Ukrainian national orientation though and in Galicia cooperation with Russophile individuals and organisations was preferred. Furthermore, Subcarpathian Rus' was part of Hungary and faced, like many other regions, the assimilationist policy of Magyarization. As a result, many

⁹¹ Kokaisl, Petr. *Subcarpathian Rusyns in the Debates of the Chamber of Deputies of the Inter-War Czechoslovak Republic*, Kulturní Studia 2023, no. 1 (2023): 93–114.

Rusyn leaders, who succumbed to the pressures of the Hungarian government, ended up favouring Hungarian culture and considered themselves to be either Uhro-Rusyns or simply Hungarians of the Greek Catholic faith. Thus, a pro-Russian or pro-Hungarian cultural and political orientation as well as a potential pro-Slovak trend were the most important national ideas which influenced also Rusyn immigrants in the United States in the later decades.⁹²

The role of religion in Ruthenian national movements was undeniable. With the majority being illiterate, priests represented the intellectual elite. When Ruthenian immigrants arrived in the US, almost all of them were Greek Catholics. However, this fact did not guarantee homogeneity and often did not even contribute to a common identity.⁹³ Initially, Greek Catholics functioned together as a community creating a platform for further evolution, but very soon diverse identities crystalized among them and divided them.⁹⁴ The sense of unity among Greek Catholics from Austrian Galicia and the Hungarian Kingdom in the US quickly disappeared. The first controversies emerged around religious questions. The first problem was acceptance of Eastern-rite Christianity as such. In this respect, a controversy of so-called Americanism played an important role in refusal of any foreign influences in the Roman Catholic Church. The Americanizers favoured quick assimilation of immigrants who were expected to support American ideals reflecting White Anglo-Saxon Protestant values. Furthermore, many Roman Catholic bishops in the United States had been unaware of existence of Eastern-rite Christianity and when confronted with the Greek Catholic immigrants, they were shocked by some of the practices, like for example married priests. This refusal of a vital part of Ruthenian culture resulted in further fragmentation of the community. In 1889, a Greek Catholic priest Alexis Toth began serving in Minneapolis, Minnesota, experiencing discriminative treatment from the Roman Catholic archbishop. When all attempts at compromising failed, Toth decided to break with the Catholic Church and enter the Russian Orthodox Church in 1891. Toth explained his decision by argument that he and his parishioners were just “returning to the faith of their fathers” meaning to the Eastern-rite Orthodox Church to which all Carpatho-Rusyns had belonged before the Union of Brest (1596) and Union of Uzhorod (1646). Toth campaigned to

⁹² Magocsi, Paul Robert. *The Political Activity of Rusyn-American Immigrants in 1918*, East European Quarterly 10, no. 3 (1976): 347–347.

⁹³ Halina, Natalia, and Pivkina, Nadezda, *American Rusyns: The Slavic motive of the American cultural landscape. The experience of discursive description*, Limbaj Si Context 14, no. 1 (2022): 15–24.

⁹⁴ Magocsi, Paul Robert. *Carpatho-Rusyn Diasporas before World War I.*, In *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, 151–66. Budapest, Hungary: Central European University Press, 2022. P. 157

bring other Greek Catholic parishes into Russian Orthodox Church as well. By 1909 over 25 000 Greek Catholics turned Orthodox. As a result, Ruthenians were divided to Greek Catholics and the Orthodox and the movement influenced homeland in Europe as well.⁹⁵

The national question and political preferences were not unrelated to this religious controversy. A good example is the development of common Ruthenian language. While other Slavic groups had already had first versions of codified national languages in the 19th century, among Ruthenians the Church Slavonic was considered the most prominent literary language until the 20th century. Building identity around religion proved later rather disadvantageous and it prevented Ruthenians from effective development of a distinct national identity.⁹⁶ While Ruthenian immigrants initially joined the same churches and organisations, a serious split between those from Austrian Galicia and the Hungarian Kingdom arose. Greek Catholic Union was led almost exclusively by Ruthenians from Hungary and many immigrants from Galicia soon left the organisation and established new brotherhood societies. Because the Ruthenians from Galicia were themselves divided by national preferences, the new organisations they founded in 1890s represented both Russian and Ukrainian political identities. The Russian Orthodox Mutual Aid Society (Russkoe pravoslavnoe vzaimopomoshchi) and the Russian Brotherhood Organization (Obshchestvo russkikh bratstv) was composed mostly of Greek Catholics who “returned” to Orthodoxy; and the Rusyn National Union (Russkii narodnyi soiuz) became the Ukrainian National Association (Ukraïns’kyi narodnyi soiuz) by 1914. The Ruthenians from Lemko region often not only joined but also took leadership in these organisations. The identity conflict reflected refusal of Galician Greek Catholic bishop Soter Ortynsky by most of Hungarian Ruthenians because of his pro-Ukrainian national orientation. Joining the Orthodox Church then became not only a matter of religious practice but also of political preferences and was accompanied by embracing Carpatho-Rusyn or Russian identity as opposed to the Ukrainian one.⁹⁷

In Europe, several Ruthenian national councils emerged after the end of the WWI with diverse political affiliations. The first national council in Stará Ľubovňa agreed on refusal of

⁹⁵ Magocsi, Paul Robert. *Carpatho-Rusyn Diasporas before World War I*, In *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, 151–66. Budapest, Hungary: Central European University Press, 2022. P.160-161

⁹⁶ Anna Plišková, *Rusínsky jazyk na Slovensku: náčrt vývoja a súčasné problémy*, Prešov: Metodicko- pedagogické centrum v Prešove, 2007, 11-12

⁹⁷ Magocsi, Paul Robert. *Carpatho-Rusyn Diasporas before World War I*, In *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, 151–66. Budapest, Hungary: Central European University Press, 2022. P. 162-163

fragmentation of Subcarpathian region and consequently Ruthenian citizens among several states. Another national council in Chust, established 17th November 1918, initially demanded unification with Ukraine, then expressed disapproval with this solution after Ukraine was occupied by the Red Army in 1919.⁹⁸ 5th November 1918 a meeting of Ruthenian intelligence took place in Uzhorod where a special committee was established led by Avhustin Voloshyn. At the people's meeting four days later, the Ugro-Russian National Council was formed, chaired by Simeon Sabov, Voloshyn becoming the executive. At the assembly the participants accepted a memorandum supporting integrity of Hungary demanding for Ruthenians the same national rights as other minorities within the state would have. Autonomous managements of the Greek Catholic Church and establishment of department of Russian language at the University of Budapest was expected and after discussions the Hungarian government promised fulfilment of the requirements. The government supported establishment of Russian national council in Budapest and Dr. Orest Sabó was entrusted with the task to draft autonomy of "Ruthenia". In December 1918 national assembly of Ugro-Rusyns took place in Budapest. Integrity of Hungary was requested along with the establishment of a special Ruthenian governorate with headquarters in Mukachevo and establishment of Ruthenian ministry. Despite that the assembly wasn't united and not all participant agreed to the conditions offered by the Hungarian government, 21st December 1918 law number 10 counted with establishment of Ruthenian autonomous region, so-called "Ruska Krajina". This territory did not include Šarišská, Zemplínska a Abovská counties as expected by Ruthenian representatives though.⁹⁹ After American National council of Ugro-Rusyns agreed on the unification with Czechoslovak republic in November 1918, T.G. Masaryk sent Ferdinand Pisecký to Uzhorod in February 1919 to present the results of the memorandum to the local Ruthenian representatives.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, Hungarian government did not give up on the efforts to keep integrity of Hungary intact and attempted to keep the territory of Subcarpathian Rus' by issuing the regulation number 928 on 5th February 1919 establishing an autonomous government for the "Ruska Krajina" chaired by Orest Sabó who was appointed minister for "Ruská Krajina" at the same time. On 4th March elections to the Ruthenian assembly took place at the territory, which was not yet occupied by the Czechoslovak army, however, attendance was already very low. It became clear that Ruthenian support for political unification with Hungary is dropping and

⁹⁸ Konečný, S., *Náčrt dejín karpatských Rusínov*, Prešov: Ústav rusínskeho jazyka a kultúry, 2015, s.131-133

⁹⁹ Onderková, Radka, *Podkarpatská Rus v medzivojnovom období*, Studium Carpatho-Ruthenorum 2022, Prešovská univerzita, Prešov, p.75-76

¹⁰⁰ Konečný, S., *Náčrt dejín karpatských Rusínov*, Prešov: Ústav rusínskeho jazyka a kultúry, 2015, s.129-130

Ugro-Rusyn national council in Uzhorod also started to openly sympathize with the Czechoslovak orientation. Other political concepts were more radical and included either unification with Ukraine or separate Ruthenian state independent from other emerging states in the region.¹⁰¹

The overall position of Ruthenians in the Czechoslovak republic was weakened by disunity of their political representation. Even though the Russophile and Ukrainophile currents did not disappear after the end of the WWI, they further developed and fractured. While some Ukrainophiles considered Ruthenians to be part of the Ukrainian nation but opposed union with the Soviets, other Ukrainophiles applauded the Soviet policy of Ukrainization and integration of all „Ukrainians“ into the Soviet Ukrainian Republic. The ambiguity was similar among the Russophiles. During the interwar period, the Ruthenian current promoting specific Ruthenian nation independent from any other nation rose to prominence, but its members were not politically united either. The Russophile fraction under the leadership of Antoni Beskid and Andrei Gagatko established the Central Russian National Council in October 1919 criticizing the alleged governmental support of the Ukrainophile movement under the influence of Avhustin Voloshyn.¹⁰²

However, an obvious fragmentation of Ruthenian people is visible not only from the number of opinions on the political future, but also from the amount of parallel communication from various Ruthenian communities either in America or in Europe, which demanded the same solutions. For example, the petition by Mr Illés Illyascevic, a delegate from the Committee of Ruthenian Emigrants in Budapest, from 1923 to the League of Nations was so similar to the previous letters already acknowledged by the League and the Czechoslovak government, that it was saved in the archive and not officially communicated to Prague as would be under normal circumstances, because it did not contain any new information.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Onderková, Radka, *Podkarpatská Rus v medzivojnovom období*, Studium Carpatho-Ruthenorum 2022, Prešovská univerzita, Prešov p.77

¹⁰² Kokaisl, Petr. *Subcarpathian Rusyns in the Debates of the Chamber of Deputies of the Inter-War Czechoslovak Republic*, Kulturní Studia 2023, no. 1 (2023): 93–114.

¹⁰³ Illyascevic, Illés. *File R1652/41/29840/9428 - The Ruthenian territory south of the Carpathians - Mr. Illés Illyascevic, Permanent Delegate of the Committee of Ruthenian Emigrants, Budapest - Communicates on behalf of the Ruthenians Emigrants Executive Committee notes in response to the observations from the Czechoslovak Government on the documents provided by the Ruthenian emigrants*. Letter. from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed September 2, 2024).

2 The interwar world

2.1 The Soviet Union, the United States, and their impact on the interwar minority rights

The First World War had many terrible consequences on the affected individuals, but it also altered the world of diplomacy and introduced new ways of maintaining peace and avoiding conflicts. While the world has become more interconnected, multinational European empires refusing the principle of democracy began to seem outdated.¹⁰⁴ While peace in Europe was being reconstructed based on democratic internationalism, other political directions were soon identified as a threat to this stability. This included foremost emerging communist politics of Russia.

The unresolved question of Ruthenian identity posed a serious political problem, during the war years in particular. While still subjects of Austria-Hungary, many Ruthenians, mostly from the Lemko region or Galicia, developed a cultural affinity towards Russia in the 19th century. Already in 1848, Carpatho-Rusyns reacted to the Hungarian nationalist revolution with orientation towards Russian culture to oppose Hungarian ethnocultural assimilation. Since then, Ruthenian Russophilism slowly evolved to form a fraction of intelligentsia and activists who either appropriated the idea of common culture of all Eastern European people or the inclination towards Russian ethnic nationalism. In most cases, the sympathies concerned Russian language and culture. The roots of Ruthenian nationalist politics can be traced back to the 1848 revolution. Hungarian nationalist ambitions and imperial policies created two different political regimes each of which pursued different nationalist politics. In Galicia, Vienna supported the Ukrainophile movement to suppress Polish nationalists and the Russian empire which made claims on the Subcarpathian Rus' and Galicia. In Hungary, Slavic population became subject of assimilation policies as Budapest tried to suppress any national particularism other than Hungarian. Ruthenian intelligentsia in this region was keener on identification with Russophilism as a way to preserve local culture.¹⁰⁵ Russian literary standard

¹⁰⁴ Fisanov, Volodymyr, Nechaieva-Yurichuk, Natalia, and Hissa-Ivanovych, Oleksandra. *Woodrow Wilson's "Fourteen Points: Between the Diplomacy and Propaganda (Origins of the Liberal Paradigm)*, *Codrul Cosminului* (Suceava, Romania) 28, no. 1 (2022): 145–70.

¹⁰⁵ Kovalchuk, Iaroslav. *At Home Among Strangers: Carpatho-Rusyn Russophiles in the Soviet Intelligentsia*, *Ab Imperio* 2021, no. 2 (2021): 103–37.

and culture became a source for significant members of contemporary intelligentsia like Alexander Dukhnovych and Adolf Dobriansky and until the end of the 19th century, when ideas about Ruthenian and Ukrainian identity intensified, Rusophilism remained the main alternative to the Hungarian cultural assimilation.¹⁰⁶

In what concerned political inclination, Ruthenians acted as loyal citizens of the monarchy until the World War I. Subcarpathian Rus' was widely affected by the events of the world conflict. Because Galicia and Subcarpathian Rus were practically in the centre of the eastern front, the regions were involved in the conflict since the very beginning. The fighting in the region left terrible consequences both on human lives and on the infrastructure. Thousands of Ruthenian young men served in the Austrian-Hungarian army and in Hungarian militia. Many of them were captured, mostly in the eastern front, and survived most of the war years in Russian prison camps. However, in the context of Russian military attack, any Russophile sympathies became specifically problematic. Since 1914, Austrian-Hungarian army started to persecute Carpatho-Ruthenian civilians with severe consequences. The war had barely begun when Carpathian Ruthenians who had converted to Orthodoxy were brought before court for treason. Arrests and violence against Carpatho-Ruthenians were most severe in the Lemko region. Hundreds of Ruthenians were arrested for suspected cooperation with Russian army, most of them had been identified by the secret service as Rusophile activists already before the war.¹⁰⁷ Austrian military tribunals pronounced sentences, often death penalties. Those who were not executed on the spot by aggressive soldiers, were usually deported to the concentration camps near Thalerhof in the western province of Styria near Graz. At least two thousands of Lemko Ruthenians from 151 villages were identified as traitors and deported to Thalerhof, some sources state number as high as five thousand Ruthenians. Practically the whole Lemko-Ruthenian intelligentsia was captured including civilian activists and Orthodox priests. Many of them died in the camps from malnutrition or diseases.¹⁰⁸ Fear from Habsburg government after the experience with Thalerhof deportation was so strong among the Ruthenians, that more than ten thousand of Lemkos joined the retreating Russian army in May 1915. Some of these refugees managed to return home after the end of the war, but many settled in Russia and assimilated in local society. Indeed, in 1915 arrests and deportations to Thalerhof were renewed

¹⁰⁶ Rusinko, Elaine, *Straddling Borders: Literature and Identity in Subcarpathian Rus*, Toronto, 2003, p. 278

¹⁰⁷ Magocsi, Paul Robert, *With Their Backs to the Mountains: A History of Carpathian Rus' and Carpatho-Rusyns*, Taschenbuch, 2015, p. 209-217

¹⁰⁸ Horbal, Bogdan, *Lemko Studies: A Handbook*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2010, p. 391-392

and executions without a trial by serving soldiers intensified as well. New trials in Vienna against Lemko and Galician Ruthenian Russophile leaders emerged when more than half of the accused were sentenced to death, first trial ending in 1915 and the second one in 1917. The death penalties were later changed to life imprisonment and after the disintegration of Austria-Hungary in 1918, all the convicted were released from prison. Ruthenians from Hungary also became targets of governmental wrath. In 1915 eight hundred Ruthenian farmers were convicted of collaboration with Russian army by Hungarian military tribunal and in Marmarosh county 160 citizens were imprisoned without prior trial. Mass executions were not unusual and Hungarian troops often attacked Ruthenian civilians beating even women and children. The fear from the authorities escalated to such an extent, that part of Ruthenian intelligentsia surrendered to the Magyarization efforts of the government and in 1915 created a petition calling on the government to abolish the term „Ruthenian“ and „Rusyn“ and call Carpatho-Ruthenians „Catholics of the Eastern Rite“ or simply „Hungarians“ instead. Some priests demanded change from Julian calendar to the Gregorian one and replacement of Russian alphabet with Latin script.¹⁰⁹

Both cultural ties to Russia and economic ties to the United States played an important role in Ruthenian political preferences in the beginning of the 20th century. While Russophile and pro-Hungarian Ruthenians were mostly interested in assimilation into already established national cultures, a separate Ruthenian (or sometimes called Rusyn) national movement intensified too. There is no doubt that the whole concept of Rusyn nationality was accelerated by the overseas migration to the United States and in the context of intensified contact with war propaganda of Wilson administration. The importance of making the Fourteen Points and other speeches public was part of introducing the role of the United States as a peacemaker in the conflict. Under the leadership of George Creel, Wilson's ideas were broadcast on the radio, translated, and spread worldwide. Because at the time there was still significant number of analphabets both in Europe and in the US, the material often used pictures making them accessible for wide range of people with diverse backgrounds. While military and political assistance to the allies was the main motivation for participation in war, the post-war arrangement of Central Europe attracted public opinion in the United States. Some assumed that American role is the one of rebuilding Europe. Because of the war, many Americans studied the map of Europe for the first

¹⁰⁹ Magocsi, Paul Robert, *With Their Backs to the Mountains: A History of Carpathian Rus' and Carpatho-Rusyns*, Taschenbuch, 2015, p. 216-218

time and some newspapers called on their readers to educate themselves on the issue of national minorities and national movements in Europe.¹¹⁰ President Wilson certainly made US military and political goals more understandable to public opinion both in warring and neutral countries. This specifically concerned the question of Central and Eastern Europe. However, Wilson himself avoided clear statements about post-war organisation of Europe and preferred pitching vague ideas and concepts when addressing public on the matter of minority rights. When United States entered the war in April 1917 with the official aim to protect world from German tyranny, Wilson pursued a rather careful diplomacy and limited military integration.¹¹¹ While older Ruthenian intellectuals based their national affiliations on Russian culture, the clearly communicated values of US war propaganda affected migrant working class Ruthenians much more effectively. Direct communication of democratic values prevailed over theoretic concepts of Russian fraternity despite President Wilson's hesitation to openly support Ruthenian independence.

Since 1917, national activists in Austria-Hungary started to openly proclaim their national goals and ideas on the internal transformation of the monarchy. However, those who were inclined towards complete secession from the empire could discuss it only in exile, in the allied countries, mostly in the Great Britain, France, or most importantly, in the United States. In the case of Ruthenians, their ties to the United States and existence of active Rusyn-American diaspora played an important role in the international discussion about this minority group.¹¹² First Rusyn-Americans who became active in politics were the Lemkos from Galicia. They had strong ties to the Russophile community in western Canada and in July 1917 they organized first congress of the League for the Liberation of Carpathian Rus' in New York. The goal was unification of all nations of the Rus' in Austria-Hungary with democratic Russia. The idea was promoted until 1919 when it became clear, that democracy was defeated in Russia. Because American immigrant groups defied Soviets and their plans included liberal and democratic Russia, their efforts lost the possibility of implementation. More significant became those

¹¹⁰ Throntveit, Trygve. *The Fable of the Fourteen Points: Woodrow Wilson and National Self-Determination*, Diplomatic History 35, no. 3 (2011): 445–81.

¹¹¹ Cude, Michael R. *Wilsonian Reform and World War I*, In Woodrow Wilson, 1st ed., 47–66. Routledge, 2024.

¹¹² Mamatey, Victor S., *The Slovaks and Carpatho-Ruthenians*, In *The Immigrants' Influence on Wilson's Peace Policies*. Edited by Joseph P. O'Grady, p. 249

Rusyn-American groups who were composed of immigrants from Hungary. From this background emerged also important Ruthenian politician Grigorij Zhatkovych.¹¹³

The Wilson 's Fourteen Points address became almost immediately interpreted as aimed at minority rights accelerating the separatist movements in Central Europe. By January 1918 Wilson developed a clearer and more understandable peace offer to the warring Europe. What was presented as The Fourteen Points speech on 8 January began as suggestions on reforms to prevent future war. Wilson's solution was clever in presenting not only concrete support for US allies, but also restraining their territorial ambitions. Open diplomacy and public treaties should have diminished unhealthy competition and conflict, free trade and lowering economic barriers should have built friendly ties among countries and arms reduction looked to prevent greater conflicts. Order of this new system should have been maintained by the League of Nations. Wilson considered establishment of this institution to be the crucial part of his programme and the point which included this idea was the only one written in imperative. The organisation would pursue the goal of conflict mediation and peaceful practices while offering collective security by discouraging potential aggressor to challenge a powerful community. Important for minorities are the points which deal with the concept of national self-determination. Important to note is, that Wilson did not use the exact expression self-determination in the Fourteen Points, even though widely used in Europe at the time of the war. He promoted security for small nations and their right to national sovereignty probably seeking to diminish the threat of instability by nationalist movements mostly in the Balkans. However, while most separatist national movements understood it as a call for political independence, Wilson only pronounced the need for fair treatment of all national groups and their right to autonomous development. The only open support of a nation state he expressed for independent Poland. The President did make clear his discontent with domination of East Central European nations by Central Powers but remained vague on the exact solution.¹¹⁴ Wilson's internationalist approach was integrative in nature which reflected the League of Nations, an organisation demanding significant concessions of sovereignty from the member states. More than supporting national self-determination Wilson stood behind the civil right of self-government meaning participation in public affairs as a universal right for all members of civil society. He understood self-determination as connected rather to political rights than to political independence. It only

¹¹³ Magocsi, Paul Robert, *With Their Backs to the Mountains: A History of Carpathian Rus' and Carpatho-Rusyns*, Taschenbuch, 2015, p. 221

¹¹⁴ Cude, Michael R. *Wilsonian Reform and World War I*, In Woodrow Wilson, 1st ed., 47–66. Routledge, 2024.

makes sense when considered, that the Fourteen Points are inspired by the American civic-nationalist tradition of self-government rather than ethnic-nationalist ideas of self-determination.¹¹⁵ When US joined allies in the war, President Wilson was specifically cautious to keep diplomatic ways open for possible agreement with Austria-Hungary. For this purpose, he did not see political sense in undermining sovereignty of the monarchy and instead, several suggestions on creation of a federal state were discussed. In this way, dualistic monarchy would not collapse, it would only be transformed into an arrangement which would respect local autonomy of different national groups. However, other forms of federations were discussed as well and not all of them counted on the preservation of Austria-Hungary – either a federation of Central Europe or a south-eastern European Confederation. Then between May-August 1918 the national movements in Austria Hungary intensified and US government became more open to the idea of support of small nationalities seeking to release themselves from German domination. An idea of direct cooperation with separatist organisations and groups was considered. Indeed, Wilson's inclination towards federalist solution of the nationality conflicts in Austria-Hungary was often criticized as opposed to the idea of equality among nations preventing some of them from becoming members of international community. In October 1918 an official note sent to Austria-Hungary from the US clearly stated, that since the proclamation of the Fourteen Points serious events had taken place and that the US government aims to recognize the „fair national demands” of Czechoslovaks and Yugoslavs and therefore the President cannot consider mere autonomy for these groups anymore.¹¹⁶

During the war years democratic values and Wilsonian concept of new Europe were much more attractive for Rusyn-American diaspora than communist conceptions from Russia, even if Bolsheviks promoted national self-determination principle much more openly than President Wilson. The official war goal proclaimed by the Russian Provisional Government in April 1917 was peace based on the self-determination. Vladimir Lenin considered the disintegrating nature of the ethnic nationalism to be an advantage in spreading the proletarian revolution across Europe as existing political structures fall apart.¹¹⁷ After the Bolsheviks seized the power in

¹¹⁵ Throntveit, Trygve. *The Fable of the Fourteen Points: Woodrow Wilson and National Self-Determination*, *Diplomatic History* 35, no. 3 (2011): 445–81.

¹¹⁶ Fisanov, Volodymyr, Nechaieva-Yuriichuk, Natalia, and Hissa-Ivanovych, Oleksandra. *Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points: Between the Diplomacy and Propaganda (Origins of the Liberal Paradigm)*. *Codrul Cosminului* (Suceava, Romania) 28, no. 1 (2022): 145–70.

¹¹⁷ Throntveit, Trygve. *The Fable of the Fourteen Points: Woodrow Wilson and National Self-Determination*, *Diplomatic History* 35, no. 3 (2011): 445–81.

October Revolution, they initiated negotiations with Germany at Brest Litovsk in December 1917. Wilson administration's war propaganda in Russia proved unsuccessful because the war was highly unpopular in Russia.¹¹⁸ In his November declaration Lenin promised all non-Russian nationalities full freedom, one week later Leon Trotsky publicly announced intention to negotiate peace with Germany based on national self-determination. He openly asked the Allies to accept these arrangements accusing them of being motivated by imperialistic ambitions making them an enemy of the oppressed stateless nations and the exploited working classes.¹¹⁹ Contrary to Wilson, representatives of the Bolshevik government did not include any ideas on future international community in their proclamations. Nevertheless, President Wilson was inspired by the revolution in Russia and the self-determination principle.¹²⁰ Ruthenians in Europe did not oppose Russian revolutionary ideas as vehemently as diaspora in the US. Russian revolution and the consequent civil war had political impact on the thousands of Austrian-Hungarian war prisoners who were released in 1917. Among them was significant number of Ruthenians who experienced first-hand the possibility of the overthrow of the tsarist regime. Already at this time, many Ruthenian soldiers felt attracted to the socialist ideology seeing the Bolsheviks confiscating extensive properties.¹²¹

After the end of the war, Ruthenian ties to the United States and creation of diaspora by the migrant community seemed to prevail over cultural sympathies towards Russia. Nevertheless, Ruthenian political ambitions remained a subject of suspicion in the interwar years and the Russophile cultural affiliations became problematic in international perception of the Subcarpathian Rus'.

2.2 Ruthenians in Czechoslovak Republic

After support for an independent Ruthenian state has been denied by President Wilson, the Rusyn-American diaspora agreed, after a discussion, on unification with Czechoslovakia. This

¹¹⁸ Cude, Michael R. *Wilsonian Reform and World War I*, In Woodrow Wilson, 1st ed., 47–66. Routledge, 2024.

¹¹⁹ Throntveit, Trygve. *The Fable of the Fourteen Points: Woodrow Wilson and National Self-Determination*, Diplomatic History 35, no. 3 (2011): 445–81.

¹²⁰ Fisanov, Volodymyr, Nechaieva-Yuriichuk, Natalia and Hissa-Ivanovych, Oleksandra. *Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points: Between the Diplomacy and Propaganda (Origins of the Liberal Paradigm)*, Codrul Cosminului (Suceava, Romania) 28, no. 1 (2022): 145–70.

¹²¹ Magocsi, Paul Robert, *With Their Backs to the Mountains: A History of Carpathian Rus' and Carpatho-Rusyns*, Taschenbuch, 2015, p. 220

was an important decision regarding enforceability of their national rights, because in the republic they would be treated as a minority. Despite that minority rights in the interwar period were guaranteed by the League of Nations, application of these rights fully depended on national government. Therefore, Ruthenian representatives accentuated autonomy as the most important condition of unification with Czechoslovak republic.

Ruthenian territory emerged as part of newly established Czechoslovak republic on 10 September 1919 by the Minorities Treaty signed at Saint Germain-en-Laye. The treaty guaranteed fullest degree of self-government within the Czechoslovak republic and provided for autonomy and equitable representation in the legislative assembly. However, the Czechoslovak government almost immediately argued, that for the sake of internal stability of the state a transitional period is necessary, during which the Prague government would rule the region directly.¹²² Ruthenian citizens took the situation hardly and since the establishment of the republic complaints on the Czechoslovak minority politics were regularly submitted to the League.

By the 1930s, a disappointment with Czechoslovak politics sharpened among Ruthenians in Subcarpathian Rus'. The fact, that promised autonomy had not materialized combined with the question of the Slovak-Ruthenian borders, when approximately 200 000 Ruthenians remained separated from the region of the Subcarpathian Rus' and incorporated into Slovakia, provoked complaints and petitions to the League of Nations which intensified as the next war was approaching. In the petition from June 1930 Mr. Boukialy turned to the League of Nations demanding fulfilment of the agreement with Czechoslovakia about creation of independent Ruthenian Diet and opportunities for education in Ruthenian language, which he claimed were not arranged. He also, once again, reminded that significant number of Ruthenian citizens was living outside of the official Subcarpathian Rus' territory in Slovak and Hungarian regions, who were excluded from political rights promised to the Rusyns at the Paris Peace Conference.¹²³ Because previous research by Swedish scholar Olaf Broch discovered, that the language used by the Ruthenians living north of the Vihorlat and Poprisni hills had strong influence of the Slovak phonetics, the whole area has been incorporated into Slovakia.

¹²² Rusinko, Elaine. *Re-Imagining Rusyn Identity*, In *Straddling Borders*, p. 296. Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2003.

¹²³ Boukialy. *File R2164/4/20256/6909 – Ruthenians in Czechoslovakia – Petition of Mr. Boukialy dated 4 June 1930 on the Autonomy of Subcarpathian Russia*, Petition. from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed September 5, 2024).

However, the report by a scholar from Budapest University Antony Hodinka for the League of Nations made it clear, that citizens in this area cannot be considered Slovak from cultural, political, or ethnic point of view and that even their language differed significantly from the Slovak one. Also, the argument Czechoslovak government presented to the League, that Ruthenians did not have a political programme to present as part of their autonomous politics was not accepted, because Zhatkovych presented several political directions even before Ruthenians joined Czechoslovak republic. The League acknowledged the right to autonomy of Ruthenians and criticized their underrepresentation in central as well as local government.¹²⁴

While territorial claims of the Rusyns and the negotiations to meet their demands might not have been fully successful the lively discussion provided a unifying factor and contributed to the Rusyn sense of community. The plans took account of the future autonomous position of the region. One of the conditions was establishment of an autonomous Diet with a governor as a head with legislative powers in language, education, and religious matters. Rusyn representatives were careful to provide conditions for cultural growth and institutionalization to enhance the national development of Rusyns. Another task which was given to the Rusyns was to choose name for their territory. The Czech and Slovak name „Subcarpathian Rus“ has been officially introduced in 1919 and it has been marked as temporary until the meeting of the Subcarpathian council, which should have had the final say in the matter. However, the term continued to be used and it appeared in the correction of Constitution of Czechoslovak Republic from 1922 as well.¹²⁵ The name of the region played an important role in Ruthenian identity, and even if the confusion about the official language or Ukrainian question remained the topic of the day, the region was something that most Rusyns could identify with without hesitation.¹²⁶

Within the new republic, Czechoslovak leaders had little sympathy for either Slovak autonomism or Rusyn demands for autonomy for Subcarpathian Rus'. League of Nations

¹²⁴File R1651/41/27930/9428 - *The Ruthenian territory of the southern Carpathians - Directory of Ruthenian Political Parties in Munkacs - Memorandum addressed to the League of Nations by the Ruthenian people of Russia Subcarpathian living on the territory of the Czecho-Slovak State with respect to the autonomy guaranteed to Ruthenian territory by the Treaty of St. Germain and not yet organized by the Czechoslovak government.* Memorandum. from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed September 5, 2024).

¹²⁵ Rychlíková, Magdaléna, Rychlík, Jan, *Podkarpatská Rus v dějinách Československa 1918–1946*, Vyšehrad 2016, p.8

¹²⁶ Holubec, Stanislav, *New state borders and (dis)loyalties to Czechoslovakia in Subcarpathian Rus, 1919–25*, European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire, 2020, p. 732-762

feared for the stability of the young state considering its multi-ethnic character and this fact was often used to postpone autonomy of the region. Czechs soon proved their dominant position in governmental politics and administration and the union with Slovaks and Rusyns was perceived more as a suitable counterbalance to the non-Slavic population, namely Germans and Hungarians. Because Germans outnumbered Slovaks within Czechoslovak republic, the government constructed an artificial Czechoslovak nation. For this reason, in both censuses Czechs and Slovaks stated Czechoslovak nationality. The leading role of the Czech nationals was demonstrated also through the propaganda promoting the Slavic origin of the population on the Czechoslovak territory. In 1920 Subcarpathian Rus was given its own government with Grigorij Zhatkovych as the first governor. However, this arrangement was far from autonomy since the governor was only an official office reporting directly to the Prague government. Furthermore, Zhatkovych proved to be unsuccessful in the Czechoslovak environment misunderstanding the dynamics of the local politics the profoundly nationalist policy of the government favouring Slavic nations above the others. The first governor attempted to reach an agreement with Hungarians in the Subcarpathian Rus' pursuing his goal to reach autonomy, which was perceived rather negatively by the Czechoslovak politicians. After the war, the Germans and the Hungarians were perceived as former oppressors and were treated as such. Even after the adoption of the Constitution of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1920 autonomy was not achieved and Zhatkovych decided to leave the office.¹²⁷

The measures adopted in the following years did not bring the autonomy either. Unification of the local administration in 1920 or later reform of the political administration creating provincial system in 1927 were all practical matters in some cases even reinforcing centralisation of the republic.¹²⁸ The change of legislation towards minorities in Czechoslovakia in 1927 provoked strong opposition among Ruthenians. Apparently, the protest against the new legislation held in Uzhorod was the largest that had taken place in that territory since 1918. The protest was led by Augutin Voloshyn and one of the main objections was the proclamation of Munkacz instead of Uzhorod as the main seat of the Landesamt of Subcarpathian Rus'. This was specifically a sensitive issue in relation to the long-lasting tension around Slovak-Ruthenian borders. Movement of the seat of Ruthenian administration

¹²⁷ Item C-214-1921_BI - *The Autonomous Territory South of the Carpathians. Note by the Secretary-General*, Report. from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed October 27, 2024).

¹²⁸ Kokaisl, Petr. *Subcarpathian Rusyns in the Debates of the Chamber of Deputies of the Inter-War Czechoslovak Republic*, *Kulturní Studia* 2023, no. 1 (2023): 93–114.

to Munkacz would complicate Ruthenian claim to the Kassa district. The new legislation would be based on older Czechoslovak Gaugesetz from 1920 changing the original administration in Landesämte increasing autonomy of the districts. At the same time, however, the law would reinforce the authority of the Ministry of Interior in national security and public order issues. The reform would divide the republic into four districts: Bohemia, Slovakia, Moravia with Silesia and Subcarpathian Rus'. The chief of each district would be appointed by the Ministry of Interior in Prague, which meant that Subcarpathian Rus' would be controlled by the central government.¹²⁹ Nevertheless, this reform was presented to the League of Nations by the Czechoslovak Secretary-General as a significant step towards the promised autonomy of Subcarpathian Rus' formally satisfying the obligation towards Ruthenians as defined in the treaty. In an official note from 1928 he explains how the administrative changes already fulfil the criteria of independent Ruthenian self-government by creation of organs of autonomous administration of the region. Great importance is attributed to the Provincial Council with two thirds of elected representatives and one third of officials appointed by the central government. Here the Secretary-General argued that this system is necessary because of the social, economic, and educational conditions of the inhabitants. According to the document, the Czechoslovak government has been doing everything in its power to ameliorate the conditions in the region in order to be able to fulfil completely the obligations towards Ruthenians arising from the Treaty of St. Germain-en-Laye.¹³⁰

One of the biggest challenges was negotiation about territorial questions. The Memorandum of the Legal Position of South Carpathian Rusyns prepared by the minister of foreign affairs Edvard Beneš suggested, that Rusyns came to be respected as a nation with rightful claim on a specific territory. However, the Ruthenian territory became source of numerous conflicts during the Paris conference and many issues remained unresolved. The most problematic were the Sighetu Marmaiei region under Romanian rule, the Lemko land in Eastern Galicia annexed by Poland and the border between Slovakia and Subcarpathian Rus'.¹³¹ As a result of dissatisfying negotiations significant Rusyn minority groups remained in Romania, Poland and

¹²⁹ File R1652/41/59496/9428 - *The Carpatho-Russian Autonomy problem - Memoranda by members of the Minorities section*. Report. from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed September 12, 2024).

¹³⁰ Item C-214-1921_BI - *The Autonomous Territory South of the Carpathians. Note by the Secretary-General*, Report. from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed October 27, 2024).

¹³¹ Kokaisl, Petr. *Subcarpathian Rusyns in the Debates of the Chamber of Deputies of the Inter-War Czechoslovak Republic*, *Kulturní Studia* 2023, no. 1 (2023): 93–114.

Slovakia. It seems, that in this case, geopolitical realities became more important than the national self-determination principle.¹³²

Except the proposed territorial definition, Ruthenian representatives expressed their discontent with the decision that all further competences in arrangements were given to the Czechoslovak government. They were hoping that continuing negotiations would be supervised by the League of Nations.¹³³ This solution to the Ruthenian minority issue was criticized already in 1921 by sir Willoughby Dickinson from the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches in his report to the League. In his view, the Minority Treaty signed by the representatives of the emerging Czechoslovak republic signed at St. Germain-en-Laye on 10th September 1919 was more a guideline than a legal commitment as it did not include any penalty for national governments not fulfilling their commitment to the national minorities. It has been indeed proposed that the minority rights should be enforced directly by the League to maintain more objectivity.¹³⁴ Nevertheless, this proposition was immediately opposed by most representatives of the governments with an argument, that it would violate sovereign rights of the states. Nevertheless, members of minorities often turned to the League of Nations, when they felt that their rights are being violated by national governments. Already in 1922 League of Nations received complaints from Ruthenians in Subcarpathian Rus' that the Prague government wasn't taking any steps to fulfil the promises and obligations and establish autonomous administration in the region. Apparently, the language of administration remained Czech and Ruthenian wasn't used even sporadically in official communication. The central government was criticized for deliberate Czechization of the citizens, excessive centralisation and even accused of colonial practices of suppression. These sentiments were later fuelled by

¹³² Seremet, S. *Why (and How) Rusyns Joined Czechoslovakia a Hundred Years Ago*, Corvinus Journal of International Affairs, 4(2-4), 2019, pp. 99–110.

¹³³ Stanislav Konečný, *Náčrt dejín Karpatských Rusínov*, Prešovská univerzita v Prešove, Prešov 2015, p. 137-140

¹³⁴ Colban, *File R1683-41-22882-22882 - The World Alliance for promoting friendship through the churches and the question of minorities - Communicated by Mr. Colban - Various documents relative to the proceedings at the recent meeting of the World Alliance at Copenhagen*, Report. from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed August 28, 2024).

influx of Ukrainian migrants from Galicia who settled in Subcarpathian Rus' and were often given jobs in administrative or educational institutions instead of Ruthenians.¹³⁵

Development of education in Subcarpathian Rus' was problematic because of the linguistic ambiguity. Before 1918, Ruthenians were subject to a strong cultural and linguistic Magyarization and therefore pro-Hungarian, Russophile and Ukrainophile deputies immediately refused and criticized the emerging Czechization. Suppression of Ruthenian language in the Subcarpathian Rus' became a discussed topic in the League of Nations. Ruthenians entered union with Czechoslovakia hoping for a special status among minorities within the republic and considered themselves on the same level as Czechs and Slovaks. However, only Czech and Slovak were included in the official language of the republic. The creators of the Constitution proposed official language of administration to be the Czechoslovak language, even though technically it did not exist and Ruthenian language was excluded altogether. However, while Czech and Slovak were two separate, but at least codified languages, Ruthenian language did not exist in any official codified form at the time. According to the law, language of a minority would be used in administration and schools in those areas where at least 20% of inhabitants spoke the same minority language as defined also in the article 9 of the Treaty of St. Germain. The language situation of the Subcarpathian Rus' should have been, however, considered separately from other minorities. According to the Treaty of St. Germain the language issue was to be settled by an autonomous Ruthenian Diet.¹³⁶ However, involvement of Czech professionals in the education system in Subcarpathian Rus was inevitable, if not directly as teachers for the minors, to educate administrators as there was shortage of qualified teachers in the region. Before the war, some form of Ruthenian language was taught only in church Greek Catholic schools and since 1907, after the introduction of the so-called lex Apponyi, Hungarian became even more widespread as the language of instruction and officially all schools in the region were Hungarian. By 1926 there were more than 500 Ruthenian schools of different levels and focus established in the Subcarpathian Rus' with the

¹³⁵ Yuhasz, Michael. *R3918-4-1610-1610, Ruthenians in Czechoslovakia - Petition of the Michael Yuhasz (Juhasz), Rusin Council of National Defense, U.S.A. - Observations of the Czechoslovak Government*. Petition, from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed October 27, 2024).

¹³⁶ *S394-59-10, File S394/59/10 - League of Nations - Czecho-Slovakian minorities*. Report, from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed September 7, 2024).

help of Czech administrators.¹³⁷ Besides absence of historical educational infrastructure with qualified professionals, in the initial years of the Czechoslovak republic, part of the challenge was to even persuade Ruthenian public that education is meaningful and beneficial. Because most of the citizens were illiterate their everyday life did not demand any intellectual education, they often preferred their children to help around house or in farming than to leave for school. However, after the union with Czechoslovak Republic, the social conditions became more favourable, people ceased to be fully dependent on their own resources and therefore on the work around the estate and parents became more receptive to the idea of education for their children. With the opportunities which opened to the young people it made much more sense for them to learn.¹³⁸ In general, teaching has been conducted in various forms of Ruthenian language, but occasionally also in Ukrainian or Russian depending on the respective teacher and his or her national claim and linguistic abilities. This approach was increasingly criticized by Ruthenian citizens in the 1920s and 1930s. In August 1933 a petition by Michael Yuhasz from the Rusyn Council of National Defence USA concerning educational rights of Ruthenians was submitted to the League of Nations. He argued, that the autonomous Diet of Subcarpathian Rus' was legally the only institution with the right to issue laws on educational administration, the equipment of individual schools, the language of instruction and control over the individual schools and that Czechoslovak interference was illegal. Mr. Yuhasz argued, that Ruthenians were treated as any other Czechoslovak minority and that their special legal position was not respected. The Prague government in the 1930s was still in charge of the educational administration of the autonomous Subcarpathian territory. He criticized the establishment of Provincial Diet in 1927 which was manipulated by the Czech administrators to avoid its independence. Centralism of educational legislation was reflected in the establishment of Educational Referate in Uzhorod by the Prague Government which was an authority subjected to the Ministry of Education in Prague. Yuhasz criticizes not only increased number of schools with Czech language of instruction, but also Czech administration of Ruthenian schools where teachers of foreign nationality and language were appointed. After examination of the situation, it was discovered that number of Czech schools in the region rose by more than 60% since 1923. It was sometimes argued that the Czech schools are there to cover the needs of the families of Czech officials who moved to the region as part of the new administrative body.

¹³⁷ Kokaisl, Petr. *Subcarpathian Rusyns in the Debates of the Chamber of Deputies of the Inter-War Czechoslovak Republic*, Kulturní Studia 2023, no. 1 (2023): 93–114.

¹³⁸ Vladimír Kuštek, *Československý svet v Karpatoch*, Združenie inteligencie Rusínov Slovenska, o.z., 2018, p. 21–23

However, on the basis of the percentual representation of Czech population in Subcarpathian Rus', the number of the schools exceeded their needs seven times. After 1928 Czech schools were being opened in larger numbers as part of remembrance of the 10th anniversary of the Czechoslovak republic as so-called Jubilee Schools. These schools were opened also at places where only one or two Czech families were stationed. In the 1930s the average number of pupils in a class of a Czech school was 38 as opposed to 60 in the Ruthenian classes. Ruthenian public suspected Prague government, that this imbalance was deliberately arranged by the Prague government in order to discourage Ruthenian parents from sending their children to the overcrowded Ruthenian speaking schools. Also, despite that according to the law there was 8-year compulsory school attendance, not even one elementary Ruthenian school offered more than six classes. Pupils of diverse age and level usually shared one class which hindered the quality of education in Ruthenian schools. The attendance of City Schools, which provided complementary education to the elementary schools, was below the state average in Subcarpathian Rus'. Apparently, it was harder for youth from poorer families to access this type of education despite the interest in education. Educating Ruthenian professionals was also not specifically enhanced in any way by the government, for schools with the focus on agriculture, industry, or commerce Ruthenian children usually had to leave Subcarpathian region. It was suspected that Czechs kept the situation in the regions dependent on Czech professionals on purpose to maintain control. For university education, Ruthenians were forced to attend Czech or German university, because there wasn't any university in Subcarpathian Rus'. This way Ruthenian intelligence undeniably came under a foreign influence. In general, many Czechs, who did not even speak Ruthenian, taught at Ruthenian schools. This was partly because of the shortage of Ruthenian teachers. However, there wasn't established any higher education institution to form teachers in Subcarpathian Rus' to solve the problem. Most of the officials making decisions about the education administration were also Czech and because Provincial Council had only the right of consultation not the right of decision-making, Subcarpathian Rus' did not have any educational autonomy. This not only hindered education of Ruthenian children in their mother tongue, but also caused hostility between Ruthenian population and appointed Czech officials who came to the region.¹³⁹

¹³⁹ Yuhasz, Michael. *R3918-4-1610-1610, Ruthenians in Czechoslovakia - Petition of the Michael Yuhasz (Juhasz), Rusin Council of National Defense, U.S.A. - Observations of the Czechoslovak Government*. Petition. from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed October 27, 2024)

Because leading Czech scholars in the field of Slavonic Studies considered Subcarpathian dialects to be ethnographic part of Ukrainian language, this categorisation was reflected in the educational policies introduced by the government in 1919. Ukrainian language with etymological alphabet was recommended for schools in Subcarpathian Rus' by several scholars who criticized Russophiles for their efforts to forcibly impose the Russian language on Ruthenians. Consequently, first vice-governor of Subcarpathian Rus' was instructed by the Czechoslovak government to endorse Ukrainian orientation in culture and education. Among the authors of the textbooks for primary and secondary schools in the region were Ukrainian philologists or representatives of the local Ukrainian movement. The *Grammar Guide* by Pankevych was prepared for and introduced to the local schools in 1922. His publication was based on the dialects of the Eastern regions of the Subcarpathian Rus which were close to the Ukrainian language of Galicia and should have prepared local citizens for gradual linguistic transition to the Ukrainian literary language. However, even Pankevych admitted that Ukrainian could not be introduced immediately because of the significant differences. In his following editions of *Grammar* in 1927 and 1936 he got rid of the Carpathian-Rusyn dialectics introducing more and more elements of Ukrainian literary language. An alternative Russophile grammar of Sabov was rejected by the authorities as textbook for regional schools until 1936. The representatives of the Russophile intelligentsia opposed linguistic policy of the Czech administration in Subcarpathian Rus' since the beginning and the Ukrainian materials introduced in schools were criticized by the teachers during the whole interwar period. Because Russophiles were suspected of pro-Hungarian sentiments and Hungarian administrators and teachers were not considered trustworthy either, the government initiated the practice of hiring Ukrainian Galician emigrants as teachers in schools in Subcarpathian Rus'. This practice developed successfully until late 1930s and resulted in endorsement of Ukrainian cultural orientation.¹⁴⁰ In reality, education in the Subcarpathian Rus' was highly disorganized in the interwar period and the chaotic situation of the language was never resolved. Forcible introduction of either Russian or Ukrainian textbooks in schools often created more confusion because the pupils did not understand the language properly.¹⁴¹ Lack of codified language was, no doubt, a great disadvantage for the Ruthenian citizens who had to rely on the Czech and Ukrainian teachers and administrators. However, Rusyn identity-building was in progress –

¹⁴⁰ Shevchenko, Kirill, and Bogatko, Anna. *Education System in Subcarpathian Rus During Interwar Period in the Estimates of the Rusyn Politicians and Public Figures*, Czech-Polish Historical and Pedagogical Journal 13, no. 1 (2022)

¹⁴¹ Kokaisl, Petr. *Subcarpathian Rusyns in the Debates of the Chamber of Deputies of the Inter-War Czechoslovak Republic*, Kulturní Studia 2023, no. 1 (2023): 93–114.

there were several attempts to codify Rusyn language. The elections in 1937 showed that the majority was aware of this fact and was interested in using Rusyn language as the language of instruction.¹⁴²

Ruthenians were not the only ones whose political future depended on external actors, though. Czechoslovakia as a newly established state was closely watched by the League of Nations, even if the organization didn't have the legal power to penalize the government for possible missteps. The Czechoslovak Constitution was translated to English and French and submitted to the League as soon as possible after its creation to be analysed and evaluated. The minority protection part was of a specific interest to the organization as it was closely related to maintaining stability in the region. The official correspondence among Czechoslovak government and League of Nations representatives shows, that Minority Treaties were consulted when evaluating the measures of the republic towards minorities.¹⁴³ From the communication it is obvious, that Czechoslovak government cared for positive international image and accentuated positive changes in the Subcarpathian region. Indeed, among the deputies from Subcarpathian Rus' there were some, who openly recognised and valued the contribution of the Czechoslovak government to this region. Those who emphasised economic development were aware of the poor state of economy and infrastructure in this part of the republic. In order to create a national consciousness, it was necessary to create a sense of not only political but also a communal identity. For this a certain level of conformity in cultural matters was necessary and despite the obvious discontent of the Rusyns with the Prague government, Czechoslovak Republic did improve conditions for its development. The era of the Czechoslovak republic was the first time in history when Rusyns achieved a relatively stable position with clearly defined administrative territory and the political unification provided conditions for the formation of community identity as well. In order to focus on national question, it was necessary to provide a certain social level for the citizens first. Fortunately, the government managed to reduce the negative consequences of war to the minimum in the years 1919-1922 and in 1924 citizens of Subcarpathian Rus' were able to choose their deputies to parliament in a democratic way for the first time.¹⁴⁴ The education system introduced by the Czech administration in Subcarpathian Rus' has led to a significant

¹⁴² Kuštek, Vladimír, *Československý svet v Karpatoch*, Združenie inteligencie Rusínov Slovenska, o.z., 2018, p. 25

¹⁴³ *File S394/59/10 - League of Nations - Czecho-Slovakian minorities*, Report. from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed September 7, 2024)

¹⁴⁴ Kuštek, Vladimír, *Československý svet v Karpatoch*, Združenie inteligencie Rusínov Slovenska, o.z., 2018, p. 27

decrease of illiteracy. In 1900 the illiteracy among Ruthenians in Hungary was about 70%, by 1930 it dropped to 42%.¹⁴⁵ Within the Czechoslovak Republic, all citizens were granted religious freedom, which meant that Ruthenians were finally allowed to openly demonstrate their appurtenance to the Orthodox Church if they wished so. However, Masaryk's Anti-Catholic conception of Czech history was not so inclined towards Greek Catholics. The anticlerical movements in the successor states in Europe sought to limit influence of the Catholic Church, but specifically in Czechoslovakia many assumed that its adherents sympathized with monarchy and Hungary and therefore could potentially destabilize the system.¹⁴⁶ Even though the political demands of Ruthenians were not immediately fulfilled, the interwar period introduced them the principle of democracy. Representation in the Czechoslovak parliament and participation in elections were all significant experiences. In national identity building, the national anthem, official coat of arms and designated nationality status played an important role. The Ruthenian language was never clearly unified, but nevertheless in one form or another appeared on official village, street and town signs in Subcarpathian Rus' and on some denominations of Czechoslovak banknotes. And freedom of speech allowed Ruthenian intelligentsia, for the first time in history, to discuss and develop national identity and culture.¹⁴⁷ It was the complex situation of political dependencies which hindered Ruthenian autonomy. Czechoslovak government needed to keep democratic image by following treaties and granting minority rights and feared that decentralisation of political power would weaken the state potency at the same time. By balancing between building the international image and keeping the full control over the state territory they slowly lost trust and loyalty of the minorities.

2.3 Bolshevism, fragile stability, and suspended autonomy

From the beginning of the common state, the dissatisfaction of Rusyn citizens with the government rose. Already in 1920s there were signals of disloyalty to the Czechoslovak government coming from the region. Often it concerned ethnic Hungarians or Jews who would have preferred union with Hungary, however Rusyns were much more specific in their

¹⁴⁵ Kirill, Shevchenko, and Bogatko, Anna. *Education System in Subcarpathian Rus During Interwar Period in the Estimates of the Rusyn Politicians and Public Figures*. Czech-Polish Historical and Pedagogical Journal 13, no. 1 (2022).

¹⁴⁶ Kokaisl, Petr. *Subcarpathian Rusyns in the Debates of the Chamber of Deputies of the Inter-War Czechoslovak Republic*, Kulturní Studia 2023, no. 1 (2023): 93–114.

¹⁴⁷ Rusinko, Elaine. *Re-Imagining Rusyn Identity*, In *Straddling Borders*, 296. Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2003.

demands for autonomy. Along with the discontent communist ideology found popularity among Ruthenians, who started to turn its hopes to possible unification with Russia or Ukraine. The reasons for displeasure were mainly the unrecognized territorial claims to some neighbouring regions and the fact, that their autonomy was delayed ad infinitum. When the first elections in the region were held in 1924, the results only confirmed the suspected discontent of the citizens.¹⁴⁸

The multi-ethnic and multinational character of the Subcarpathian Rus' made it vulnerable to political turmoil and instability. As a home to several ethnic groups the territory became object of competing aspirations for the nations at war. Already at the beginning of the World War I, Russian Empire openly expressed the intention to incorporate Galicia and Northern Hungary into its territory. The claim was made based on the fact, that Tsarist Russia considered local Ruthenian population to be Russian and that all Slavic people should be united in the same Empire. The plans collapsed after the revolutionary events of 1917. After the Bolshevik coup, People's Republic of Ukraine emerged in January 1918 signing a separate peace with Germany and Austria-Hungary. According to the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk Russia was forced to respect Ukrainian independence. Nevertheless, Ukraine was soon incorporated into USSR in 1922. In November 1918, another successor state emerged, the Peoples Republic of Western Ukraine aiming to unite the Ukrainians of Galicia and Bukovina. From a certain point of view, it would make sense to include Ruthenians from the other side of the Carpathians into this state, and suggestions have been made indeed.¹⁴⁹ When in late 1918 the administration of monarchy began to dissolve, Ruthenians in Hungary formed national councils which then negotiated political future with Hungarian officials. When Hungarian republic was established under the leadership of Count Mihaly Karolyi it included an autonomous province of Rus'ka Krai'na as a specific territory of Ruthenians. Rus'ka Krai'na lasted only a few weeks before negotiations were taken over by Rusyn-American representatives on an international level with more political potency.¹⁵⁰ The fact that Ruthenians from Hungary followed separate political negotiations first with Hungarian officials, then with the US government and Czechoslovak leaders shows the difference in cultural development between Rusyns in Hungary and Rusyns

¹⁴⁸ Holubec, Stanislav. *New state borders and (dis)loyalties to Czechoslovakia in Subcarpathian Rus, 1919–25*, European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire, 2020, p. 732-762

¹⁴⁹ Seremet, S., *Why (and How) Rusyns Joined Czechoslovakia a Hundred Years Ago*, Corvinus Journal of International Affairs, 4(2-4), 2019 pp. 99–110.

¹⁵⁰ Rusinko, Elaine. *Re-Imagining Rusyn Identity*, In *Straddling Borders*, 296. Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2003.

in Galicia. While in Galicia identification with Ukrainian nation prevailed over time, in Hungary narrative of independent Rusyn nationality spread and was further supported by the US diaspora. However, at the end of the war it became clear, that Subcarpathian Rus' would become part of emerging Czechoslovakia and support of powerful allies hindered any further claims for the territory.

Due to the successful diplomacy of Czechoslovak representatives in Paris in 1919, unification of Subcarpathian Rus' with Czechoslovak Republic was internationally well received. Support of United States, France and Great Britain were extremely important for security of the new state. The territory in Eastern-Central Europe was strategic for the allies, important areas in Poland and Czechoslovakia became buffer zones against Germany and Soviet Russia. Subcarpathian Rus' was ideal in this respect as it isolated Hungary and provided a strategic link between Czechoslovakia and Romania.¹⁵¹ For these strategic purposes it was not only in Czechoslovak but also in international interest to keep political stability in the region. Constant worries about possible rebellions of diverse ethnic and political groups created mistrust for autonomy of Subcarpathian Rus'. Immediate autonomy could mean, that Ruthenians would become dominated by better educated and culturally and politically advanced Hungarian and Jewish citizens. Combined with the relatively numerous pro-Hungarian Ruthenian group this could even lead to the annexation of Subcarpathian Rus' by Hungary and further territorial conflict.¹⁵² Therefore after the end of the war Czechoslovak government decided to postpone introduction of autonomy in the Subcarpathian Rus' and to manage local questions through central authorities from Prague. Because Ruthenians were still lacking stable and unified national self-consciousness, they were vulnerable targets of diverse, possibly subversive, ideologies. A significant part of the local Rusyn intelligentsia already shared Russophile ideas and the situation were further complicated by the influx of Ukrainian migrants from Galicia who had significant impact on the shaping of Ruthenian identity. Indeed, Ukrainian nationalists often viewed Ruthenians as potential objects of their activities perceiving them as Ukrainians who did not yet fully develop their national consciousness.¹⁵³ Perception of the political

¹⁵¹ Seremet, S. *Why (and How) Rusyns Joined Czechoslovakia a Hundred Years Ago*, *Corvinus Journal of International Affairs*, 4(2-4), 2019 pp. 99–110.

¹⁵² Kokaisl, Petr. *Subcarpathian Rusyns in the Debates of the Chamber of Deputies of the Inter-War Czechoslovak Republic*, *Kulturní Studia* 2023, no. 1 (2023): 93–114.

¹⁵³ Shevchenko, Kirill, and Bogatko, Anna. *Education System in Subcarpathian Rus During Interwar Period in the Estimates of the Rusyn Politicians and Public Figures*, *Czech-Polish Historical and Pedagogical Journal* 13, no. 1 (2022).

dangers of both communism and Hungarian territorial ambitions for democratic Europe was well illustrated on the cold reception of a petition by Mr Ivan Kurtyak, a deputy of the Subcarpathian Agrarian Union by the League of Nations. The petition from August 1931 summed up most of the same demands of similar petitions by Ruthenian nationalists of the time, calling on the national rights as guaranteed by the agreement with Czechoslovak government. He articulated the burning question of the Ruthenian autonomy, however, mentioning the national rights offered to Ruthenian people by Hungary after the end of the war before settlement with President Masaryk was decided and suggesting that there were other options for Ruthenian national development except in cooperation with Czechoslovak government. Considering the background of the Subcarpathian Agrarian Union, which had Russophile inclination and was funded by Hungary to promote reunification of the region to the before-war status, the petition probably looked too provocative and was rejected by the League.¹⁵⁴

Fear of the possible Russian expansionist ambition was not new in the interwar politics. In case of Ruthenians, the only thing which changed was the form of the threat. Before the Great War, the most problematic appeared Ruthenian religious inclination towards Orthodoxy. Already during the period of Austria-Hungary conversion movements to leave Greek-Catholic Church became popular among Ruthenian population and this trend was further accelerated by transatlantic migration and mass conversions in the United States. Hungarian government tried to hinder the conversions out of fear of Russian influence. The motivation of Ruthenians who changed their confession truly varied from religious to political ideas, even more radical support for unification with Russian Empire. In Czechoslovak republic Catholicism was no longer associated with loyalty to the government, therefore Ruthenians became free to choose their confession without persecution. Return-to-Orthodoxy movement became rather a mass phenomenon in the 1920s in Subcarpathian Rus'.¹⁵⁵ Many Orthodox priests from the Russian Empire who had fled to Czechoslovakia after the October Revolution popularized these conversions along with the political idea of Subcarpathian Rus' belonging to the Russian

¹⁵⁴ Kurtyak, Ivan. *File R2164/4/30890/6909 – Ruthenians in Czechoslovakia – Petition of Mr. Ivan Kurtyak dated 31 August 1931*, Petition. from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed October 10, 2024)

¹⁵⁵ Brady, Joel, *East European Assimilation and (Re)Integration: The Interwar Legacies of Transatlantic Migration and „Russian“ Orthodox Conversion (1918-1939)*, Canadian Slavonic Papers, 2015, Vol.57 No. 1-2, p.81

national territory. Consequently, religion became part of competition between different political orientations again.¹⁵⁶

After the Bolshevik revolution, fear that communist ideology might have subversive effect on democratic societies and even enhance aggressive Russian imperialism entered international discussions. After the experience with the world war and being aware of the interconnectedness of the economic system countries realized, that regional instability could lead to another international conflict. In the United States the First Red Scare of 1919-1920 reflected these general worries in internal policies towards suspicious citizens. Economic depression induced by the consequences of the war, inflation and high unemployment rates brought unrest among the working classes. Labourers started agitating for higher wages as the ideas of the Bolshevik Revolution reached America. Communist parties emerged in the United States, but these organizations were not always based on ethnicity of people involved in them, many well-to-do Americans decided to support them out of their own political perceptions. Then there were also „foreign language federations“, which were autonomous groups of working-class immigrants with homogenous ethnic background. Communist revolution in the US was very unlikely, however, American radicals were still inspired by the Bolshevik Revolution and the rise in radical activities and anti-Communist propaganda campaign in the national mass media inseminated fear among Americans. In the immediate post-war period thousands of Russian immigrants became victims of mass arrests. Often violent and abusive, raids targeted groups suspicious of subversive communist activities and as a result, hundreds of immigrants were deported to Soviet Russia. Proletarian immigrants in the United States were typically very active in labour unions, but the fact, that Bolshevik Revolution occurred in Russia made the Russian immigrants target of not only the raids, but also of discrimination at work or in society.¹⁵⁷ Bolshevism was portrayed as an ideology opposed to American democracy with its strong anti-capitalist and anti-religious narrative. Threat to American morality became an excuse for monitoring leftist movements which arose during and after the war. After 1917 events in Russia suspicion against immigrants with ethnic, linguistic, or religious ties to Bolshevik Russia became an argument for deportation or persecution. Specifically, adherents of the Russian Orthodox Church were early targets of the intensifying surveillance state and

¹⁵⁶ Kovalchuk, Iaroslav. *At Home Among Strangers: Carpatho-Rusyn Russophiles in the Soviet Intelligentsia*, Ab Imperio 2021, no. 2 (2021): 103–37.

¹⁵⁷ Popkova, Anna. *Imagining the Russian Community: Novoye Russkoe Slovo, the First Red Scare, and the Palmer Raids, 1919-1920*, Journalism History 48, no. 1 (2022): 41–60.

the project of knowledge-gathering. Some feared, that Russian Church might become a possible site for revolutionary activity fostering the ties between working-class immigrants in the US and ecclesiastical hierarchy in Russia. However, many Orthodox believers were Subcarpathians from Austria-Hungary who converted from Greek-Catholicism after emigration and only a small number of immigrants in this period were ethnically Russian. Church leaders upon their arrival in America, recognized the need to build a wider network which would provide not only religious, but also social, material, and educational background for their believers who were predominantly uneducated agricultural laborers. Educational opportunities and vocational training provided by the church authorities in mother tongue and within the familiar community sought to produce skilled workers with better position on the capitalist labour market, but its purpose wasn't political.¹⁵⁸

The Red Scare phenomenon in the US shouldn't be perceived as a national phenomenon, but rather as part of wider global issues emerging from the World War I era and its social consequences like militarisation of political culture, expansive investigative and repressive state capacity and bureaucratic defence of race, gender, and class hierarchies against social movements. The intensifying challenge to colonialism in the 20th century was not unrelated to the challenge to capitalism.¹⁵⁹ Czechoslovak republic as a democratic country took a clear stand against communist ideology. Beneš, the Czechoslovak Minister of Foreign Affairs in his exposé in January 1921 expressed a very critical view on Russian politics and warned against the Bolsheviks and Russian expansionism. A global social revolution, at least in the form proposed by the Bolsheviks, was an unacceptable thought for a democratic society and constant threat to the fragile stability in Europe.¹⁶⁰ The argument of communist subversion was often used by the Czechoslovak government as an excuse why autonomy couldn't be granted to Subcarpathian Rus'. The consequences of the war were reflected in the paternalism of Czechoslovak government towards Ruthenians in Subcarpathia. However, because the Treaty of St Germain-en-Laye obliged Czechoslovak government to grant Subcarpathian Rus' autonomy, they still had to defend the decision not to do so before international community. This shows not only

¹⁵⁸ Sarkisian, Aram G. *Their Daily Dread: Russian Orthodox Christians in Red Scare Detroit, 1918–1920*, *Journal of American Ethnic History* 41, no. 4 (2022): 37–73.

¹⁵⁹ Hodges, Adam J. *Understanding a national and global red scare/red summer through the local invention of solidarities*, *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 18, no. 1 (2019): 81–98.

¹⁶⁰ *Item S394-59-10, File S394/59/10 - League of Nations - Czecho-Slovakian minorities*, Report. from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed September 7, 2024)

dependence of Ruthenians on the state, but also dependence of Czechoslovakia on the democratic allies. In the note sent to the League of Nations in September 1928 the Secretary General argued that the alleged political immaturity of the Ruthenian people rendered it vulnerable towards subversive communist agitation. Therefore, he further explained, it was impossible to grant the promised autonomy without the risk of endangering peace in the region.¹⁶¹

2.4 Through autonomy to independence

By the late 1920s the League of Nations became alarmed about the spread of communism in Europe making it an easy argument for keeping Subcarpathian Rus' under control of the central government. However, alleged dubious political inclinations of Ruthenians were not the only barrier towards their autonomy. Hungarian claim to the territory remained a more immediate threat. The Treaty of St. Germain bound Czechoslovak government to secure autonomy for Subcarpathian Rus' under the condition that it would not endanger the stability and security of the republic. An image of an autonomous Diet where Hungarian or Communist representatives could eventually dominate was enough to postpone the autonomy question indefinitely.¹⁶²

In the 1930s Europe became more occupied by the questions of peace and stability while minority rights discussion was muted. Many European states were politically weakened by the necessary focus on international affairs and the dissatisfied minority communities used the situation to their advantage. After the Munich Agreement Ruthenians were determined to push through their long-standing demands of autonomy, discussion of which only intensified in the 1930s. The topic was mostly promoted by the Autonomous Agricultural Association led by Andrej Bródy later joined by Russian National Autonomist Party established in 1935 under the leadership of 'Stefan Fentsykk. Both parties were in contact with the Rusyn-American organisations overseas. Because they demanded union of the territory of eastern Slovakia with Subcarpathian Rus', several branches of the organisations were established in Slovakia. Funding of these organisations were secured through several opposition parties in Czechoslovak government but also by national governments of Hungary and Poland.

¹⁶¹ *Item C-214-1921_BI - The Autonomous Territory South of the Carpathians. Note by the Secretary-General.* Report. from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed October 27, 2024)

¹⁶² *File R1652/41/59496/9428 - The Carpatho-Russian Autonomy problem - Memoranda by members of the Minorities section.* Report. from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed September 12, 2024)

Ruthenian representatives ultimately agreed on the desire for autonomy despite political differences among them and in 1936 submitted a draft proposal for autonomous Subcarpathian Rus'. The Czechoslovak government tried to postpone the autonomy one last time and issued a new law altering the competencies of the Subcarpathian governor. In reality, the Czech vice-governor, who had always been appointed by the Prague government, continued to hold more power. In the spring of 1938, representatives of both Ukrainophile and Russophile politics unified within Russian-Ukrainian Central National Council and pressured Czechoslovak government to immediately declare elections to the Subcarpathian Autonomous Diet and to unify the Ruthenian inhabited territory in eastern Slovakia with Subcarpathian Rus'. The resolution was further supported by National Committee of Prešov, under the leadership of the representatives of Ruthenians in Slovakia.¹⁶³

The weakened Czechoslovak government recognized claims for autonomy to both Slovakia and Subcarpathian Rus' right after the Munich Treaty. At this point Ruthenians lost trust for Prague government and they were even open to the collaboration with enemies of the republic to achieve their goal as proved their collaboration with Hungary and Poland. Symbolic gestures of the Prague government counted for little to the Ruthenians and even the law from 1937 slightly altering competences of the Subcarpathian governor was not enough to inspire trust in the Czechoslovak government again. On 11 October 1938 autonomous Subcarpathian Diet was appointed. In 1930s US immigrant community actively supported the nationalist efforts for autonomy and eventual independence in the future. The Rusyn-American organizations like the Greek Catholic Union and Carpatho-Russian Union supported the main Rusyn political bodies in Subcarpathian Rus' – the Autonomist Agricultural Union led by Andrii Bródy which was joined in the later 1930s by the Russian National Autonomist Party led by Shtefan Fentsyk. When Czechoslovak government appointed autonomous Subcarpathian government, it was Andrii Bródy who became the first Premier of the Diet. The autonomous government had ambitious plans unifying all the territories inhabited by Carpatho-Rusyns under one state. Bródy's government lasted only 15 days, but managed to define very clearly its political goals. Accusing the Prague government of Czechization, they started to immediately close schools with Czech language of instruction in Subcarpathian Rus'. Ministers from the Prešov region were instructed to organize demonstrations in the eastern Slovakia which should have proved

¹⁶³ Magocsi, Paul Robert, *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, Central European University Press, NED - New edition 2015-12-15, p. 333-334

the desire of local Ruthenian communities to join Subcarpathian Rus'. Bródy did not hide his sympathies for cooperation with Hungary and built his political image on his support of a plebiscite regarding unification with Hungary counting on the support not only of Ruthenians but also of the numerous Hungarians inhabiting the region. However, before his government could start to put their plans to work, the Prague government dissolved the Diet.¹⁶⁴ Because he openly discussed cooperation with Hungary, Brodii was arrested after only 15 days in office and accused of treason. The autonomous government was dismissed and a new Premier was appointed – Avhustyn Voloshyn.¹⁶⁵ One of the first changes the Voloshin's government made was renaming Subcarpathian Rus' to Carpatho-Ukraine. This was part of the Ukrainization policies, as naming the territory of Rusyns Subcarpathian Rus' and giving it the national attribute played a big role in the Rusyn identity building.¹⁶⁶ Since the beginning, Voloshyn's government had to face disputes with Slovakia over territorial issues because Ruthenians living in Slovakia continued to demand unification of the Prešov region with Subcarpathian Rus'. Despite the external disputes, the focus was on the election to the Diet. With the introduction of Voloshyn's government, all political parties were abolished, and new political bodies had to be presented in order to participate in the election. Ukrainian National Union (Ukrajinske nacionálně Objednannja or UNO) presented 32 candidates, all Ukrainian nationalists. The election commission refused any other candidate party with the exception of Nazi-oriented German Party, therefore the citizens were not truly given a free choice. In the manipulated election 12 February 1939 over 90% voters formally accepted the proposed Ukrainophile candidates. The tension between Prague and Voloshyn's government intensified as the Czechoslovak government reorganised again the autonomous Diet in March 1939.¹⁶⁷ The Ukrainophile fraction soon gained support of Nazi Germany which destabilized the region and hindered further Ruthenian national development. The Ukrainian military organization Carpathian Sich was legalized, and 25 October 1938 Ukrainian was even declared as official language in Subcarpathian Rus'. This had specifically negative impact on the Rusyn identity as Rusyn language still had not been officially codified.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁴ Magocsi, *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, p. 335-337

¹⁶⁵ Magocsi, p. 269-271

¹⁶⁶ Magdaléna Rychlíková, Jan Rychlík, *Podkarpatská Rus v dějinách Československa 1918–1946*, Vyšehrad 2016, p.8

¹⁶⁷ Magocsi, Paul Robert, *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, Central European University Press, NED - New edition 2015-12-15, p. 343-346

¹⁶⁸ Rychlík, Jan, Zilynskyj, Bohdan, Magocsi, Paul Robert, *Dějiny Ukrajiny*, Lidové noviny 2015, p.324

Apparently, the proclamation of autonomy did not bring the expected outcome. Subcarpathian Rus' still remained dependent on the Prague government which continued to intervene in its affairs like in the case of removal of Bródy, and after these events, Subcarpathian Rus' fell into a forced Ukrainization and manipulation politics. On the contrary, the destabilizing influence of Hungary in the region intensified. Because Germany and Hungary were allies, Munich Agreement was not the last agreement on destabilisation of Czechoslovakia. On 2 November 1938, the Vienna conference resulted in The First Vienna Award, when most of the fertile southern part of Subcarpathian Rus' was separated from Czechoslovakia and ceded to Hungary. As a consequence, Subcarpathian Rus' lost its administrative centre in Uzhorod and two biggest cities, Mukachevo and Berehovo. Socioeconomic conditions immediately worsened, and the roads and train communications were cut. The Subcarpathian Diet was forced to move to Chust to at least maintain railway communication with Prague. Bródy and Fentsyk, who were released after their arrest, moved their activities to Uzhorod where they launched a campaign for unification of the rest of the Rus' with Hungary. Many Greek-Catholic priests remained in Uzhorod and joined the campaign along the politicians.¹⁶⁹

Rusyn-American organisations remained active in political life in their homeland and hosted visits of several political activists, all of them from the Russophile camp. Most of these activists openly proclaimed their aversion towards the Czechoslovak government and praising Hungarian politics instead.¹⁷⁰ Under this influence, Ruthenian diaspora in the US quickly condemned the new Voloshyn government in the Subcarpathian Rus' opposing not only the Ukrainophile politics but also Czechoslovak interference. Members of the diaspora overseas also communicated their concerns about security in the Subcarpathian Rus' to the governments of Canada, the United States and Britain and campaigned for their support of minority rights of Ruthenians and opposition of the Vienna Award.¹⁷¹

Instead of development of the existing Ruthenian identity, Ukrainophile politicians became rather dominant in the autonomous Diet forcing Ukrainian identity on their subjects. This became even easier because of the sudden lack of Czechoslovak social and educational

¹⁶⁹ Magocsi, Paul Robert. *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, Central European University Press, NED - New edition 2015-12-15, p. 337-340

¹⁷⁰ Magocsi, *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, p. 312

¹⁷¹ Magocsi, p. 342

assistance, which proved to be crucial for national identity building process.¹⁷² The dispute between Russophiles and Ukrainophiles, as a divide between Hungarian and Galician Ruthenians, went back to the end of the First World War. As Magyarization politics pressured them no more, Ruthenians applied the same principle of suppression on the ideologically opposed fellow citizens. Not only did each community exclude the opposing one, but it also convinced the other that it did not exist. Because each group came up with a different version of the national narrative without compromising, it was very hard to imagine a unification of the versions.¹⁷³ Despite the efforts of the Ukrainian nationalists to discredit Russophile fraction of Rusyn politics through the political scandal of Bródy, there remained some active politicians who turned their hope to the possibility of federative Czechoslovak State. 14 November 1938 in Chust was established Central Russian National Council by 25 Russophile representatives who favoured the idea. The Council protested what they called Ukrainian terror and criticized openly the dismissal of Russophiles from Provincial School Administration and establishment of concentration camps by the Carpathian Sich where politically uncomfortable individuals were kept. The camp was established on 20 November 1938 near Rakhiv town. The church controversy re-emerged again as the Orthodox communities became a hotbed of discontent with Voloshyn's Ukrainization program. Despite the fact, that both Serbian Orthodox and Constantinople Orthodox bishops later expressed support for Voloshyn's government, the northern areas with strong Orthodox background defied Ukrainian nationalism by voting strongly against the Ukrainophile candidates to the Diet already in February 1938 and later by encountering Carpathian Sich on several occasions. The protests against the name Carpatho-Ukraine were held also by the Rusyn students in Prague and the immigrant community in the US expressed their discontent with establishing Ukraine in the region inhabited by Rusyns.¹⁷⁴

Germany, in an attempt to destabilize Czechoslovakia, supported autonomist movements not only in Subcarpathian Rus' but also in Slovakia. German politicians in the Czechoslovak government were also the ones, who supported Ruthenian efforts the most. Voloshin's government was particularly keen on cooperation with Hitler, who promised help with

¹⁷² Jan Rychlík, Zilynskyj, Bohdan Paul Robert Magocsi, Paul Robert. *Dějiny Ukrajiny*, Lidové noviny 2015, p. 325

¹⁷³ Rusinko, Elaine. *Re-Imagining Rusyn Identity*, In *Straddling Borders*, 296. Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2003.

¹⁷⁴ Magocsi, Paul Robert. *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, Central European University Press, NED - New edition 2015-12-15, p.273-277

establishing economic ties with Ukraine.¹⁷⁵ In general, the Ukrainophile Ruthenians who were optimistic about possibility of independent Ukrainian state including the territory of Subcarpathian Rus' turned to Germany. However, those who imagined future within the Soviet Union were intrigued by the communist politics and sought alliances accordingly.¹⁷⁶ With Ruthenians distancing themselves from the Czechoslovak government the assistance from Czechoslovakia became restricted to military help as the situation sharpened. Because the new political allies did not care as much about Ruthenian national goals as they cared about the territory they wanted to control, Subcarpathian Rus' only emerged more weakened.¹⁷⁷ In fact, there were records of Hungarian subversive activities in Czechoslovakia already in the 1920s. In August 1920 in *Le Temps* an article warned that Hungarian government seeks political differences between Czechs and Slovaks to exploit these and weaken the state. When the anti-Czech propaganda proved to be ineffective, Budapest turned to endorsement of Slovak separatism by targeting social discontent in some regions.¹⁷⁸ By the middle of the 1930s it became obvious how underestimated was the discontent of Ruthenian and Slovak citizens within the republic. This discontent was further used by Germany, Poland, and Hungary to fulfil their own political ambitions. The political inexperience of Ruthenian leaders made Subcarpathian Rus' vulnerable towards foreign manipulation. An example is a complaint submitted to the League of Nations by Mr. Kutkafalvy, a member of the Ruthenian Political Party of Hungary, from December 1920. Apparently, he attempted to persuade the League officers that Czechoslovak army occupied Subcarpathian Rus' and threatened Ruthenians to join the republic.¹⁷⁹

Even after occupying southern territories of the Subcarpathian Rus', Hungary was still hoping to take the whole territory. The now autonomous region had to face threat of military attacks from Hungary and Poland. In an effort to prove political capability and not to rely fully on the

¹⁷⁵ Kokaisl, Petr. *Subcarpathian Rusyns in the Debates of the Chamber of Deputies of the Inter-War Czechoslovak Republic*, *Kulturní Studia* 2023, no. 1 (2023): 93–114.

¹⁷⁶ Magocsi, Paul Robert. *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, Central European University Press, NED - New edition 2015-12-15, p. 312-313

¹⁷⁷ Ivan Pop, *V osídlach veľmoci*, Združenie inteligencie Rusínov Slovenska, 2017, DVD

¹⁷⁸ *File S394/59/10 - League of Nations - Czecho-Slovakian minorities*. Report. from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed September 7, 2024)

¹⁷⁹ Kutkafalvy. *File R1650-41-9428-10131 - Ruthenians in Hungary - M. Kutkafalvy - Protests against inclusion of officers and men of the Czech army, stationed in Ruthenia, among the electors.*, Letter. from United Nations Archives at Geneva. www.archives.ungeneva.org (accessed September 8, 2024)

Czechoslovak government, Ruthenians tried to secure the region through paramilitary organization Carpathian Sich. However, it wasn't very successful failing to provide security and enhanced further Ukrainization.¹⁸⁰ Already the summer of 1938 Hungary created a specific army of approximately 4000 men named Rongyos Garda was created in Hungary. By the end of August, it was sent to the borders of Czechoslovakia where it remained until the first attack at night from 9 to 10 October. The firing continued even after the Vienna Award in November. At the same time, Poland attacked Subcarpathian Rus' from the north. The Czechoslovak army defied the attacks while Voloshyn's government created a special organisation for national protection as well. Leaders of this organisation were pro-Ukrainian activists from Subcarpathian Rus' but most of the soldiers were Ukrainian nationalists from Galicia. Most of them were members of the secret army, Organisation of Ukrainian nationalists, fighting in guerrilla war with Poland since the 1930s and establishing units in neighbouring countries allegedly inhabited by Ukrainians, including Subcarpathian Rus'.¹⁸¹

13 March 1939, the Prime Minister of the autonomous Slovakia Jozef Tiso, was invited to Berlin and pressured to declare independent Slovak republic under German patronage. When Slovak assembly declared independence the next day, the Ruthenian assembly in Chust followed the lead immediately declaring independent Carpatho-Ukraine. Voloshyn tried to negotiate protectorate status with Hitler, but Hungarians already made an agreement with Germany two days earlier to absorb whole Subcarpathian Rus', therefore his proposal was refused. 14 March, the same day as the independence was declared, the Hungarian invasion of Carpathian Ukraine was launched the same day. Czechoslovak army resisted the attack, then gave up in the evening. Fights continued the next day, but not even a united force of Ruthenian civilians, Ukrainian nationalists and students could not stop the Hungarian army. On 15 March, the newly established government of the independent Carpatho-Ukraine assembled in Chust to confirm the new status, name Augustin Voloshyn the president and agree to flee the country given that they lost support of Germany and were under pressure of the advancing Hungarian army. Simultaneously, German troops entered Prague and occupied the rest of the Czechoslovak republic. Czechoslovak troops were immediately instructed to leave

¹⁸⁰ Segal, Raz. *Genocide in the Carpathians: War, Social Breakdown, and Mass Violence*, Stanford University Press, 2016, p.269-271

¹⁸¹ Magocsi, Paul Robert. *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, Central European University Press, NED - New edition 2015-12-15, p. 337-340

Subcarpathian Rus' and stop fighting the Hungarian army, which occupied the whole territory of Subcarpathian Rus' by 18 March 1939.¹⁸²

CONCLUSION

Rusyn-American diaspora, which emerged in the late 19th century in the USA as a consequence of the mass migration from Subcarpathian Rus' and Galicia, was of a great significance to the Ruthenian national movement in the first half of the 20th century. Fragmentation of the political ideologies within the Ruthenian migrants influenced the direction of Ruthenian politics for several decades and had negative impact on the stability of Subcarpathian Rus'. Political influence of the diaspora was possible due to several aspects. First one was the network between migrants and their families in Europe. Because many migrants considered movement to America as a temporary adventure, they usually left their families in Europe keeping vital communication and visiting whenever possible. This created a network of cultural and political exchange between America and regions inhabited by Ruthenians in Europe. Ruthenians who migrated overseas not only gained experience, but often also education with help of numerous church organisations. If their families followed them and settled in America, the next generation usually climbed on the social ladder and wasn't forced to make living through the hardest work available. While hard conditions and social situation of the first generation of Ruthenian migrants created an ideal environment for emergence of unions and organisations for mutual help, the educational opportunities of the second generation created space for successful political activities. Emergence of brotherhoods and church organisations for mutual help often created ties between Ruthenians from different regions and with different political views, which later could be further developed and discussed. Education of the second generation provided also for valuable connections with American politicians who then helped to push through the political ambitions of Ruthenians.

In this respect, Greek-Catholic Church and Orthodox Church became important for political life of Ruthenians who migrated to the United States. Because historically Ruthenian people had showed large percentage of illiteracy, the intellectual elite had consisted mostly of the clergy. In the United States communities were created around church meetings and even secular organizations were either led by clergy or at least consisted more or less of the same people

¹⁸² Magocsi, Paul Robert. *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, Central European University Press, NED - New edition 2015-12-15, p. 343-346

who met in the church. Because Ruthenians had been traditionally strongly religious and most of them Greek Catholic or Orthodox Christians, it became natural for them to mix religious meetings with discussing national questions. Soon it became clear, that there are strong political differences between Ruthenians from Hungary and those who migrated from Galicia. While the first considered themselves a separate nation, Ruthenians from Galicia adopted Ukrainian identity. By the first world war Ruthenian religious life was so intertwined with the political one, that in 1916 two separate exarchates of Greek Catholic Church in the United States were created. As a consequence, Greek Catholic immigrants created separate communities of Ukrainians and Ruthenians who developed their politics separately from each other.¹⁸³ As a result of religious conflicts with the Vatican during the efforts to establish Greek Catholic church in the US for the immigrants, many Ruthenians followed father Chornock in conversion to Orthodox Christianity since the 1930s. The new church refused both Vatican and Moscow and named patriarch of Constantinople.¹⁸⁴ Because religion was so strongly connected to the politics, the conversion movement showed not only desire for religious independence, but also a political one.

World War I left disastrous social and economic consequences all over Europe, and the regions inhabited by Ruthenians were particularly shaken by the conflict. However, the consequential dissolution of the Habsburg monarchy created space for smaller nation states. Involvement of the USA in the position of a peacemaker pathed the way for emergence of minority rights under the protection of the League of Nations. Ruthenians, conveniently with ties to the United States, were able to negotiate what they considered favourable conditions for national development. The brotherhoods of mutual aid, organisations which enabled Ruthenians in the United States to help each other in case of emergency in a foreign environment later transformed into a more politically active community. Movement of the significant number of Ruthenians to the United States had undoubtedly important impact on the political direction of the people after the end of the world war. The decision to join democratic Czechoslovak republic and clear refusal of communism at the time of the collapse of the Habsburg monarchy bore stamp of influence of the democratic society in America part of which were then many influential Ruthenians. However, union with Czechoslovakia, which prevailed as the universally accepted course of action, was not the only option and different political possibilities continued to be discussed

¹⁸³ Magocsi, Paul Robert, *Carpathian Rus': A Historical Atlas*, University of Toronto Press, 2017

¹⁸⁴ Magocsi, Paul Robert. *Carpatho-Rusyn Diasporas During the Interwar Years, 1919–1938*, In *With Their Backs to the Mountains*, 241–52. Budapest, Hungary: Central European University Press, 2022, p. 161

among Ruthenian population even after joining the republic. This continued discussion, specifically the complicated question of Ruthenian identity, caused increasing distrust from the Prague government on the one hand and interest from the parties wanting to destabilize the region.

In the end, Ruthenians did not gain the expected territory in whole, and they remained dependent on the Czechoslovak government for further development. Also, Rusyn-Americans ceased to be dominant in communication of Ruthenian demands and local councils took over the day-to-day agenda of nation-building activities from education to legal administration of the region. With the Prague government postponing autonomy of the Subcarpathian Rus' for years, disappointment took root among Ruthenian citizens. However, even if the League of Nations did not have direct legal leverage over minority rights within nation states, the new international system created opportunity for Ruthenians to develop indirectly. Czechoslovak government emerged as a successor state with strong support of political allies upon which it remained dependant even in the interwar period. To prove its democratic values, Czechoslovakia regularly communicated with the League of Nations trying to defend their political decisions towards minorities and specifically towards Ruthenians. Ruthenian politicians were very active in communicating their demands, and their disappointment, to the League of Nations through various petitions and individual complaints. As a result, Czechoslovak government tried to develop the region without being forced to grant political freedoms to its citizens. Subcarpathian Rus' overcame a period of social and economic development with a great assistance of Czech officials who moved to the region to work in administration, education, and healthcare. This practice was quite controversial because on one hand, Czechoslovak officials argued with obvious positive results, while on the other hand Ruthenians argued that the true motivation of such activities was gradual Czechization of the citizens. Nevertheless, even though Ruthenians were dependent on the Czechoslovak republic in enforcing their rights, they were able to communicate their concerns with the League of Nations which could indirectly pressure the state to pay attention to the national demands of the minorities.

By the end of the 1930s it became clear that indirect involvement of the League of Nations wasn't sufficient for preventing collapse of the relationship between Ruthenians and the Czechoslovak government. On the contrary, Ruthenian dependence on the Czechoslovak government, which denied Subcarpathian Rus' autonomy for as long as possible, escalating

conflict with Slovaks over territorial issues and internal political division among Ruthenian representatives made them look around for new political allies. The influence of Rusyn-Americans became weaker in the Subcarpathian Rus' which was reflected in the overall political confusion of the Ruthenians in Czechoslovakia. Russian revolution grew into a communist propaganda with global ambitions and expansionist goals. Many Ruthenians, appreciating older cultural ties to Russia, were seduced by the promise of social equality promoted by the Russian communists. However, this political inclination made it very difficult to view autonomous Subcarpathian Rus' as beneficial to the stability of the region by democratic political partners. Specifically, in the context of the red fear and the fragility of the interwar peace in Europe, communist political ideology was perceived as dangerous and manipulative. Countries, which were dissatisfied with the outcome of the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, were seeking opportunities to expand their territory at the expense of the successor states by manipulating politically inexperienced minority leaders to turn against the national government. Specifically, Germany became an alarming threat to the peace and security in Europe in the 1930s. By that time, Ruthenians already lost trust in Czechoslovak government and in some cases were open to cooperation even with Hungary to gain political autonomy denied by the Czechs. Manipulated by Hungarian agents, controlled by Czechoslovak government and ultimately taken over by Ukrainian nationalists, Subcarpathian Rus' gained political independence only to lose it the next day together with any possibilities for further national development for the next fifty years.

I argue that national development of Ruthenian minority was strongly influenced by global interactions, because politics of the Subcarpathian Rus' were impacted by not only external factors, but communities and organisations which were part of world events. Throughout the interwar political history of Ruthenians these often seem more powerful than the local political bodies and organisations themselves. First, by the creation of transatlantic network of friends and families communicating democratic values and opinions on national politics. The dominant position of the Rusyn diaspora in the USA was an interesting indicator of how important the spatial expansion of the community was for political progress of the people. The main political streams were created also in the context of religious conflicts in the USA, which divided Ruthenians from Ukrainians and helped individuals to define their national identity. Second, by creation of the League of Nations and new international order as proposed by Wilson's government. The League monitored actions against minorities taken by the successor states, while minorities remained legally dependent on the national governments of the respective

states. The League maybe did not possess effective legal instruments to directly enforce minority rights in member nation states, but the fact that Ruthenians were recognized by the organisation with global reach meant difference in their international political status and eased their isolation from political partners. This proved advantageous at the time when Ruthenian people started to voice distrust towards Czechoslovak government. Third, cultural proximity to Russia made Ruthenians suspects in communist subversion plans and became one of the main arguments for keeping Subcarpathian Rus' under control of the central government in Prague. However, fear of communist propaganda opened door to intrigues of Germany and Hungary and the fate of Subcarpathian Rus' was decided, in the end, by foreign politics instead of the Ruthenian community itself. Even though the region of Subcarpathian Rus might seem isolated geographically or politically, the vivid interwar interactions with the democratic United States, intangible cultural ties with Russia and consequent sympathy for communist Soviet Union, and the strategic importance of the territory for numerous foreign governments suggest otherwise. Subcarpathian Rus', along with its inhabitants, became part of world conflicts and partnerships and in this way its historical events in the interwar period were largely motivated by these global interactions. Because they so often seem more dominant than interwar local politics and Ruthenian national activities, and because the local events cannot be viewed without partly global perspective, I suggest taking a mixed, *glocal* perspective on the interwar Ruthenian national history. This approach allows bigger picture of what is commonly perceived as national history with strict regional definition and permits inclusion of more space in which Ruthenian political development was taking place.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cude, Michael R. *Wilsonian Reform and World War I*, In Woodrow Wilson, 1st ed., 47–66.

Routledge, 2024

Núñez Seixas, Xosé M., *Home-rule Versus Non-territorial Autonomy? Western European National Movements and Their Views on the Minority Question, 1919–1939*, Nations and Nationalism 29, no. 2, 2023

Kokaisl, Petr. *Subcarpathian Rusyns in the Debates of the Chamber of Deputies of the Inter-War Czechoslovak Republic*, Kulturní Studia 2023, no. 1, 2023

Shevchenko, Kirill, and Bogatko, Anna. *Education System in Subcarpathian Rus During Interwar Period in the Estimates of the Rusyn Politicians and Public Figures*, Czech-Polish Historical and Pedagogical Journal 13, no. 1, 2022

Onderková, Radka, *Podkarpatská Rus v medzivojnovom období*, Studium Carpatho-Ruthenorum 2022, Prešovská univerzita v Prešove, 2022

Atack, Jeremy, Margo, Robert A., and Rhode, Paul W.. *Industrialization and Urbanization in Nineteenth Century America*, Regional Science and Urban Economics 94, 2022

Kohn, Hans. *History of nationalism in the east*, [S.l.]: Routledge, 2022

Halina, Natalia, and Pivkina, Nadezda. *American Rusyns: The Slavic motive in the American cultural landscape. The experience of discursive description*, Limbaj Si Context 14, no. 1, 2022

Börries, Kuzmany, Battis, Matthias, and Mulej, Oskar. *Accommodating National Diversity Within States: Territorial and Non-Territorial Approaches Since the Late 19th Century*. Nationalities Papers 50, no. 5, 2022

Klatt, Martin. *Schleswig and Non-Territorial Autonomy – The Territorial Trap?*, Nationalities Papers 50, no. 5, 2022

Fisanov, Volodymyr, Nechaieva-Yuriichuk, Natalia, and Hissa-Ivanovych, Oleksandra. *Woodrow Wilson's "Fourteen Points: Between the Diplomacy and Propaganda (Origins of the Liberal Paradigm)*, Codrul Cosminului (Suceava, Romania) 28, no. 1, 2022

Popkova, Anna. *Imagining the Russian Community: Novoye Russkoe Slovo, the First Red Scare, and the Palmer Raids, 1919-1920*, Journalism History 48, no. 1, 2022

Sarkisian, Aram G. *Their Daily Dread: Russian Orthodox Christians in Red Scare Detroit, 1918–1920*, Journal of American Ethnic History 41, no. 4, 2022

Steidl, Annemarie. *On Many Routes : Internal, European, and Transatlantic Migration in the Late Habsburg Empire*, West, Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2021

Kovalchuk, Iaroslav. *At Home Among Strangers: Carpatho-Rusyn Russophiles in the Soviet Intelligentsia*, Ab Imperio 2021, no. 2, 2021

Doleshal, Zachary Austin, *In the Kingdom of Shoes*. University of Toronto Press, 2021

Robson, Laura. *Capitulations Redux: The Imperial Genealogy of the Post–World War I “Minority” Regimes.*”, *The American Historical Review* 126, no. 3, 2021

Becker, Peter, and Wheatley, Natasha. *Hungary and the League of Nations: A Forced Marriage*, In *Remaking Central Europe*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2021.

Komlosy, Andrea, and Musić, Goran, *Global Commodity Chains and Labor Relations*, Leiden; Boston: BRILL, 2021

Holubec, Stanislav, *New state borders and (dis)loyalties to Czechoslovakia in Subcarpathian Rus, 1919–25*, *European Review of History: Revue européenne d'histoire*, 27:6, 2020

Švorc, Peter. *Dve periférie v dvoch krajinách október 1918 – január 1919. Východné Slovensko a Uhorská Rus na ceste do Československej republiky*, *Historický časopis* 68, no. 3, 2020

Kochanowicz, Jacek, and Murgescu, Bogdan. *Rural and Urban Worlds*, In *The Routledge History Of East Central Europe Since 1700*, 1st ed., 81–125, 2020

Adorjáni, Anna, and Bari, László Bence. *National Minority: The Emergence of the Concept in the Habsburg and International Legal Thought*, *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae. European and Regional Studies* 16, no. 1, 2019

Wheatley, Natasha. *Central Europe as Ground Zero of the New International Order*, *Slavic Review* 78, no. 4, 2019

Seremet, S. *Why (and How) Rusyns Joined Czechoslovakia a Hundred Years Ago*, *Corvinus Journal of International Affairs*, 4(2-4), 2019

Hodges, Adam J. *Understanding a national and global red scare/red summer through the local invention of solidarities*, *The Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 18, no. 1, 2019

Degtyarev, Serhii, and Yevhen Samoilenko. *League of Nations and Protection of national minorities in Eastern European states (1919-1946)*, Східноєвропейський історичний вісник, no. 12, 2019

Shackel, Paul A., *Remembering Lattimer: Labor, Migration, and Race in Pennsylvania Anthracite Country*, Urbana. University of Illinois Press, 2018

Vladimír Kuštek, *Československý svet v Karpatoch*, Združenie inteligencie Rusínov Slovenska, o.z., 2018

Esch, Michael G. *Migration: Transnationale Praktiken, Wirkungen und Paradigmen*, In *Handbuch einer transnationalen Geschichte Ostmitteleuropas*, 1st ed., 6:131–88. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017

Kaltenbrunner, Matthias, Campus Verlag, and Verlag. *Das global vernetzte Dorf: eine Migrationsgeschichte*, Frankfurt New York: Campus Verlag, 2017

Nagy, Zsolt. *Great Expectations and Interwar Realities*, Budapest: Central European University Press, 2017

Ivan Pop, *V osídlach veľmoci*, Združenie inteligencie Rusínov Slovenska, DVD, 2017

Magocsi, Paul Robert, *Carpathian Rus': A Historical Atlas*, University of Toronto Press, 2017

Segal, Raz. *Genocide in the Carpathians: War, Social Breakdown, and Mass Violence*, Stanford University Press, 2016

Judson, Pieter M.. *The Habsburg Empire : A New History*. Belknap Press, 2016

Rychlíková, Magdaléna, Rychlík, Jan, *Podkarpatská Rus v dějinách Československa 1918–1946*, Vyšehrad 2016

Stráner, Katalin, *Emigration Agents and the Agency of the Urban Press: Approaches to Transatlantic Migration in Hungary, 1880s-1914*, *Journal of Migration History* 2, no. 2, 2016

Conrad, Sebastian. *What Is Global History?*, Princeton Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2016

Rychlík, Jan, Zilynskyj, Bohdan, Magocsi, Paul Robert, *Dějiny Ukrajiny*, Lidové noviny 2015

Brady, Joel, *East European Assimilation and (Re)Integration: The Interwar Legacies of Transatlantic Migration and „Russian“ Orthodox Conversion (1918-1939)*, Canadian Slavonic Papers, 2015, Vol.57 No. 1-2, 2015

Magocsi, Paul R. *With Their Backs to the Mountains: a History of Carpathian Rus' and Carpatho-Rusyns* /. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2015

Pedersen, Susan. *The Guardians: The League of Nations and The Crisis of Empire*, In Guardians. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2015

Konečný, Stanislav, *Náčrt dejín karpatských Rusínov*, Prešov university, Ústav rusínskeho jazyka a kultúry, 2015

Fejsa, Mihajlo P. *The Preservation of the Rusyn Language and Culture in Serbia/Vojvodina*. A Jubilee Collection: Essays in Honor of Professor Paul Robert Magocsi on his 70th Birthday. Uzhorod: Valerii Padiak Publishers, 2015

Švorc, Peter. *Prvá svetová vojna, Rusíni a vznik Československa*, In Studium Carpatorutenorum 2015, Študii z karpatorussnistiky 7, Prešov: Prešovská univerzita – Ústav rusínskeho jazyka a literatúry, 2015

Svistun F.I.. *Carpathian Rus' under the ownership of Austria*, Part 2, Lviv: Printing house of the Stavropol Institute, 2015

Portes, Alejandro, and Rumbaut, Rubén G.. *Immigrant America : a Portrait*, 4th ed. Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2014

Beckert, Sven, *Empire of Cotton*, Penguin New York, 2014

Tatyana L. Shestova, *Methodological Foundations of Global history*, Globalistics and Globalization Studies: Theories, Research and Teaching, 2013

Vanhaute, Eric. *World History : An Introduction*, Taylor & Francis Group, ProQuest Ebook Central, 2012

- Brady, Joel. *Transnational Conversions: Greek Catholic Migrants and Russky Orthodox Conversion Movements in Austria-Hungary, Russia, and the Americas (1890–1914)*, ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2012
- Throntveit, Trygve. *The Fable of the Fourteen Points: Woodrow Wilson and National Self-Determination*, *Diplomatic History* 35, no. 3, 2011
- Horbal, Bogdan, *Lemko Studies: A Handbook*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2010
- Šprocha, Branislav, and Tišliar, Pavol. *Populačný vývoj Podkarpatskej Rusi*, Vol. I, Bratislava, 2009
- Anna Plišková, *Rusínsky jazyk na Slovensku: náčrt vývoja a súčasné problémy*, Prešov: Metodicko- pedagogické centrum v Prešove, 2007
- DiNunzio, Mario R. *Woodrow Wilson: essential writings and speeches of the scholar president*, New York University Press, 2006
- Keeling, Drew. *The Business of Transatlantic Migration Between Europe and the USA, 1900–1914*, *The Journal of Economic History* 66, no. 2, 2006
- Roediger D.R.. *Working Toward Whiteness: How America's Immigrants Became White: The Strange Journey from Ellis Island to the Suburbs*, New York: Basic Books, 2006
- Magocsi, Paul Robert, *Our People: Carpatho-Rusyns and Their Descendants in North America*, 4th rev. ed., Wauconda, Ill., 2005
- Pop, Ivan. *Dějiny Podkarpatské Rusi v datech*. Praha: Libri, 2005
- Iggers, Georg. Review of *Historiography from a Global Perspective*, by Jürgen Osterhammel. *History and Theory* 43, no. 1, 2004
- Kryuchkov, I.V.. *Amerikano-vengerskie otnosheniya vo vtoroy polovine XIX – nachale XX veka i problemy emigratsii Slovakov i Ukraintsev (Rusin) [US–Hungary relations in the second half of the 19th – early 20th century and the problems of Slovak and Ukrainian (Ruthenian) immigration]*, *Amerikanskiy ezhegodnik – American Yearbook* 2003
- Rusinko, Elaine, *Straddling Borders: Literature and Identity in Subcarpathian Rus*, Toronto, 2003

Rusinko, Elaine. *Re-Imagining Rusyn Identity*, In *Straddling Borders*, p. 296. Canada: University of Toronto Press, 2003

Morawska E.. *Immigrants, Transnationalism, and Ethnicization: A Comparison of This Great Wave and the Last In E Pluribus Unum? Contemporary and Historical Perspectives on Immigrant Political Incorporation*, Ed. by G. Gerstle, J. Mollenkopf. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2001

Brubaker, Rogers. *Nationalism Reframed*, Cambridge, Mass: Cambridge Univ. Pr, 1996

Magocsi, Paul Robert. *The Political Activity of Rusyn-American Immigrants in 1918*, East European Quarterly 10, no. 3 (1976): 347–347, 1976

Mamatey, Victor S., *The Slovaks and Carpatho-Ruthenians*, In *The Immigrants' Influence on Wilson's Peace Policies*. Edited by Joseph P. O'Grady, 1967

Roosting, Helmer. *Protection of Minorities by the League of Nations*. The American Journal of International Law 17, no. 4 1923

Matrosov, Leliva E.N. *Zaokeanskaya Rus' [The Overseas Rus']*, Istoricheskii vestnik. LXVII., 1897

PRIMARY SOURCES

United Nations Archives at Geneva, File R1650-41-9428-10131 - Ruthenians in Hungary - M. Kutkafalvy - Protests against inclusion of officers and men of the Czech army, stationed in Ruthenia, among the electors.

United Nations Archives at Geneva, File S394/59/10 - League of Nations - Czecho-Slovakian minorities

United Nations Archives at Geneva, File COL42/21/6 - Proposition of the Political Party of Ruthenians in Hungary

United Nations Archives at Geneva, File R5375/18A/26911/1426/Jacket20 - New Delhi Office - Press clippings - Minorities section

United Nations Archives at Geneva, File S354/19/3 - League of Nations - Czecho-Slovakia minorities

United Nations Archives at Geneva, File R1651/41/27930/9428 - The Ruthenian territory of the southern Carpathians - Directory of Ruthenian Political Parties in Munkacs - Memorandum addressed to the League of Nations by the Ruthenian people of Russia Subcarpathian living on the territory of the Czecho-Slovak State with respect to the autonomy guaranteed to Ruthenian territory by the Treaty of St. Germain and not yet organized by the Czechoslovak government.

United Nations Archives at Geneva, Item C-214-1921_BI - The Autonomous Territory South of the Carpathians. Note by the Secretary-General

United Nations Archives at Geneva, File R1683-41-22882-22882 - The World Alliance for promoting friendship through the churches and the question of minorities - Communicated by Mr. Colban - Various documents relative to the proceedings at the recent meeting of the World Alliance at Copenhagen.

United Nations Archives at Geneva, File R3918-4-1610-1610, Ruthenians in Czechoslovakia - Petition of the Michael Yuhasz (Juhasz), Rusin Council of National Defense, U.S.A. - Observations of the Czechoslovak Government.

United Nations Archives at Geneva, File R1652/41/59496/9428 - The Carpatho-Russian Autonomy problem - Memoranda by members of the Minorities section.

United Nations Archives at Geneva, File R2164/4/20256/6909 – Ruthenians in Czechoslovakia – Petition of Mr. Boukialy dated 4 June 1930 on the Autonomy of Subcarpathian Russia

United Nations Archives at Geneva, File R2164/4/30890/6909 – Ruthenians in Czechoslovakia – Petition of Mr. Ivan Kurtyak dated 31 August 1931

United Nations Archives at Geneva, File R1652/41/29840/9428 - The Ruthenian territory south of the Carpathians - Mr. Illès Illyascevics, Permanent Delegate of the Committee of Ruthenian Emigrants, Budapest - Communicates on behalf of the Ruthenians Emigrants Executive Committee notes in response to the observations from the Czechoslovak Government on the documents provided by the Ruthenian emigrants.

Svoboda. № 38. 1897. 16 sep.

Svoboda. (1900) 8th August