

Gens fidelissima:

The Rusyns

By: András S. Benedek

A pocketbook, published in the Rusyn language, for the benefit of
the people of Rusynsko, especially the students and teachers of
history

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Foreword

Of all the nations in the Danubian basin who have been living together with the Hungarians, almost from the very beginning, it is the Rusyns who have the most unique fate: they have never had a state of their own, they have never stood apart from other nations. Their national identity has been determined by their Orthodox Catholic religion, by their closely related dialects which, however, have failed to become homogeneous, by their rich material and intellectual ethnography and by their historico-political awareness influenced by their centuries-long coexistence with the Hungarians.

Later, the Panslav ideology, as it was called by the Muscovites, aimed at the liquidation of the small Slavonic nations while trying to keep melt them into one whole. A good example is the fate of the Ukrainians, a nation of nearly fifty million, who in their life-and-death struggle with the Poles and Turks found an unfortunate ally. 'Brotherly' Russia disputed their right to their own nationhood, their language was banned from use and millions of Russian peasants were resettled on the Ukrainian territories liberated from the Turks. (The logic of imperial thinking would seem to be identical everywhere. Imperial Austria settled primarily Germans - later Slovaks, Serbs and Vlachs [Romanians] - on lands confiscated from the Rákóczi family and on the southern territories liberated from the Turks.)

Lest we forget: this was not an East European peculiarity. Around the same time, Scotland, Wales and Ireland came under the sway of English cultural - and language - superiority. (Not to mention France's linguistic chauvinism masked as "Enlightenment"). The best Ukrainian (Malorussian = Small Russian) writer Gogol wrote his novels and stories in Russian, although many of them were rooted in Ukrainian epic folklore and mythology.

The Greater Russian unifying intent became apparent in the 18th century, in the activity of the Russian wine-purchasing committee, and later in the actions of the Russian Orthodox churchmen who arrived at the church of Ūröm (built to the memory of the deceased Grand Duchess Alexandra Pavlovna, daughter of the Russian czar Paul and wife to Joseph, Palatine (Nádor, viceroy) of Hungary). The same direction can be felt in the work of the Slav censors and advisers in Vienna who 'aligned' school texts to the spirit of the

orthodox ideology and adjusted them according to their own dictates. This Greater Russian intention, financially supported, can be clearly felt in the last years of the reform period in the 19th century, during the War of Independence in 1848-49, and the following years of absolutism. This movement is best revealed in the activities of Adolph Dobrjanszki, the commander of Russian troops in the War of Independence. This agitation sometimes had a Ukrainian tinge, as it was directed from Kiev. Unfortunately, the Rusyn culture, having by this time produced serious results, became the victim of this aggressive campaign. One of the best Ukrainian poets, Alexandr Duchnovics, the author of the Rusyn national anthem, himself began to write in Russian from 1856 onwards. When a memorial was erected on the battlefield of Fehéregyháza, hardly a man could be found to translate a few of his lines into Rusyn.

The Rusyn intelligentsia found its way back to its roots after a fifty-year delay, at the turn of the century. However, at this time the 'rolling rubles' launched a new attack aimed at the religious beliefs of the Rusyns. Orthodox priests, trained in Kiev, arrived in the county of Máramaros, especially around Iza, to spread the schism, the conversion to Russian (Pravoslav) Orthodoxy. In spite of all efforts and support from the Czechoslovak authorities in the inter-war period, and the Soviet directive to make orthodoxy the sole religion in Subcarpathia, this movement failed to shake the Rusyn nation and its priests from their faith and traditional religion.

The Pan-Slav chauvinism, cloaked in Communism, banned the Greek Orthodox Church, the Rusyn language, the Rusyn to denote an ethnic group and tried, by extreme means, to destroy even the works of folklore. New editions of Rusyn novels were translated and published in Ukrainian by the editors of the Kárpáti Publishing House. They did the same with collections of folktales.

Soviet authority, naturally, tried to drive a wedge into the thousand-year-long Rusyn-Hungarian friendship. They put forward fanciful legends, based on popular etymology and created by charlatans, elevated to a scientific theory and propagated in all seriousness. Studies and political brochures had a common subtext of a millenium of Hungarian oppression and the heavy-handed reign of the Hungarian rulers over the original inhabitants of Subcarpathia.

The true representatives of the currently reviving Rusyn national

identity know perfectly well that these two nations (indeed, all the nations in the Danubian basin) share a common fate. *Rákóczi's gens fidelissima* (faithful nation) has never wavered and kept its faith with the Hungarian people in spite of all the efforts and attacks aimed at them. The Rusyn people, under the guidance of the Greek Orthodox Church, have preserved their spiritual autonomy, which, due to Pál Teleki's efforts, turned to four brief years of real autonomy when the Rusyns, for the first time in their history, were politically organized. Within this administrative area, conflicts over legislative and human rights never reached antagonistic extremes.

The last century and a half, especially the last fifty years, have not passed without leaving behind indelible traces in the history of the Rusyn people. As the Pan-Slav propaganda in the Age of Reforms in the 19th century prevented the Rusyns from becoming a nation, a unified literary language also failed to materialize and the fundamental icons of a national culture (dictionaries, monographs, folklore collections, etc.) did not emerge. In our days, Kiev (although reluctantly accepting the existence of the Rusyns) disputes the existence of an independent Rusyn entity citing the lack of a common literary language and an independent culture (many times undermined by Kiev itself). To achieve this, Kiev poses convoluted theses based on shaky historical and scientific basis in an attempt to falsify the existence of the Rusyn ethnogenesis. Under internal and external pressure, Kiev promised to include on the 2001 census questions about national ethnicity. Unfortunately, in this part of the world, the facts of the past can't be taken for granted, never mind future promises.

This small nation, cast by the path of history, must find its way back to its traditional values and hence to a claim of self-determination. In this age of ethnic renaissance and regionalism, this task is not hopeless for a nation with strong and healthy roots, such as the Rusyns.

The historical fate of the Rusyns is unusual and its consequences are unconventional. The lessons, however, may be useful for all the nations of the Danubian basin.

András S. Benedek

The historical Rusyns and Rusynsko

The traditional land of the Rusyns lies in the northeastern Uplands extending from Szepes county to the valley of Viso in Máramaros. The structure of the Carpathian mountains is the simplest here. It is made up of two, deeply indented, sandstone ranges interrupted by the occasional limestone cliff and, at its southeastern extremity, at Rahó and Nagybocksó, by crystalline limestone ranges. It is separated from the Great Hungarian Plain by the volcanic range of the Vihorlát-Gutini mountains. From an economic geography perspective, this well definable territory also includes the market zone with its so-called gateway-towns, built at the confluence of the rivers and the passes over the mountains. The most characteristic are Ungvár and Munkács and, in spite of their mountainous surrounding, Beregszász, Nagyszólo's and Huszt.

The rivers of the region flow almost without exception to the northwest, to turn west in the valley of the rivers Ung, Latorca, Borsa and Tisza. In their upper reaches, they form steep valleys and basins, the Verhovinas. In the gorges and basins, the fast-flowing rivers created natural corridors leading to the high passes. It is here that the arc of the Carpathians is the easiest to cross. The Beszkid-pass is merely 584m high. To the southeast are found Uzsok (889m), Verecke (841m), and the most difficult to traverse Panter (1,225m) and Tatár (931m) passes. The rivers seem to symbolically connect the territories of the Rusyns' and the Hungarians' and indicate that these territories form an econo-geographic unit.

The physical geography, in this case, does not simply demarcate the territory inhabited by Rusyns in the counties of Máramaros, Ugocsa, Bereg, Ung and Zemplén but at the same time answers several questions about their settlement and differentiation.

At the time of the Hungarian settlement, the Great Hungarian Plain (Lowlands), with its impenetrable woods, marshlands, brooks and rivers meandering among the marshes was unfit for continuous human habitation. In the early years, only the foothills and valleys of smaller rivers provided hospitable terrain for permanent settlements (e.g.- in the valley of the Borzsa river). The chain of the settlements formed a part of a defensive system toward the East, the so-called *gyepű* zone (an uninhabited wasteland, about a day's march deep, with artificial and natural obstacles and lines of defense serving to block or slow down the progress of an intruder). The

shortcomings of this system of defense were already felt in the 12th century but the Mongolian invasion in the 13th century clearly showed it to be of little value. Immediately afterwards, a large scale building, or strengthening, of stone fortresses and fortifications was begun, accompanied by a wave of new settlements around them. The process took two or three centuries, strengthening the natural economic growth, primarily animal husbandry, farming and a primitive artisan manufacturing industry. This in turn increased the region's capacity to support a larger population.

The agricultural "conquest" of the higher slopes is - as in so many other places in Europe - due to the discovery of America. It was made possible only with the introduction of species of potato and corn fit for cultivation at higher altitudes. The settlements in Verhovina gathered strength and the system of settlements in the whole Northeast Uplands was completed (covering today's Subcarpathia, with the exception of high mountain areas unsuitable for human life).

From this ethnic block, formed by natural processes in the course of centuries, from this physical-geographical entity was created, at Trianon, an administrative unit sometimes called Subcarpathia, Rusynsko, Ruthenia, Ruska Krajina or Transcarpathia. This also means that the territory of modern Subcarpathia is not identical with the land of the Rusyns. Czechoslovak greed separated two counties from today's political unit, Ung and Zemplén and the valley of the Viso river, containing a considerable Rusyn ethnic group. It was enlarged, on the other hand, by lowland territories inhabited, at the time, mostly by Hungarians. The thousand-year coexistence continued on this tiny reservation - an experiment for the cruel intentions of political power.

The more or less reconstructable chain of settlements could only be developed in the foothills and in the valleys of rivers heading for the Lowlands. Based on settlement names, the few written documents, and two experts in the field (József Melich and István Kniezsa), the Lowland settlements had a mixed Slav-Hungarian population (predominantly Hungarians serving as troops in the *gyepü* zone, with a Slav population in the river valleys). It is hard to say, however, to which branch of the Slavic language group the local population belonged (eastern, western or southern). This can only be done with the help of an interdisciplinary approach and the

contribution of other sciences. Equally difficult to unravel are the questions relating to the later development of the Slav / Rusyn population, the subsequent waves of immigration and the evolution of the Rusyn identity. It is no wonder, then, that the self appointed 'scientists', serving various political interests, have discovered a series of local legends and pseudo-historical myths, using place names and chronicles known only from hearsay, historical notes taken out of context and arrived at uncritical interpretations. Considering all the tragic moments in the history of the development and formation of the Rusyn people, we must carefully weigh these arguments and legends, hold them to the highest standards of critique.

The history of the Rusyn ethnogenesis (From romanticism to positivism)

If a nation has never had its own political independence, it is natural to ask the question: Has this nation reached an independent national identity? How does it correlate to the surrounding nations? This is the question of 'to be or not to be', answered many times according to the political demands of the moment. The answers to these questions determine the national existence of this ethnic group, its economic and cultural history, its political endeavors of past and present.

The story of the Rusyns consists of many interlinked, yet separate, events. According to the traditionally view of historians, there are three possibilities to account for the existence of this nation. These are 1) The theory of indiginity; 2) The settlement together with the Hungarian conquerors under the leadership of Árpád; and 3) The theory of immigration. Today, the world of Hungarian science accepts only the last one, as it is supported by written documents and by some aspects of critical historical review. Many of those who accept the last theory, however, influenced by various political tendencies, pay special attention to the theory of Ukrainian-Rusyn continuity and priority, to the existence of a special duchy and to the data supporting internal development.

Most of the misconceptions, legends and deliberate distortions are connected with the first one. The development of the legends can be best understood if we rely on the arguments of a non-biased expert, Alexey Petrov, professor of the Petersburg University (by nationality, he could even be considered as counter biased): "For the intelligentsia of an oppressed and poor nation, it is an understandable and natural desire to find consolation in the past... The political history of the Carpathian Russians is, however, an illusion, a mirage... This phantasy is not only false but also harmful. Harmful because it condemns researchers to non-productive work, and also because the imaginary heroes of the past obscure the real Carpatho-Rusyn hero, the Rusyn people." This firm stance of the historian could put an end to the professional discussions, but human fantasy and gullibility is unparalleled and inexhaustible and its 'discussion points' deserve mention.

When, after the decades of Soviet terror, it became possible to mention the Rusyns, some East-Slovak and Subcarpathian 'scholars' 'discovered' that these people were the oldest inhabitants of the region. Their history is approximately 2,000 years old. To prove their theory, they relied on the ethnic names of Rus, Rusyn and its historical variants, positing that all past mentions referred to them. The fact is that the name Rus, in the beginning, denoted not the Rusyns but the Normans (Vikings) who sailed down the Volga and Dnieper to the Black Sea, did not put an end to their speculation. They were not aware of the historical sources and their evaluations were less than critical. According to their theory, it was the Rusyns who (allegedly starting from the swamps of the Laborc-Ung-Latorca) reached the Black Sea in their small ships and besieged Byzantium. They also accepted the theory, contrived in the 19th century, that one of the seven bishoprics in Pannonia mentioned by Pilgrim, archbishop of Passau, not known for his authenticity, was in Munkács. Their conviction was not - is not - shaken by the fact that Pannonia, lying on the right bank of the Danube was, at the time, unapproachable and isolated from the people on the other side of the Danube.

The followers of the 'continuity theory' take no notice of the fact that this area is at the crossroads of migrating nations and all the people coming from the East come up against this part of the Danubian basin. It is natural for each successive wave to take up battle with any state in their path that presents any possible danger for them. It well may be that the marshes and forests offered a measure of safety for the long-term survival of some communities but no organized state could persist.

In the imagination of the followers of these legends, there appears the existence of an independent principality in Subcarpathia under a chieftain, Laborc, who is mentioned in connection with the Hungarian settlement. Laborc, the allegedly Slav prince mentioned also by the chronicler Anonymous, is transformed by Anatolij Kralickij, head of the Basilian monastery in Munkács and otherwise a talented poet, into the last prince of an independent Rusyn principality. According to him, Prince Laborc had his throne in the fortress of Uz'horod (sic) and died after its fall, while escaping from his pursuers, on the banks of the river Latorca. The river was named after him. The poet Kralickij, relating this episode in an epic work, could not know (this was established by historical linguistics after his time) that generally geographical places are not named after people but the other way round. This linguistic trait is especially true

in the case of life reaffirming rivers.

Also escaping his attention is the archeological and historical fact that today's Ungvár is the third of the same name (the others at the village of Kapos and in the vicinity of the village of Gerény). The settlement of Ungvár in his epic legend (that is, the Ungvár of today) dates from the time of the Anjou kings. Finally, applying the name of Uz̄horod to Ungvár was begun only in the 19th century. The presence of the nasal vowel in the word Ung indicates a very early Slavic form. The use of the name in its form as Uz̄horod, as introduced by Kralickij, was later accepted only by the archdeacon Jevhen Fencik. The Rusyn - and generally Slavic - writers did not use it and the better-informed supporters of the Pan-Slav idea only reluctantly tolerated it. ("I am using the name Uz̄horod instead of Ungvár, although in reality it is not used by the people. It is an artificial name but we have no reason to abandon it as it sounds suitably Slavic" - published by Tomasevskij in St. Petersburg, in 1910, in *The ethnographic map of the Hungarian Russians*.) Being aware of all these, this romantic legend, as part of Rusyn tradition, can be thought of in the same way as countless others in Hungarian romantic literature: a part of the national identity.

The supposition seems to be much more a product of direct political intention, that the local indigenous population must have been part of a strong eastern Slav state, centered in Kiev. This state is held to have been so strong and well organized that the Hungarian tribes did not dare to attack but continued on. Only later, in the 12th century, when their strength increased, did they conquer this territory. (Here they probably misinterpret the real political situation with the slow process of the occupation of the *gyepü* zone and the establishment of the system of fortresses).

The basic proposition of the second theory is as following: The Russians of Subcarpathia (Russes, Rusyns) arrived at the Northeastern Carpathians at the same time as the Hungarian tribes, settled here and in the neighboring territories. They formed an independent state of Russkaya Krajina, the rulers of which, from the 11th century onwards, were from the Hungarian royal family. They held power until the end of the 15th century.

With what did the followers of this romantic idea support their theory? They point out, as their first argument, that the chronicler *Anonymous* mentions that Ruthenians came to Pannonia with chief

Álmos, and whose descendants lived, at the writing of his book, in various parts of the country. This is, indeed, true. Ruthenians were settled, as border defenders, in the West (Oroszvár) as well as the North (Nógrád) and in Transylvania (Szilágy). Thus, it is evident, that we can not talk about a large scale, organized settlement of Ruthenians in the upper regions of the Tisza river. The initial critics of this theory, Antal Hodinka, Sándor Bonkáló, Iréneusz Kontratovics and the above-mentioned eminent Russian scholar, Alexei Petrov, were aware of this. Recent archeological evidence casts a different light on this. Weapons found in Hungarian tombs of the conquest era points to Normans (Viking, Varang), who played an important role in the organization of the Kievan Rus, and who trained and fielded secondary troops. This supposition seems to be bolstered by the finds of the excavation of a cemetery in Csoma, county of Bereg, which dates to the time of the Hungarian conquest. (In addition to the non-indigenous weaponry, the skeletal remains differ significantly from the Hungarian ones, belonging to a taller race). In the light of these findings, it would explain the origin of the near-by village name of 'Sáros-oroszi'. It hints of a settlement, of foreign mercenaries, who formed part of the *gyepű* system and manned the fortress of Borzsava, together with the inhabitants of the village of Borzsava (whose inhabitants were free men, later raised to the ranks of the minor nobility).

In the next variation of this legend, we come to the arguments for an independent Rusyn principality whose rulers sprang from the Hungarian ruling house. A clear-cut refutation of this theory is given by Sándor Bonkáló in his book *The Rusyns (A rutének)*. The first historical record is in the *Hildelsheimchronicle* where it is written that, in 1031, the son of King Stephen, the *dux Ruizorum*, was killed by a wild boar while hunting. Even German scholars, who consider it to be a sketchy anthology, suspect the credibility of this chronicle. The image presented of Prince Imre, as that of a great hunter, is undermined by the fact that the pious prince, a disciple of bishop Gellért, spent most of his time in prayers and fasting. The unfortunate event took place a mere 6 days before his coronation. His title, however, is more precisely recorded in the *Hungarian-Polishchronicle*, where Imre is referred to as *dux Slavoniae*. Imre's wife was a Croatian princess, the King of Croatia's, Cresimir's, daughter. Having a Slavic spouse from such a distance, it would seem more logical to take a title nearer at hand in the Eastern Marches. The significant word here is 'marches'. In the Frankish and Holy Roman Empires, the word 'marches' denoted a military frontier region made up of a defensive and offensive system of

fortresses and fortifications, *always bearing the name of the country against which it was organized*. This is the explanation for the notation in the biography of Konrad, bishop of Salzburg, written in 1770-1777, where we find the expression *Marchia Ruthenorum*. The reason for using this term lies in the fact that the Hungarian King, Béla II, was at that time campaigning along his Eastern borders aiming to prevent the pretender to the throne, Boris, king Koloman's son, from invading the country from Galicia.

These terms are incidental, in much the same way as the geographical expressions *Alpes Ruthenorum*, *Alpes Ruthenie* and *Porta Ruscie* simply denoting place names and geographical formations. (Comparable to the expressions: 'Hungarian mountains, Hungarian passes' used in Russian chronicles). These expressions merely denoted contact points and not the ethnicity of the group found in the territory itself. It is interesting to note that these expressions are used in only in documents that were written far from the Danubian basin where, on the other hand, written records (chronicles, diplomas, legal documents) make no mention of this unique 'principality'. However, there is no denying the fact that during the rule of the Árpád dynasty, Subcarpathia was part of a larger principality. In order to avoid dynastic struggles for the throne, the younger prince(s) received the eastern part of the country, together with the *gyepü* zone of Subcarpathia. The counties of Ugocsa and Bereg became the favorite hunting grounds of the so-called saint kings who visited frequently. Here the king's people settled early on. Local village names seem to point to this, such as Királyháza (the king's house), Halászi (fisher's) and Luprechtszásza, the former name of Beregszász, which preserved the name of the younger brother of Kings László and Géza.

The eminent historian, Biederman, also suspected these few and dubious details to be inconclusive but he fell into the trap of hypothetical thinking and supposed that the Krajnas (Sáros, Zemplén, Ung and Bereg) known from later documents may have made up an entity, and thus could be equated to the above mentioned Marches (Marchia). The fact is that the words *krajna, krajina* appear for the first time in a document dating from 1364, where they were used to denote nine Wallachian villages to the south of Munkács, under the jurisdiction of a vajda. Later usage of *krajna, krajina* was in the sense of *district* and *domain*. This is the sense we find them employed in the property description of the Homonnai-Drugeth (later Bercsényi) family and the lands controlled by the castle of Munkács (later belonging to the Rákóczi family).

This is a good opportunity to clarify some particulars based on the erroneous or flawed interpretation of written documents. One, a report about the income of Hungarian bishops in the time of King Béla III, mentions that: "*To the archdiocese of Kalocsa belongs... the bishop of Bihar, with a seat in Oroszi (Russians)*". Aside from the probability that the document was probably referring to Várad Olaszi, a Czech historian, Chaloupecky, inferred from this sentence-fragment that in the 12th century the territories inhabited by Russians extended from the Carpathians down to the southern border of the county of Bihar. Chaloupecky made his conclusion during the time of the Czech occupation of Subcarpathia and in order to support the existence of Slavic legends. It would be not unfair for us to consider this not a blunder but a deliberate misinterpretation of the facts. The same can be said of the letter of Pope Eugene IV, which states that in Hungary and in Transylvania "*nonnulli Rutheni nuncupati*", i.e., a small number of Ruthenians also live here. In the later adaptation by the Czech historian Niederle, this sentence was translated in 1446 as 'a large number' of Russians living in Hungary and Transylvania. The document allegedly mentioning Gregor (Gergely), the prince of Ruthenians, also comes under this category. Written in 1299, it states: "*Nos Gregorius comes de Beregh officialis Lev, ducis Ruthenorum.*" Lev Danilovics, prince of Halics, married Constantina, daughter of King Béla IV and, as a dowry, he received the domains of Munkács, but being unable to govern it from a great distance, he commissioned the Lord Lieutenant of Bereg to carry out his duties. In this light, the text has the following meaning: "*We George, Lord Lieutenant of county Beregh, appointed by Leo prince of the Ruthenians*".

The followers of the theory of an independent Ruthenian principality were led onto shaky ground by dubious data. At the time of the petty lords and oligarchs, Petune (Petö) from the Aba family, Lord Lieutenant of county Zemplén, rebelled against King Károly Róbert. In Károly Mészáros' historical writings, this aristocrat appears as a defender of the orthodox faith and as a leader of the Russian people. In the works of the talented Hiador Sztripszky who, however, proved to be uncritical in his acceptance of legends, he appears with the ostensibly authentic Slavic name Petyenko (Pet'enko). Under this name, the Catholic Hungarian aristocrat enters the realm of literature in the writings of Grendzsa Donszkij. Henceforth, the "Petyenko rebellion" is an irrefutable part of the local history, accepted even by the Soviet 'historians'.

The third theory, that of the later settlement, although well documented and supported by historical facts, is strongly linked to a questionable allegation. In the last two centuries some Rusyn, Czech, Ukrainian and a few Hungarian researchers took at face value all the actions connected with Tódor Koriatovics (son of Koriat, co-prince of Lithuania), real and alleged.

Lithuania, in the 13th century, was divided along tribal lines. As a result of unifying efforts in the 14th century, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was established, which conquered considerable areas of Belaruss and the Ukraine. At the end of the 14th century, Lithuania is a strong and extensive state under the rule of two brothers, co-Grand Dukes of the country. One of them, Jogaila (also known as Jagello) accepted Christianity and was elected the king of Poland. This family link existed for a short period only as Vytautas the Great (1392-1430), nephew of Jagello, created a more powerful state, stretching from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea. In the process of consolidation and expansion, he absorbed smaller principalities and thus Tódor (Theodor), prince of Podolia, the younger son of Koriat, was forced to flee. Zsigmond (Sigismund), King of Hungary sheltered him, intending to use him as a trump in his plans against the Poles. To support his existence, the king granted for his use the estates of Munkács, which, after the death of Queen Maria in 1395, stood empty. The income of Munkács was, for centuries before and after, the estate of the Queen.

Tódor is first mentioned in a document of King Zsigmond, in 1398, as a nobleman residing in Hungary. He is referred to as *dominus de Munkach* in 1401 and Lord Lieutenant of Bereg county in 1400, 1404, 1406-1408, 1411, and in 1404 as Lord Lieutenant of Szatmár county, as well. In a later document, from 1419, King Zsigmond refers to him as the governor of Castle Munkács, which was a regal domain. It is important to note that Tódor himself always used the title *dux Podoliae* and no documents mention him as *dux de Munkács*. How, then, is it possible that he became in the legendary prince of Munkács and the duke of the Rusyn territories?

If we analyze the situation closely, it turns out that here, as everywhere else in the world, money played an important role. The monks of the monastery of Munkács fell out with the parish priest in Munkács over the right to levy a tithe. Accordingly, they created a document, predating 1360, in order to support common law and traditional custom. In vain did Antal Hodinka, Aleksey Petrov or

Holodnjak, professor of Moscow University, provide evidence of falsification. Although they scientifically proved that the date, the language and style, the method of its writing were all fabricated, the majority of Rusyn and, in general, Slavic writers cling to the authenticity of the document. This centuries old controversy remains unresolved due to clashes in approach: scientific reasoning runs into national sentiment and changing political expediency, although, in the long term, it has been more or less constant on this point.

In the document, Koriatovics is credited as the founder of the monastery of Munkács. It also goes on to state that the prince arrived in Hungary with 40,000 followers. Evidently, this significant number of people would have had consequences on the proportion of the local ethnic and language distribution. It is highly doubtful, however, that Tódor, who had to flee on short notice, would have been able to organize the resettlement of such a multitude, given the road conditions of the time. The historians Jenő Szabó and Vilmos Bélay point out that, at that time, a prince with a retinue of 40,000 people would not have had reason to flee. Tódor Koriatovics signed the document as prince of Munkács.

Without going into the authenticity of this document and continue the centuries long debate, we have to point out a significant 18th century development. Moved by the interests of his monastery and bishopric, Ioannicus Bazilovics (Bazilovits János), provost of the Basilian order in the monastery of Csernekhegy, decided to summarize all the available material of his time about the bishopric of Munkács, as well as the Rusyns. His voluminous work (*Brevis notitia...*) was published in Kassa (Kosice) between 1799-1805. The primary purpose of the work was to verify the authenticity of documents and donation deeds, which have given rise to many debates. He also recorded the names of all the bishops of Munkács, in order to emphasize the continuity, the legitimacy and, in this way, to justify the continued existence of the bishopric. The results turned out to be much more than the original theses. His six volumes today represent the best collection of documents and source material on the history of the Rusyns.

No matter how much we debate the Koriatovics document - its exaggerations and legend creating conclusions - we have to acknowledge that it is nothing more than an attempt to create the mythical foundation for the Rusyn national identity. The statue of Koriatovics in the castle of Munkács, the public square dedicated to him in Ungvár, are tangible expressions of that myth and should be

accepted in that vein. Although the Lithuanian Prince of Podolia was not of Ukrainian descent, was neither Catholic nor Orthodox but - in our modern terminology - a heathen, he ensures the institution of the bishopric of Munkács that developed from the second monastery of the Orthodox Rusyns in Munkács (the first one of Körtvélyes in Máramaros having fallen into ruin). As the Rusyns had no other autonomy but a religious one, this symbolized for them their national autonomy.

The most resolute representatives of the third theory, that of the later settlement, are the Hungarian scholars Antal Hodinka and Sándor Bonkáló, although it is accepted by many Slavic historians as well. It is interesting to note that Soviet historiography also accepts it, although it maintains the theory of indigeniousty, trying to clearly demonstrate that there is no ethnic difference between Ukrainians and Rusyns. The Hungarian Sándor Bonkáló proved to be the most radical proponent of this (third) theory, adopting an unambiguous position. He asserts (referring many times to Antal Hodinka), that the Ruthenians mentioned in the ancient texts (as ethnic groups living in different parts of the country) are not to be confused with the present day population of Subcarpathia. According to him, the Rusyns settled here in subsequent waves after the Mongol invasion and the dismantling of the *gyepü* system. King Béla IV granted enormous - empty - lands to his followers beyond the *gyepü*. Land there was in plenty but no inhabitants to clear and work it. Landowners attracted settlers from areas of uncertainty and unsettled conditions; from the other side of the Carpathians, from Halics, Bukovina and even Podolia. Wherever circumstances were harsh, people ventured elsewhere, leaving their homelands, with a hope for the possibility of starting a new life on the other side of the border, in Subcarpathia. There were earlier attempts made to settle Vlachs here but this nomadic tribe of herders found it hard to settle in one place. The resettlement of the Rusyns was organized by the *soltész* and *kenéz* (two names for the same concept, the first one common in the western parts of Hungary, the latter in the East). The first known document (*literae scultetiales*) dates from 1322, representing a contract between the landowner and the *soltész*, who undertakes the organization of the resettlement of people. We know their names, these *soltész* and *kenéz*, from the research of Antal Hodinka, Sándor Bonkáló and more recently from the works of Pál Engel and the co-authors Péter Takács-István Udvari, making the authenticity of these contracts indisputable.

Expressed in modern terms, the *kenéz* and *soltész* were

contractors who, under conditions agreed with the landowner, attracted settlers to a given territory. If they themselves wanted to settle, they negotiated for themselves the post of the headman of the village or other privileges. If he did not wish to settle, after taking his reward, he continued organizing more colonists for new settlements.

The first tasks for the new settlers were: clear the forests, build houses and plough the land. They were usually exempt from taxation for a number of years. Their legal status in most large settlements was unique. The *soltész*, *kenéz* or headman collected the imposed taxes. They were usually less than those imposed on the Hungarian Lowlands. On the other hand, as a compensation for this, there were other duties not connected with farming or forestry (such as collecting fresh mushrooms and wild fruits and drying them). This provided the serf-farmer with more opportunity and, hence, more income.

Perhaps the best expert on this resettlement was Antal Hodinka. In his work *The settlements, economy and history of the Rusyns of Subcarpathia*, published in 1923, he devotes a chapter to each affected county. The available data of concerning the early settlement of the *gyepü* zone of Ung was published recently by historian Pál Engel. According to his calculation, the aftermath of the Mongolian invasion freed an area of about 2,000 sq. km. Settlements started from the *gyepü* toward the border, growing close to existing manorial centers. These settlements proceeded rapidly in the 14th century. The pace later slowed somewhat and was completed only in the 16th century. Engel's research showed 44 new settlements in the former *gyepü* county, approximately half of them after 1552.

Thanks to the monographs of István Szabó, our knowledge of the settlement of Ugocsa county is accurate, while the works of Vilmos Bélay offer similarly detailed information about Máramaros county where this process took place at a slightly later date. Currently, there is no comprehensive work about Bereg county but based on the fragmentary, partial information we can reconstruct the process of the settlement (only Hegyhát [highland] and the valley of the river Borzsa need special consideration).

Both Antal Hodinka and Sándor Bonkáló proceeded from the supposition that the *gyepü* zone was completely uninhabited, for all intents, hermetically sealed from the population. In reality, things

are never so simple and so, this concept, although supported by documents, should be approached with caution. The generally accepted argument for third theory (that of the later settlement) is that the same ethnic groups can be found on both sides of the Carpathians (i.e., groups such as the Lemák, Bojkó and Hucul), sharing a similar language, traditions and folklore. This is indeed true for all but one group, the Dolisnjak, the most numerous group, settled on territory adjoining the Hungarians. Researchers into this question, including Sándor Bonkáló, could find no equivalent ethnic group in Halics. Bonkáló, trying to find evidence to support his own theory, went further afield in looking for corresponding ethnic groups. V. P. Lintur, the highly regarded Soviet-Ukrainian ethnographer, simply discarded the Dolisnjak references as "dubious, infected by foreign influences" material.

The Russian musicologist and folklorist, V. I. Gosovskij, solved the problem in a unique manner. In his collection of folksongs, he was obliged to record the words too, in the local dialects. At the same time, he aligned them to Ukrainian linguistic usage and published them with accompanying Russian translations. It is not by chance during the Soviet era, the authorities waged war on all manifestations of national folkloric characteristics. Previously published works of Rusyn literature were translated into 'literary Ukrainian' by the 'expert' editors of the Kárpáti Publishing House, taking particular care to erase all manifestations of local linguistic characteristics.

The supporters of inner development build their case on some of the uncertainties of the third (later settlement) theory, although it is the most widely accepted in professional circles. The fundamental issue in their notion is that, although having accepted the theory of continuity, they postulate neither East-Slav nor Ukrainian origins to the people of Subcarpathia but of a completely different source, a transitional Slavic ancestral font. In their argument, they rely on the conditions in Hungary during the period of the conquest. As mentioned in the preface, the Hungarian settlers found a Slav ethnic group which, under the confused conditions of the time, may be part of a South-Slav (Bulgarian) principality. It is also possible that they lived in a loosely organized system clustered around small fortress estates. Although these references in the *Gesta Hungarorum* could be disputed, the archeological finds, historical geography and linguistic research into the toponyms seem to support them. As to the archeological evidence, even the proponents of the East-Slav theory had to accept the fact that the evidence uncovered shows

remarkable similarities with those found in West-Slav or South-Slav inhabited areas. In some cases, the similar material was found only in the South-Slav areas. At the same time, it is not prudent to rely exclusively on archeological data to define the ethnicity of any historic group.

The conflicting interpretation of local place names stems from the fact that scholars have failed to take into consideration the migrations of the 13th to the 18th centuries. Nor did they evaluate them in their historical context. Using this criteria, toponyms should be considered important only if found in close proximity to archeological sites and are known from mediaeval documents. The combined evidence of historical linguistics, archeology and the few written documents all point to the probability that the population of this territory must have been of South-Slav origin. In the almost unanimous opinion of researchers, this early Slav population diminished and was assimilated over time to the degree that, by the 14th to the 15th centuries, there are only sparse signs of their existence. Research results and the verifiable documents unanimously support the proponents of the theory of later settlement. We must also take into consideration that, for more than 50 years, there was little opportunity for unbiased research. The Soviet era's agenda limited both archeological and linguistic opportunities. The early written records central to the debate have yet to be subjected to modern methods and techniques. The existing body of work based on the uncritical acceptance of these ancient records creates a situation where a different conclusion poses the possibility of creating further damage. The task of modern science is to compensate for past shortcomings by employing different techniques in an attempt enhance our understanding of the historical events.

Towards a new synthesis

As we can clearly see from the material mentioned above, the record of Rusyn ethnogenesis has opened several questions and left them unanswered. At the same time, it is of pressing urgency to give the awareness of national traditions its proper place in the ideological system of national identity (free of outside political motivations). This awareness must incorporate all the spiritual and cultural facets of the historical experiences and the lessons learned from the common fate shared by the people of this region. It must also contain all those intangibles which defy verification by facts or statistics, especially those deep and near-mythical underpinnings which has served this small nation as the basis to define themselves and survive, sometimes contrary to historical reality.

In order to meet these requirements, students of Rusyn history should not be deterred by these thorny questions. The often-repeated notions, cited almost automatically and widely accepted as evidence, should also be put in their proper place. Historians are expected to determine the historical value, role and relationship of legends in local history and culture, which were mostly the products of an era of romanticism. They must also face the fact that some of the views held by the majority of today's scientists need re-evaluation, even if they seem persuasive. In regards to the theory of later settlement, there must arise certain doubt based on the two-centuries of overlapped existence of the newly settled people.

Underlining the importance of an interdisciplinary approach, it is thought provoking that the researchers emphasize that the two population groups are not genetically identical. Although several branches of science are investigating the question, genetics is not one of them. The genetic characteristics of the people of Eastern-Carpathia are described by István Kiszely in his monumental, encompassing anthropological work (*A Föld népei The nations of the world*, vol. *Europe*). The close connection between anthropology and genetics needs no commentary. Anthropology studies, besides external features (such as: color of eyes, of skin, form of head, height, etc.), the frequency of the most common gene types. In plain language, genetics studies the inner rules of human types while the external features are categorized by anthropology. Although István Kiszely's sources are, of necessity, Russian and

Ukrainian works, thus his use of terminology is tentative, most likely due to the translation. However, he clearly states that, in contrast to the neighboring Slav and non-Slav populations, the people living on both sides of the Carpathians anthropologically belong to the Alpine-Dinaric type (the majority of the Ukrainians belong to the Dniester-Carpathian type). This fact raises questions, which need answers. We know that the ancestors of today's South-Slavs, the ancient Karvaties, later called White-Croats lived here. The existence of this ethnic group is widely accepted by historians.

Let us suppose, hypothetically, that the current population of the Carpathian region are descendants of the White-Croats who, while preserving their common features, developed in two different directions. The inhabitants of the eastern slopes grew closer to the emerging Ukrainian language and culture, while those living on the southern and southwest slopes preserved their old characteristics as well as acquiring new ones. These later ones could be accepted as Rusyns, allowing for the theory of continuous migration of later settlers who had the same genetic traits and, in time, outnumbered the original settlers. This hypothesis would account for the parallel existence of Lemák, Boyko and Hucul folkloric elements on both sides of the Carpathians and would also enable us to resolve several contradictions (e.g.- those in connection with the toponyms of the Hegyhát [Highland] and of the neighbouring small regions). These contradictions have been suppressed with categorical declarations by opposing schools of historians, unsupported by data.

This answer implies more research and the reinterpretation of the scant sources we have at our disposal. Among others, we must try to explain the role played by the wandering Vlach people who, while displaying many disparate ethnic features, most definitely contained the Dinaric type as well. We have to acknowledge that today the Ukrainian and Rusyn languages, due to the continuous and comparatively late migration, are very similar to each other. However, there exist European nations whose unquestioned independence is based on less significant linguistic differences. What is more, although not typical for this region, nations exist who have lost or forgotten their own language, yet retain their national identity through the preservation of traditions. (It is high time to bury the Stalinist definition of a nation.)

In the interest of defining an integrated national identity, Hungarian scientific efforts have done much. In this respect, we have to draw attention to the activity of the Department of the

Ukrainian and Rusyn languages in Nyiregyháza, especially to the head of the department István Udvari. The same recognition must be paid to the Rusyn research center, a part of the national Rusyn self-government. Its head, Miklós Tibor Popovics, while accepting the theory of White-Croatian population, stresses the role of the Avar, Hungarian, German, Rumanian, Old Russian, Polish and Ukrainian components in the formation of the Rusyn ethnic group. According to him, the Rusyns represent a mid-Slavic ethnic group formed in the contact zone between the Eastern and Western Slavs, the result of the amalgamation of a dozen of various ethnic groups in the melting pot of the Carpathian basin.

New territory for investigation becomes manifest and illuminated. Scientific work may last for decades to come but the challenges of our time, however, demand immediate solutions. In the case of this complicated ethnogenesis, the answer is clear: **A Rusyn nation exists if the people declare themselves to be Rusyn.**

Attempts to create an independent culture and language, begun in the Age of Reform, have intensified in our days after the terrors of the past half-century and contrary to the political goals prevailing in the region. Felipe Fernández-Armesto, associate of the department of modern history at Oxford, devoted a complete section to the Ruthenians and Rusyns in his book *Europe's nations*. He noted, however, that the lack of a standardized common literary language is the main obstacle in the successful definition of their identity.

The latent awareness of their uniqueness is, however, evident from the census of Dec. 1, 1991, when a plebiscite was held on Ukrainian independence. The returns showed that 78% of the population voted for an autonomous region. (This, in spite of the fact that the questions dealing with this topic were worded intentionally vague by the Ukrainian authorities who feared the emergence of separatist ideas!)

The 'scientific approach' embraced by the Ukrainian centralizing efforts can not be accepted as meaningful. To cite an example, the stand taken by the Ukrainian participants of the joint Ukrainian-Hungarian committee of historians stated, at the end of 2000, that the first Hungarian settlers entered Pannonia not through the Verecke Pass but along the lower reaches of the Danube. The statement was made in spite of the strenuous efforts of the whole committee to avoid any conflict. The declaration may have been

influenced not so much by the critical analysis of historical facts but by the political situation caused by the planned memorial at Verecke to commemorate the first Hungarian settlers. The statue remains incomplete because of renewed attacks - a bitter memento. Yet the local population raised no objections to the monument; on the contrary, they supported the plan with pride. Here again is living example of the actions of a fading political elite still determined to prevent the completion of the statue, thus hampering the natural development of this region in Central Europe and frustrating the desires of tens of thousands of people.

This apparatus (the nomenklatura), inherited from the past, prevents today the emergence of Rusyn identity through control of the media, blanketing local efforts at creating a viable culture and identity. Unbiased and objective researchers can not be influenced by current political goals. Therefore, we must speak about an independent Rusyn entity only in full light of the facts. This must be the prime consideration in historical and related studies.

The centuries of Rusyn life

In the period between 1939-1944, it seemed possible for the emergence of a Rusyns national identity, a common literary language and an independent Rusyn culture. It also became evident that Rusyn historiography should be put on a new basis. In the first issue of the quarterly *Zorja* (Hajnal) Irén(eusz) Kontratovics wrote with ruthless honesty that "we have no political history, we have no heroes of our own in spite of the attempts of our historians to create them. *Our real history lies in our socioeconomic past, in the socioeconomic life of the Rusyn peasant*". The task facing Rusyn historiography, still in the process of development, is "to articulate this genuine history". It should be added that another important font of Rusyn history is the ecclesiastical history of Subcarpathia, which was always present over the course of the centuries. The Rusyn Church, while part of the Eastern Rite, united this community and, after the signing of the Union with Rome, the Orthodox Church became the embodiment of the people.

This fact was already well known to Antal Hodinka, an expert in Rusyn history, at the beginning of the 20th century. His monograph, *The history of the Greek Orthodox bishopric of Munkács* (A munkácsi görög-katolikus püspökség története), is not merely an ecclesiastical history of the region but at the same time an important source of regional history. He clearly saw the links between the socioeconomic life of the Rusyns and the so-called 'bigger history'. In his short monograph about the Rusyns, published in 1923, he describes the conditions of the peasant farms in Máramaros county, the relative prosperity that existed for centuries due to the common interest between landlord and serf. This relationship, between landlord and serf, rested on the constraints imposed by the region's natural characteristics. The villages, established in the narrow river valleys, could only sustain the needs of the ever-increasing population, and landlord expectations, by making use of the forests and upland slopes.

In this region, the village levies could often be redeemed in kind. An interesting example of this can be found in the founding deed of the Jesuit College in Ungvár, connected to the name of János Homonnai Drugeth, a major landlord of the region. The college transferred to Ungvár in 1640. The generous deed orders the bailiff

of Ungvár that *"six farm carts will be sent, each with six oxen and two labourers, for the transportation of stone, lime, water, sand, wood, bricks and other goods, and one foreman-builder with a guardsman whose pay, food, drink and clothes will be provided by the Ungvár and Homonna krainas (march-lands) every year ... The first cart will be from the Zaieczko district (riding), the second from Branko, the third from Belenszki, the fourth from Verchevina, the fifth from Brenyo, the sixth from the Kopácza districts together with the farm laborers and their pay. If urgent transport should be needed, more carts will be sent by the bailiff in Ungvár. From the six krainas boards, shakes, laths, rafters, scaffolding and joists, millers will be sent as needed by the building ... So that there will be no shortage of lime, our two villages in the Ungh valley, as well as Pereczen and Rakován, will henceforth be exempt from all other services except for the provision of lime ... the firewood for the brick ovens we order to be provided in time and sufficient quantity, with care for the brick-oven and the color of the bricks, that neither suffer damage."*

The building of the college was exceptional only in its size. The services that the Rusyn villages were directed to provide they may have done before, a kind of 'industry' in the villages concerned and exercised by the landlords regularly. It shows that the landlords expected services primarily in kind. A contemporary saying runs: "Who has Rusyn serfs, has everything." Clearly, the landlords were protecting their own interests when they tried to preserve the privileges of the Rusyns. The III. article of the Act of 1408 and the XLV. article of the Act of 1495 (later referred to as the edicts of Kings Wladislas and Matthias) exempted the Rusyns from paying royal taxes. However, as soon as the central rule of the country passed into foreign hands, these privileges were endangered. The struggle for these incomes, for the usurpation of the fragile Rusyn agrarian economy, went on for two centuries and resulted in the victory of the imperial (royal) Treasury. This victory was due to unfortunate historical events, to the weakening of Transylvania's position where this area belonged, the kurucz uprising and subsequent failure of Rákoczi's war of independence. Sándor Bonkáló admirably depicts all this in his work on the Rusyns. We follow his chronology of events.

In 1569, the Imperial Cabinet of Vienna sent a commission to conduct a survey of the Rusyn domain. The report of Salm, Pappendorf and Pacz satisfied the requirements of Vienna: they found that the Rusyns were well off and able to pay the tithe and all

the royal taxes. The report, however, was not enough for Vienna. Emperor Miksa, in his proposal to the legislative assembly of 1572, played on the self-esteem of the estates. "It is unseemly that the Hungarians, the real and natural lords of this country pay tithe and taxes, but the Rusyns ... who are foreigners and immigrants ... are free and exempt, seemingly nobler and better than the Hungarians ..." The Diet, however, referring to the edicts of Kings Wladislas and Matthias, voted to exempt the Rusyns from the tithe.

Naturally, the Cabinet did not accept amicably. The treasury of Szepes county, noting that the Rusyns provide their landlords with everything, altered the previous saying and reported in 1571 that "landlords who have Rusyn have excellent kitchen". According to them the Rusyns "*sow but little, more often raising animals, cutting the best forests and transform fertile fields to pastures. They earn money principally as cattle-dealers and have other means to make money; they are rich and have gold coins in plenty.*" At the same time, the Rusyns were reproached for abusing the 7-12 year tax exemption granted to new settlers. After its expiry, they move to a new settlement to begin another tax holiday, ensuring a continued free existence.

This report on the prevailing conditions, motivated from the point of view of a colonizer, takes no account of local opportunities for a livelihood. It merely catalogues the immediate profit that can be made from the exploitation of resources. No wonder then, that in the decade long war of independence waged between the Emperor and prince Rákóczi, the Rusyns took a stand on the Hungarian side. In the background were the previous 20-years of unrest and uprisings in the Hegyalja region (a wine-growing district at the foot of the hills of Zemplén). These, then, are the social, economic and emotional reasons for the *gens fidelissima's* orientation. All this, of course, takes away nothing from the loyalty and spirit of unity of the Rusyn nation.

By the time the Imperial Treasury gained absolute control in this district too, the idealized conditions of the report have changed fundamentally. The natural population increase, coupled with the rapid influx of settlers dislocated the traditional modes of subsistence, the grazing of livestock. At the same time, the poor quality of the arable land could not sustain the population.

The military campaigns to regain Transylvania, the raids by the Poles and Tartars all contributed to the increasing poverty of the

population. After the unfortunate campaign of George Rákóczi II in 1657, the Poles, led by Prince Lubomirski, in retaliation devastated Munkács, Beregszász, Szatmár, Máramaros and, of course, the domains of the Rákóczi family in Munkács-Szentmiklós and Makovica. Subsequently, in the same century, Polish forces raided the borderlands on three further occasions.

As a consequence of the Kurucz-Labancz war (Hungarian soldiers of Princes Thököly and Rákóczi vs. the Habsburg troops), Munkács was the first to have been almost completely devastated. The Habsburg mercenaries besieging the fortress of Munkács, valiantly defended by Ilona Zrinyi, requisitioned and devoured the peasants' grain and cattle. Bonkáló describes in his book the grievance of the small village Huszák in Ung county. The inhabitants of the village write that the three companies of Labancz troops, in four days, confiscated 2 bushels of wheat, 190 bushels of rye, 203 bushels of barley, 243 bushels of oats and 40 wagons of hay. They bought 226 geese, 1 hog, and 15 piglets, bacon for 3 Forints and 46 Denars and drank wine worth 22 Forints. They smashed furniture, household goods and agricultural instruments for use as firewood. It is no wonder then, that the Rusyns, suffering these billetings, awaited and received Rákóczi as their liberator and savior.

The Prince himself writes about it in his *Memoirs* as follows: "*I arrived at Skole. On news of my arrival, an old man named Petroniusz Kamenszky, prior of a neighboring Rusyn cloister, who used to carry me in his arms when I was a child, shed tears of happiness and, not being able to see enough of me, joined me and accompanied me to the border. On hearing of my arrival in the principality of Munkács, one can hardly imagine the joy and haste with which the people swarmed around me... They came with their wives and children and, having caught sight of me from afar, they fell on their knees and made the sign of cross, in the usual Rusyn way. In their fervor and loyalty, they not only provided me with food but sent home their wives and children and joined my army and never left me... and declared that they were ready to live or die with me.*" The first men to volunteer for the insurgent army were the peasants of the 161 villages of the Rákóczi domain, shortly followed by the Rusyns from the neighboring counties and by the foot soldiers of the Tisza valley.

After the defeat of the War of Independence, the Rusyn soldiers of Rákóczi did not return to their native villages but settled in the

abandoned villages of Ugocsa, Szabolcs and Hajdú counties. These villages in the neighboring counties became, in the next decades, the primary destinations of Rusyn re-settlers. After two-three generations of tentative language use, the southern boundary of the Rusyn language was pushed southward, especially in Ugocsa county.

The Great Prince (Rákóczi) was the last lord of the Rusyns, protecting them in a patriarchal sense. No wonder, then, that his person became an almost mythical figure in the legends of the mountain inhabitants. Twenty-seven years after the defeat of the war (at Majtény) and three years after his death in 1738, it was reported to the Treasury that the serfs of the Munkács domain were in revolt. When it was announced from the pulpits that the peasants were expected to pray for the Emperor in his struggle against the Turks, they grumbled and said that they were not willing to pray for an emperor who overloaded them with taxes and duties. Instead they were going to pray for their Lord, Rákóczi, asking him to come back to them. The allegations proved to be true. The Rusyns declared that they had a better life under their Hungarian lords when they had to pay only 12 Forints a year, whereas now they were charged with paying 300 Forints. The ringleaders were sentenced to caning, 60 strokes each, which was carried out in the marketplace of Munkács before the assembled crowd. This is the real basis of the Rusyns' amity towards the Hungarians, an emotional one partly based on economics, intensified by the self-centered severity of the foreign colonizers.

According to a note made in a manuscript Bible of the Basilian monastery of Munkács, general Montecuccoli, in pursuit of Prince Rákóczi, broke into the town with his army and "*evicted everyone from the town and had murdered a great many people, among of them innocent peasants and under the devil's suggestion destroying the churches at one end and also at the other, that of the Rusyns, torched the town and tore leaves out of this Gospel*". Epidemics, greatly influencing the outcome of the war of independence, also inflicted heavy losses on the local population.

During the eight years of the War of Independence, the number of peasant smallholders decreased to one third. In 1704, the average village had 12 serf-farmers with smallholdings, in 1711, only 4. The best authority on the Rusyns, the historian Hodinka, used the economic data for the rationalization of the sociopolitical processes. Around 1600, highland farmers had, on average, 4 to 5 cows, the

same number of horses, oxen and several hundred sheep. The conditions for raising hogs were not optimal, whereas on the farms of the upper Tisza valley there were about 20 to 30 pigs in every village, compensating for the decrease in the number of sheep. The tragic deterioration of economical conditions can be best illustrated by the data of the Munkács domain belonging to the Rákóczi family, which suffered the most. The villages in this domain possessed:

	Horses	Oxen	Cows	Sheep/ goats	Pigs
1625	752	7,945	8,889	13,229	5,500
1691	101	309	446	792	481
1729	226	773	1,696	1,957	1,047

The data for the year 1625 is connected with the activity of the steward of the Munkács castle who epitomized the conscious economic and cultural policy of Gábor Bethlen and the Rákóczi family. The second year documents the destruction caused by the Kurucz rebellions and the final entry reflects an economy stabilized at a depressed level. During these years, the Hungarian princes and estate stewards, who cared about their homeland and their people, were replaced by foreigner nobles whose only aim was a stable and abundant income - at any costs. The Munkács domain was secured, after long negotiations, by a distant relative of the prince-electors of Mainz as a reward for loans advanced to Emperor Carol III during the war. This territory was so foreign to the Schönborn family that they rarely visited it, although in size it compared with a German principality. They delegated the running of the estate to trained stewards, their only undertaking, to determine the annual (enormous) sum of money to be dispatched to Vienna.

Here, and in the Imperial domains of Ung and Máramaros, the opportunities of earning a livelihood were extremely limited. The original settlers were granted property rights but as villages became depopulated during the course of wars, the estates and domains were acquired by large landowning nobles or reverted to the Imperial Treasury. This happened with vast forests, highland meadows, fields and pastures which, up to that time, were used by the Rusyns for free or perhaps for a nominal sum. The results of these self-serving measures were noted by officials who, during the time of Joseph II, carried out military surveys in Verhovina and frequently documented in their report that the meadows and grasslands were often overgrown by bushes and weeds. The

burdens on the Rusyns were further increased by an ever-growing number of taxes and arbitrarily imposed duties.

By the second half of the 18th century, living conditions for serfs became untenable. The sockage (soccage: tenure of land by determinate service) reform of Empress Maria Theresa was intended to change this situation. This territory, however, lies far from the mainstream of political and socioeconomic events of the time. The Queen's sockage reform, issued in 1763, is the richest source of history of the peasants and of the history of the national economy in Hungary, especially in Subcarpathia. Strangely enough, the study of this document was even supported by Soviet 'historiography' as they expected the researchers to reveal feudal exploitation by the landlords. The work by Kamil Neupauer, *The sockage reform of Maria Theresa in Bereg, Máramaros and Ugocsa counties*, is very illuminating in this respect. In the preface of his book, he states that the methodological basis for his work was Lenin's treatise, *The development of Capitalism in Russia* and other works by Lenin, Marx and Engels. In the same breath, he criticizes the works of Gusztáv Thirring, Ignác Acsády and other 'bourgeois' Slovak and Ukrainian historians. If the work saw the light of day in the demonic world of the Soviet ideological literature, it would not be surprising but, unfortunately, it was published by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in Budapest - in 1989! István Udvari's book, *The Rusyn sources of Marie-Therese's sockage regulation* (Nyiregyháza, 1999) is much more objective and superior. The publication of this work is all the more important as it contains not simply data about the history of national economy but also the Rusyn version of the 9-point questionnaire and the text of the required oath. Thus, he combines historical linguistics and cultural history with his topic.

The objective analysis of this rich source, preserved almost intact and in perfect condition, became possible only at the end of the 20th century. István Udvari, perhaps the most active researcher of the Rusyn subject matter, Chair of the Ukrainian / Rusyn Department of the College of Nyiregyháza, sometimes alone, sometimes with co-author Péter Takács, endeavors to continue the analysis of the sockage documents pertaining to the region, to highlight specific local features and to integrate it into the general body of economic history. To illustrate the living conditions of the Rusyns, we now quote from his recent treatise (written with Péter Takács), *Contributions to the history of the inhabitants of the Vicsa valley at the end of the 18th century* (Adalékok a Vicsa-völgy

lakóinak 18. századvégi történetéhez, published by Minerva, Kárpátalja).

The contract, made the year Maria Theresa's sockage regulation was issued, sets out the conditions under which the obligations had to be honored. It shows that these conditions closely paralleled the regulations predetermined by the state. The absence of the tithe and other donations, not usual in this region, shows a favorable picture about living conditions in the Vicsa valley. The reality is, however, far different. As the soil in this region was unsuitable for tilling, the imposition of taxes on crops would have made the populace give up working these infertile, stony fields. On the contrary, they needed to be prompted and urged into this hard and barely profitable work. The loss of income from this source was abundantly compensated by taxes imposed on the raising of livestock.

As a rule, sheep farming was taxed most highly. All sheep breeders were required to tender every 20th sheep (and its offspring) to the landlord. If the herd consisted of less than 20 sheep, a payment was required, after each ram and ewe 6-6 krajcárs, and after each lamb 3 krajcárs. At the time of the collection of the 20th, the bailiffs also collected cheese and wool provisions. This provision for wool was 12 krajcárs, for cheese 15 krajcárs each year. Payment was also imposed on pig-breeders and beekeepers. The normal rate for a pig was 4 krajcárs, piglets at 2 krajcárs; a beehive was taxed at 2 krajcárs.

All these cash payments and taxes would have been bearable if they ended here. The heaviest tax burden was represented by the wintering provision for the landlord's sheep. Under this provision, the village of Huklivka, for example, paid 145 Forints each year to the bailiff, the village of Kanora 70 Forints. The serfs of Veretecsó paid the least, 10 Forints, for the winter provision of the manor's sheep every year. What these taxes, calculated by village, meant for individual farmers we know from the declaration of the serfs of the village Hársfalva-Nelepina. The well-to-do, i.e., those with at least four oxen, were obligated to pay 1 Forint and 34 krajcárs, as their share of winter provisions, while those having only two oxen paid 34 krajcárs for winter provisions. Serfs without any cattle paid 17 krajcárs yearly. The 'sheep wintering levy' was obligatory even if the serf kept no sheep.

A new kind of duty was the production of sacks. This generally

meant one new sack per farmer each year but could be provided collectively by the village. The annual figure for Huklivka was 66 sacks, for Szkotárszka 33 sacks, for Kanora 16 new sacks each year to be hand over at the estate center. Annual land tax also had to be paid in cash. This was usually either 1 Hungarian Forint or 50 krajcárs. This tax had to be paid even by the *kenéz* (village elder) who were otherwise exempt from other taxes.

Beyond the taxes listed above, each serf in the Vicsa valley had to share the burden of the maintenance of an estate cart and driver. The details of this are known to us from the declaration of the serfs of Szaszóka village: "*The Duszina district of the Munkács domain is obligated to buy four oxen and a cart, a plough and all other equipment needed for the cart. Accompanying it, they are expected to hire a laborer and provide for his cost and board. Stemming from this, each serf is required to pay an annual laborer duty of 17 krajcárs in cash, cotters to pay 10 1/2 krajcárs. Over and above, the village is to provide two mérö (1 mérö=62.5 litres) of rye for the hired man and in winter two cartloads of hay for his oxen*". If the oxen grew old, perished, were lost, devoured by wolves or died from disease, they were obligated to buy a new one, fit for yoking to the cart.

Compared to the burden of the oxen and cartman duty, the 'dry pub' tax was somewhat lighter. The estate stewards did not considered it profitable to operate pubs in the small villages of the Vicsa valley. Nevertheless, they collected payment for 'dry pubs' even though the serfs were not permitted to distill alcohol. Serfs with a land had to pay 9 krajcárs and cottars 4 1/2 krajcárs (a peasant or farm laborer who occupies a cottage, sometimes a small plot of land, usually in return for services). The payment varied from village to village. In places the sum was 8 krajcárs for the serfs and 4 for cottars. Serfs also had to pay for the right to operate a mill. The accepted tariff was 1 Forint 40 krajcárs for one mill. The situation became costly in villages operating 3-4 mills, or in exceptional cases even 8.

A regular source of estate income in the Vicsa valley was the 'village judge' tax. This consisted of a fixed amount that the village elder was to contribute at the time as each tax was collected. In reality, it demanded that, at the time of collection of taxes for pig keeping, bee keeping, for 'dry-pubs' and the collecting the tithes and other taxes, the village elders pay 12-12 krajcárs to the estate bailiff. In all probability, it was a way of making up the diminishing

returns from another old tax source, the 'pennaticum' (a tax paid according to the number of fowls kept on a farm). This tax rose to 1 Forint 50 krajcárs at the annual sheep taxation, i.e., when collecting the 20th.

The levies listed above weighed on all the inhabitants of every village. Differences were, at most, a krajcár or two, for a serf. As every village had a proprietor - count Schönborn's family - the taxes and duties were relatively similar. Any disparity depended on the wealth of the family or on the number of livestock, beasts of burden, in the household.

There existed, on the other hand, levies that depended on the natural or geographical features of a particular settlement. For example, the serfs of the village of Szolyva were obligated to pay a tax in hazelnuts, and 25-25 krajcárs for gathering acorns. A similar tax was the so-called rope-levy, a trifling amount of 1 or 2 krajcárs yearly (in Szolyva). However, this tax was unrelated to the use of the hemp-fields, as that was paid in sacks. In all probability, this was an ancient custom that represented an extra income for the bailiff. In the villages of Szaszóka and Szolyva, it was the practice that the serfs also had to pay in hops. Each family in the two villages was obligated to collect 1 mérö (62.5 liters), sometimes 1/2, of wild hops from the surrounding forests and deliver them to the breweries of Munkács and Szentmiklós.

The serfs in the village of Hársfalva had to pay 3 forints 6 krajcárs for the right to fish. This sum allowed them to fish at the junction of the rivers Vicsa and Latorca. It is not clear how much benefit the village drew from it. All we know clearly is that of this tax, the 6 krajcárs was the so-called *pennaticum*, the collection of which had already been forbidden by regulations. The inhabitants of Hársfalva-Nelepina were also required to pay a heating tax - to be paid in kind. The bailiff of the domain also collected a boat tax. From time to time, ferry crossing at Podhering needed new boats and barges. By paying 3-4 krajcárs a year as a fee, the villagers could use the ferry free of charge.

It was no easy matter for the people of the Vicsa valley to raise the money for the taxes listed above. They lacked the produce, fruits, vegetables and other products to sell and raise money. Job opportunities were few in the region, as was the need for cartage. They only had a small share of the salt cartage, were ignorant of charcoal and lime burning, and lacked skilled in the making of

wooden utensils. Even if they had the required mentioned skills, there were no markets nearby. In 1773, any buying and selling necessitated a cart trip to Munkács or Szentmiklós, a distance of about 3 miles that took a day for a round trip. However, living far from the highways, at the back of beyond, had some advantages. These remote villages were rarely used to billet soldiers, rarely mobilized to assist army logistics with their wagons. Soldiers did not harass their families; their larders were not bled. The drawbacks were keenly felt when authorities demanded military taxes not in kind but in money, not taking into consideration the unfavorable regional conditions.

The sketch of everyday serf existence in the Vicsa valley shows an archaic way of life with enormous forests, highland pastures, infertile fields and barely endurable taxes and obligations. This was a region where minor changes needed decades. Maria Theresa's sockage regulation, issued in 1767, aimed at relieving to some extent the burdens of the serfs, were introduced here only in 1773, its infinitesimal improvements begun to be felt only in 1775. The serfs of the region paid their landowners dearly for the scenic landscape of the Vicsa valley, for the rich pastures, for the clean water of the brooks and springs, for the pine and beech scented air, for the isolation and patriarchal peace, for the unyielding lands and limited opportunities. It may be believed that the regulations considerably improved the lot of the serfs and, indeed, they blessed the queen for it. What they failed to notice was that these improvements lasted only for some short decades, alleviating the situation for one or two generations. As soon as the no-nonsense attitude of the foreigners prevailed in the domains of Munkács and Szentmiklós, the villagers were slowly denied the free use of the woods, grasslands and pastures of the highlands. Their livelihood was confined to the minimal, a field yielding 14-24 butts, the village grazing and pasture (9-16 butts). Thus they lost the right to operate a mill for 1-2 Forints, to gather firewood for free, to fish for 3 Forints. They lost all manner of other benefits, those they wisely didn't volunteer to the commissioners of the Sockage Regulation. The world closed around them and soon the greedy leaseholders appeared in the woods and pubs, their stewards newly aware of untapped sources of income. The Vicsa valley and its inhabitants were rapidly thrust into an ever-deepening poverty. The consequences of this enormous impoverishment became widely known only in the period of the Dualism, at the end of the 19th century, when publicists, sociologists and politicians were astounded, even in Parliament, at the unbearable poverty and

hopelessness. The greed of the absentee landlords and leaseholders, of the Imperial Treasury for more and more short term profit pushed the Rusyn peasants down a road which led to more misery, famine, hardship and - the only possible way out - emigration.

The laws of the 1848 revolution only confirmed the established order. The redistribution of land, carried out in the whole country, brought about widespread dissatisfaction but especially here. The abolition of serfdom brought little change. It made it possible for the Rusyns to buy the serf plots, already divided among several families. The loss of access to natural resources, a process that has been going on for decades, was now confirmed by law and the deep forests, highland meadows and pastures became the possession of the landlords. This dissatisfaction was seized by some historians as anti-Hungarian hostility. To shore up their allegations, they marshaled the 'facts and evidence' of folklore. Some folksongs (?) from the end of the 19th century poked fun at Kossuth and his soldiers. This author, in his study *Kossuth's Faithful Nation*, published on the 150th anniversary of the War of Independence, proved that these songs were the creations of the regimental bandleaders of the Austrian Imperial Army of Galicia. Some were printed in Krakow, in Polish typeface. These songs were 'discovered' by enthusiastic folklorists in the possession of some local nobility, fifty years after the events.

The reality is that in 1848-49, the Rusyns fought for freedom side-by-side with the Hungarians. Especially noteworthy was the role of Rusyn intellectuals in the dissemination of revolutionary ideals. It is characteristic of the mood of the Orthodox seminarians of Ungvár that they composed a song of freedom after the influence of a Petöfi poem (Down with the tyrant, down to the grave / Free is our Fatherland and Nation! / And swears never to acknowledge / Your rule, Austria!). Their beliefs were proved by deeds. Encouraged by their priests, they joined the Hungarian army en masse and, after the defeat, accepted with dignity the consequences of the retribution. Among the heroes of the War of Independence belongs Endre Andrejkovics, to whom we are indebted for victory in the battle of Munkács-Podhering. Also worthy of mention is Mihály Bacsinni Bacsinszky, who after countless battles lost his life in the field, a dauntless soldier reminiscent of a later day Kinizsi, the heroic captain of King Matthias. Both were Orthodox seminarians.

In retaliation for their role in the revolution, Rusyns were not

given provided with any assistance to alleviate their deteriorating social conditions. The only proliferation to be seen was in the number of pubs and shopkeepers, whose usurious loans plunged the Rusyn peasant families even deeper into debt, hopelessly mortgaging their futures. Initiatives such as the Guild for the Support of Handicrafts in the Upper Tisza Region, organized in 1877 (initially for the territory of Bereg county), brought no fundamental changes (indeed, could not) in the local economy, in spite of efforts of the local press to popularize it. Is it any wonder, then, that thousands of Rusyn peasants joined the waves of emigration? Crafty businessmen, however, made a profit of even this. The agents organizing the emigrating groups demanded large sums of money for the realization of their dream of America. On occasion, this bankrupted several families who stayed behind and made the sacrifice to finance the escape of one.

The socioeconomic project sponsored by the Orthodox Church had a more significant influence. Gyula Firczák, bishop of Munkács, called the MPs of the counties Ung, Bereg, Ugocsa and Máramaros to a meeting in the spring of 1897, where they drew up a plan, which was forwarded to higher authorities for their consideration. Here we quote only the main points of this lengthy and detailed project. They demanded free trade schools, nurseries and day-care from the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Commerce was asked to provide assistance in the introduction and spread of the handicrafts and textile industries (similar attempts have already been made in this connection). It was also asked to commence building new roads, to regulate rivers and the lifting of taxes imposed on some basic necessities. The Ministry of Home Affairs (Secretary of State) was asked to limit immigration from Galicia. They hoped for assistance from the Ministry of Agriculture in the scientific improvement of fields and a review of laws concerning pasturage (outstanding since 1848!). Finally, the Ministry of Finance was asked to establish reasonable taxes and to provide sufficient loans.

The government, which supported the proposals of the Orthodox Church even before this memorandum, now launched an experimental project called 'Highland Actions', to be tested in the Szolyva district of Bereg county. (Many of the documents and records of this 'Highland Actions' project were published by József Botlik in his recent study *Egestas Subcarpathica*.) The project manager was Ede Egán.

The well-prepared and committed economist started his work with great ambition. One year after the creation of the plan, in 1898, he launched the project and work started in the spring of the same year. He rented 12,622 holds of land (1 hold = 0.57 hectares or 1.42 English acres) for 15 years from the Schönborn family and distributed it among 4,303 peasants from 41 villages. He organized 3 model farms to popularize the modern methods, designed specially for highland farming. In 1899, he organized a six-week course for the intelligentsia of Subcarpathia, in Alsó-Verecke, on agrarian reform. To improve animal husbandry, he imported 1,600 cows and 500 ewes, under favorable credit terms, and distributed them to the farmers of the projects. (The livestock quality in Subcarpathia declined over the last 100-150 years due to the unfavorable economic and agricultural conditions). To lower unemployment, he put 500 workers on road building projects.

In three years, he succeeded in setting up a network of credit unions whose activity reached all the villages in the district. In 18 months, 50,000 koronas were loaned to 484 members. The monthly business transacted in the shops of the society reached 35,000 koronas. In practical terms, the activities of the society were similar to that of the 'Hangya Szövetkezet' (Ant Association) introduced in Hungarian villages two decades later.

After the early successes, Ede Egán proposed the extension of the project to other areas. He recommended as centers Huszt, in Máramaros county, and Nagyberezna (perhaps Perecseny), in Ung county.

The 'Highland project', of course, ran counter to the interests of the tradesmen, shopkeepers, pub keepers and usurers who exploited the Rusyns. They actively opposed the project from the very beginning. They threatened the workers taking part in the Highland projects, several times the house of the priest of Felsőbisztra, who ran the local credit union, was set on fire and his wife was attacked and stabbed. Finally, on September 20, 1901, Ede Egán was murdered in the village Láz while on his way to Ungvár. His memory was kept with reverence in the minds of people, although recently the memorial commemorating his death 'disappeared', allegedly due to a highway-widening project.

Although the death of Ede Egán was a great setback for the project, nevertheless, it carried on. In 1911, the administered 30,000 acres (21,000 hold) with the participation of 3,063 small

farmers from 66 villages. In addition, 6,000 holds were deeded to villages and individuals. The credit unions also financed the building of a series of warehouses and by this time there were 143 credit unions and 77 warehouses throughout the region. The credit unions had 33,819 members with a deposit capitalization of 2,577,580 Koronas; the amount of the loans approved to the members was over 6 million Koronas. Advancements were made in the qualitative improvement of the meadows and pastures, in the breeding stock of the animals as well as free legal advice for the members. The educational reforms, introduced by Ede Egán, were adopted and the temporary employment of the Rusyns in seasonal jobs in the Lowlands was organized.

The war, in which Subcarpathia became a theater of operations and the subsequent annexation to Czechoslovakia, ended these initiatives.

The symbol of territorial and organizational integrity of the Rusyns: The Orthodox Church

However we assess the emergence of the Rusyns, the region's compact Slav population was firmly connected to the Orthodox Church, as proven by historical documents. Subcarpathia's early Slav population's adherence to a religion is barely an issue as these woodsmen, these defenders of the *gyepü* zone, were isolated from a larger ethnic community and were semi-pagan. The priests mentioned in documents, preaching in the Slavic tongue at the court of Elisabeth Lokiotek, belonged to the Dominican order. They may have been missionaries or itinerant preachers.

The majority of the immigrant waves some organized, some spontaneous, rarely brought an ordained priest with them. This also had an impact on the tax-free status of village land set aside for church use, the priest's lot. The problem was treated differently on the various estates but, as a rule, the land was not inheritable. The communities built their own chapels and churches, according to their financial ability, some of exceptional artistic value. In theory, immigrants remained under the jurisdiction of the bishopric from where they came but, in reality, this was not practical due to the distances, the impassable roads and the rules and traditions of their new country. The first religious centers of the Rusyns were the monasteries. Several were founded, especially in Máramaros and Bereg counties. In time, the Basilian monastery of Munkács-Csernekhegy became the most influential. It was situated in the realm of the fortress of Munkács, the dominant power center of the region, and its support and patronage enabled the monastery in Munkács-Csernekhegy to gain supremacy and be elevated to a bishopric.

As with much else regarding the Rusyns, legends abound concerning the creation of the bishopric,. The one relating to its founding by Prince Tódor Koriatovics, as the sovereign ruler of the region, can be safely rejected. We can, however, accept the hypothesis, shared by Antal Hodinka, that the formation of the bishopric cannot be tied to a single founding document but that it was the result of a period of internal development. This seems to be confirmed by written documents, in which the head of the monastery is not called a bishop, but as "*igumen*" (provost). Only

from the middle of the 15th century do they title themselves as bishops. Sándor Bonkáló dates this from around 1439, Antal Hodinka puts it at 1458 and Tivadar Lehoczky, in his study in the 1880's, fixes it around 1491. The earliest of these dates seems acceptable, as its establishment took place after the first Czechoslovak period and was not influenced by political considerations. Bonkáló, in his work *The Rusyns* (A ruszinok), mentions provost Lukács as the first *igumen* of the monastery to exercise, between 1439-1445, the authority of a bishop.

The authority of the bishops of Munkács, at the time, rested on questionable foundations. The legal framework of Hungary did not accord equal rights to the members of the schismatic Eastern Rite church. The realm of the provost always depended on the good, or ill, will of the man ruling the Munkács domain. During the long period of the Bethlen and Rákóczi families, the captain of the fortress, János Balling of Gelse, who played a noteworthy role in the formative cultural history of the Rusyns, greatly influenced the fate of the bishopric. In the early days, the jurisdiction of the provost was disputed by the Orthodox priests of Máramaros county who acknowledged, as their head, the provost of the monastery in Körtvélyes. The legal and financial status of the village priests was also uncertain at this time.

Initiatives to unite the two Churches were already begun at the beginning of the 15th century. The Polish Orthodox Church united with Rome in 1595. Thereafter, the Uniate and Roman Catholic priests enjoyed the same privileges. A local magnate and landowner, György Homonnai-Drugeth, on observing the powerless circumstance of the Slavic priests of Subcarpathia, decided to support the union with Rome. After long preparation and organization, the Union of Ungvár was accomplished in 1646 by the priests of Szepes, Sáros, Zemplén and Ung counties. The priests of Bereg and Máramaros counties, under the jurisdiction of the Prince of Transylvania, who were opposed to the Union, remained Orthodox (Pravoslav) until 1745. As a result, the Rusyns of Subcarpathia had, for a period, two bishops at the same time, one Greek Catholic and one Orthodox. (To further complicate the matter, on occasion the two bishops were one and the same person, having been elected as provost at the two principal monasteries.)

After the Union of Ungvár, the Greek Catholic Church was placed under the jurisdiction of the Roman Catholic bishop of Eger.

The training of the priests was made possible in Roman Catholic universities, colleges and seminaries such as those in Nagyszombat and Eger. The graduates of these institutions, having received a first class education, lead the attempts for independence from the supremacy of Eger. Shortly after the Union of Ungvár, a struggle began for the control of the Greek Catholic bishopric in Subcarpathia. Barely two decades after the union, the bishop of Chelm appeared in Rome with a request (sent here by Princess Zsófia Báthory, who, through his son Ferenc Rákóczi I, was the ruler of the domains of Munkács-Szentmiklós and Makovec). He asked Rome to appoint a bishop to Munkács, who would be independent of the jurisdiction of Eger and, consequently, of Esztergom. This, incidentally, would have emphasized the importance of his own bishopric. Rome delayed the answer and asked the nuncio in Vienna to investigate. The report sent to Rome by the nuncio contained the reasoning of the Hungarian Primate, which, in reality, was the description of the unplanned and peculiar formation of the Munkács bishopric (as outlined by us above).

The Holy See faced a unique and complicated canonical problem. The first question was the right to nominate the bishop of Munkács. Who? The following possibilities arose:

1. The Prince of Transylvania, on the basis of unwritten law and tradition, also as the founder of the bishopric.
2. The same privileges accrued to the Rákóczi family, as the territory owner in question.
3. The Emperor of Austria, in his office as King of Hungary.
4. The Ruthenian metropolitan, as he consecrated all the other Uniate bishops.
5. The Holy See.

The last one can be excluded as, according to tradition, a Roman Catholic bishop could only be consecrated by another Roman Catholic. As well, the Holy See has not been involved in the nomination of bishops in Hungary since the early 11th century, the time of King St. Stephen. Equally difficult was the question as to who will consecrate the appointed bishop of Munkács. In a decision worthy of Solomon, Rome decided not to decide. Instead, they postulated that the see of Munkács did not exist. In fact, it did not appear on the 1701 list of Hungarian bishoprics. In consequence, a difficult period of history was overseen by self-appointed bishops and administrators of dubious authority. The territory continued to be overseen by two bishops, Greek Catholics and Orthodox, as Schismatic bishops continued to wield authority in large parts of

Bereg and Máramaros counties. To illustrate the situation prevailing in 1648, the highlands (Northeastern Upper Hungary) were controlled by bishop Lipniczki, Szatmár and Szabolcs counties by bishop Monasztelli and at the central monastery, in place of the deceased Schismatic bishop Zékány, was elected Metód, accepted by Prince Thököly. Although Metód allowed himself to be consecrated by the Schismatic Metropolitan of Moldova, he maintained good relations with the Uniates. All this, however, could not compensate for his lack of knowledge and education coupled, as it was, with a quarrelsome personality. The intervention of the Cardinal and the Emperor seemed unavoidable. In 1689, Cardinal Kollonich, infamous and unsavory in Hungarian history, brought with himself from Rome the priest De Camelis, an Italian educated Greek from the island of Chios and named him as bishop of Munkács. The result of this intercession was the beginning of a compromise solution. Accordingly, the King appointed the bishop nominated by the Cardinal, who still remained under the jurisdiction of Eger. The title of bishop of Munkács was, by this time, a hollow one as the monastery was stripped of all estates and possessions.

The jurisdiction of Eger was in dispute from almost the beginning of the Munkács bishopric. The struggle for independence became intensified between 1742 and 1766 when bishops Mihály Olsavszki and János Bradács took up the cause. Their goal was achieved only with the help of Empress Maria Theresa who took action in Rome to have the bishop of Munkács consecrated and thus become independent. The first bishop so recognized was János Bradács, already the acting bishop of Munkács, consecrated in 1771. Two years after his death, the post was filled by András Bacsinszky who, during his 30-year tenure, vastly improved conditions. He succeeded in putting the ecclesiastical, legal and economic affairs of the see in order. It was under him, in 1775-1776, that the seat of the bishop was transferred from Munkács to Ungvár, into the college buildings of the suppressed Jesuits. Due to his efforts, the development of the Rusyn language and culture made strides. András Bacsinszky was the most prominent Rusyn personality of the Age of Enlightenment. He was the descendant of a Galician noble family, his father served as pastor in the village of Benetina in Ung county. He was schooled by the Jesuits in Ungvár, then studied theology and philosophy at the University of Nagyszombat. After his ordination, he was pastor for an extended period in Hajdudorog and later, elevated to canon, he landed in Vienna as a representative of the Greek Catholic Church. His success in this post helped him to the unanimous nomination, in

1772, as bishop of Munkács. In 1777, he became a Privy Councilor and it was he who procured for the bishops of Munkács membership in the Upper House. From 1780 until his death in 1809, he lived and worked in the new seat of the bishopric in Ungvár. Towards the end of his life, Latin became the language of instruction in the seminary of Ungvár. With his publishing activities he did much for the Church. He published both Bible and catechism, contributing a great deal to the formation and development of a common literary language. It is characteristic of his multi-faceted personality that, in 1804, he was elected a member of the mineralogical society of Jena. He bequeathed a library of 9,000 volumes to his heirs, stipulating that it be made available to those interested. The followers of András Bacsinszky proved to be faithful leaders of their religion and nation. They made common cause with the Hungarians of the region in the Age of Reformation and during the War of Independence. They supported the people who launched the "Highland project" in one of the saddest periods of economic downturn in the life of the Rusyns.

The foundations of Rusyn culture and education **The beginnings**

Taking into consideration the difficult socioeconomic conditions facing the Rusyns, the difficulties of their Church, it is evident that we cannot speak about the emergence of serious cultural life and literature at this early stage. Strangely enough, the spread of Protestantism brought about the greatest changes in their lives. Although the Rusyns persisted in their religion, the Orthodox Catholic Church, yet they voiced the need that their priests undertake teaching, in the manner of the protestant preachers. For this purpose they used the so-called Gospel interpretations and explanations, as well as books printed in Poland and containing sermons for Sundays, various feasts and holidays. These works were adapted in Subcarpathia according to regional flavor, adding local legends, myths and superstitions. The real historical value of these manuscripts lies in documenting the state of the local language in use at the time. Unfortunately very few of these manuscripts and Gospel interpretations survived; we know of about eighteen.

The most popular books were the so-called *zborniks*, encyclopedic works and collections of legends, stories, tales, geographical and historical curiosities and apocryphal biblical stories. To date, about a dozen have been thoroughly studied by various scholars. These *zborniks* served as sources of learning for the priests as well as the simple country folk. They are the fundamental reason for the myth-based world-view of the Rusyns, which is manifest even today, as amply documented by folklorist. Noteworthy are the religious tracts of the 17th century. Of interest is the work of Mihály Oroszvégesi, or Mihail Roszvigovszkij in Rusyn (also wrote under Andrella or Mihail Feodul) *Tractatus contra latinos agraecocatholicos* (1672-1681). The work takes a strong defensive stand on the side of orthodoxy (graecocatholicos or Greek Catholics) and attributes its longevity to the protection and timely support of the Protestant Princes of Transylvania and the captain of the fortress of Husz.

In light of this, it is obvious that the poetry of this era consists mostly of religious works. The best known is a song about the icon of Klokocsó, whose subject is the siege of Vienna in 1683 and the liberation of Buda. The unknown author moans of the havoc

inflicted by both Kurucz and Labancz soldiers. The author takes a pro-Austrian stance, seeing the Emperor as the defender of Christianity. The manuscript literature of this century clearly shows that the authors, mostly priests and Rusyn "batykós" have a good grasp of the Hungarian language, using Hungarian phrases for which no equivalent exists in the Rusyn language and often referred to parallel Hungarian linguistic patterns. Studying the language of these manuscripts, it becomes clear that the language of the southernmost group of the Rusyns, the Dolisnyák, has barely changed in the last quarter century. The literary genres of this century continued into the beginning of the 18th century when the Church, becoming an organized institution, made use of these literary forms in administrative, legal, political and private dealings. Antal Hodinka gave a detailed description of the state of literacy in the 18th century, later summed up by Sándor Bonkáló in a short monograph. The most thorough linguistic analysis was made by István Udvari, head of the Ukrainian/Rusyn Department of the Nyiregyháza College, in his work: *Rusyn (Carpatho-Ruthenian) official literacy in 18th century Hungary* (Ruszin (kárpatukrán) hivatalos írásbeliség a XVIII. századi Magyarországon). In this study, he analyses the linguistic characteristics of the manuscripts according to their functional and literary genres. He points out that in private correspondence the local vernacular dominates while in official communications Church Slavic and the Old Ukrainian variant of Galicia is dominant.

The ages of Enlightenment and Reformation

In the middle of the 19th century, church literacy reflected a unique synthesis of elements of the local vernacular and literature. Subsequently, a genuine Church Slavic makes its appearance, encompassing the emerging literary Russian. It is at this time that the synthetic language, called "jazicsie", a product of the chancellery of Bishop Bacsinszky, makes its advent as the language of choice of the intelligentsia for the following two or three generations. The unadulterated folk speech thrived only in some regional centers.

The Rusyn cursive literary (chancellery) style appeared in publications and printed works as well. It was employed in urbariums, the statutes of Joseph II and the catechisms of 1801 and 1803. The catechism, published by János Kutka, was used up to the 20th century. We are indebted to István Udvari for the reprint editions of this catechism and early primers and their philological analysis. He re-published Kutka's primer of 1799 and, in its epilogue points out that while this genre of Rusyn literacy was begun a hundred years before with the work of De Camelis, the third chapter deals with etiquette, in the Lemák dialect of Zemplén county, which later formed the basis of the literary variant of the Rusyn language of Eastern Slovakia.

Culture and refinement has always depended on the quality of education. After the Union, the Imperial Treasury or the treasury of Szepes county aided education of young Rusyn seminarians in Eger or Nagyszombat. Bishops De Camelis, Gennadius Bizánci, and Emanuel Olsavszky made efforts to elevate the intellectual level of the clerics by publishing and distributing handbooks. Olsavszky organized a school in Munkács whose special focus was the learning of Latin. In 1746, he published a book in Kolozsvár with the title *Elementa puerilis institutionis in lingua Latina* where, under the Latin text, he gives the equivalent Church Slavic and Rusyn variants. The concrete solution was finally achieved in 1776 when Empress Maria Theresa founded a seminary in Ungvár where the language of the curriculum was Church Slavic and Latin. In 1809, Latin took precedence with some subjects taught in Rusyn, later in Hungarian. Although some students attended the colleges in Eger, Nagyszombat, Esztergom, Rome or Vienna, the majority of the

Greek Catholic priests from the end of the 18th century were the graduates of the seminary of Ungvár. The cantors were also the products of the cantor academy of Ungvár.

At the same time, the emergence of Latin did not improve education in the vernacular. In 1798, András Bacsinszky complains bitterly that the recent graduates of the Latin schools, at the beginning of their ecclesiastical career, can barely express themselves in the people's language. The new intelligentsia of the Age of Enlightenment had lost touch with the old generation of priests, teaching their flock from the one-time *zborniks*. Joannicus Basilovits, head of the Basilian order of the province, wrote his monumental historical work *Brevis notitia fundationis Theodori Koriatovits* (1799-1807) in Latin. Similarly, Mihály Pap Lutskey, dean of Ungvár also wrote in Latin (and partly in Church Slavic, 1789-1843). His main work, *Historia Carpatho-Ruthenorum* remained in manuscript form and only a single Russian adaptation of it was published in 1874-1877. His important and distinguished *Grammatica Slavo-Ruthena* was published in Buda in 1830. From the perspective of linguistics, his two-volume collection of sermons, written in 1831, is of great importance as they were composed in a mixture of Church Slavic and Rusyn. We have already mentioned János Kutka's catechism and primer. The language of these books is an amalgamation of Rusyn, Church Slavic and Russian. The clumsy syntax of his catechism, following Latin rules, made it difficult to use in the village schools. Yet, in spite of these drawbacks, it was in use for almost a century because, as one of its critics wrote, "the people became used to it".

The Hungarian period of Reformation engulfed the Rusyn intelligentsia, manifesting itself in public, as well as private, bilingualism. A significant representative of the period of national revival was Vaszil Dohovics (1783-1849), parson in Lucska, then Munkács and Huszt and a corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. He learned to read and write in his native village of Ötvösfalva and he was 13 when he reached the Hungarian schools in Huszt and later, Máramaros. He studied philosophy in Nagyvárad, theology in Nagyszombat and was ordained in Ungvár. He wrote his works in Latin, Hungarian and Rusyn. His studies appeared in the significant journals of his time (*Tudományos Gyűjtemény*, *Felső-Magyarországi Minerva*, *Társalkodó*). He was a real polyhistor, as he had interests in music, painting and took part in the compilation of the Philosophical Dictionary undertaken by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. In his biography, he listed 48

Latin, 36 Hungarian and 10 Russian (Rusyn) works. Only a few were published.

Representatives of the Age of Reformation were the brothers Duliskovics, János and Mihály, although their early activities belong in the Age of Absolutism. János worked on the history of the Rusyns, his main work being *Istoricheskije cherti Ugrorusskih*. His brother, Mihály Duliskovics, published geographical and ethnographical studies on the characteristics of the Máramaros and Verhovina regions in *Hasznos mulatságok* and *Tudományos Gyűjtemény*.

The outstanding Rusyn writer of the first half of the 19th century was Alekszander Duhnovics. Born in Zemplén, he went to secondary schools in Ungvár and Kassa and studied theology in Ungvár. He began working in the bishop's Chancellery, then became a tutor with the Petrovay family, the sub-prefect of Ung county. After two years as a village clergyman, he was transferred to Ungvár as clerk of the ecclesiastical court, finishing his career as canon in Eperjes. The decade following 1843, he made Eperjes the center of Rusyn intellectual life. He organized a literary society in 1850, only to have it banned by the authorities. His primary purpose was to elevate the cultural level of his people. István Udvari, in one of his book-reviews, emphasizes that Duhnovics' early works rely on the traditions of contemporary Hungarian literature. Initially, his ethnic ideology aligned with the multi-ethnic Hungary, manifested by active patriotism. Guided by his loyalty, he concentrated his energy in contributing to the welfare of his own ethnic group. His first work, *Olvasókönyvecske kezdők számára* (Reader for beginners, Buda, 1847), is a rich and varied text written in Church Slavic and Rusyn. It was well received by the students, as they were familiar with both the language and the tales. The author distributed free 2,000 copies. His later works, such as the *Rövid földleírás fiatal ruszinok számára* (A short geography for young Rusyns), his prayer book, his drama and romantic historical stories served to advance the development and formation of national identity and awareness.

Subsequent generations primarily know him as a poet, as two of his works are revered akin to a national anthem. The first, "My Subcarpathian Rusyn people / Enough of dreams" (Kárpátalji Ruszin népem / Elég volt az álomból), is a veritable hymn and prayer to the Almighty. The second, "I was, am and will be Rusyn / I was born a Rusyn" (Ruszin voltam, vagyok, leszek / Én ruszinok)

születtem) is a genuine declaration of the poet on the side of this nation, his people. The poem brought forth significant beneficial effects as Rusyn intellectuals began to take an interest in their culture, language and nation.

Russophile aspirations in the second half of the 19th century

Strangely, after proving that the Rusyn language of the past two centuries, used by village priests and batykós, was suitable for literary expression, Duchnovics submitted to the Panslav pressure. His works in Russian, however, had no lasting value; he had lost his roots. After his death in 1865, his name became the symbol of the Russophile cultural and linguistic movement. The movement was arguably an unnatural construct, supported and financed from abroad. This fact was widely accepted by unbiased historians from Sándor Bonkáló to István Udvari. The main contact between the Slavs of the Monarchy and Russia was the reactionary Orthodox priest, and secret agent, of the Russian Embassy in Vienna, M. Rajevskij. It was he who distributed the money of the Russian government, the 'rolling rubles', among the Hungarian Slavs, who eased the way for the emigration of eminent specialists to Russia, who provided financial support for the publication of Russophile works. A 'worthy' accomplice was the Orthodox priest of Úröm (one K. Kustodijev). Apart from supporting Russian initiatives, they took an active part in the 'revising' of Rusyn texts sent for publication to printers in Buda, Pest and Vienna. Their 'corrections' ended up as translations into literary Russian.

After the death of Duchnovics, the leaders of the Russophile movement founded the St. Basil Society in Ungvár. Although their stated aim was to raise the cultural level of the common people, their leaders (Adolf Dobrjászki, Iván Rakovszky, Cirill Szabó, Sándor Mitrák) biased Russophilism predetermined the movement's direction from its inception. Several school texts and articles in the journal *Svjat* (The World) were self-serving and did not find wide approval. As Sándor Bonkáló makes clear in his monograph, the true aims of this society were made clear in the first issue of this journal. According to it: "There is no need to speak about literature. We already have a complete and mature literature; it has simply not become common knowledge, a public treasure. We don't need to create our own literature as our Hungarian brothers did, we simply have to learn the existing one ... We must endeavor to acquire the already rich Russian literature."

The sacrifice of the interests of the common people, of smaller communities, bore success in France and Britain in the previous

centuries but no longer. The failure of these idealistic initiatives lay in the inability of the Rusyn readers to understand the language of the publications. The local Russophile writers were deficient in their ability to rise to the level of the excellent Russian literature. They were unable to grasp the distinctiveness of everyday local life. Only rabid philologists study their mediocre, and oftentimes poor, works. Their attempts to publish journals (*Svjat, Novyj Svjat, Karpat*) ended in failure due to lack of readers and subscribers. The one exception was the *Lisztok*, published by Jevhen Fencik (1844-1903), a most active and prolific Russophile writer, at his own expense.

In the leaders of the movement, Adolf Dobrjǎnszki and Iván Rakovszky, political motives can also be observed in the background. Dobrjǎnszki (1817-1901) was one of the organizers of the Slav Congress held in Prague, in 1848. His aim was to unite the Rusyns of Subcarpathia and Galicia into one province. To this end, he served Vienna and during the War of Independence he, as commissioner of the Austrian government, led Russian troops against the Hungarian army. In the period of Absolutism following the suppression of the War of Independence, he became the Lord Lieutenant of four counties inhabited by Rusyns. During his administration, the most important positions were filled by like-thinking cronies. After the Compromise of 1867, he tried to run for Parliament, but gave up and moved to Lemberg, later to Innsbruck. His writings are long on fantasy, short on reality and historical facts.

Iván Rakovszky (1817-1885) was a teacher in the Teachers College of Ungvár and later, in the fifties, the official Rusyn translator of the government in Pest. In this capacity he, however, translated the laws and instructions not into Rusyn but into Russian. He produced a book of Russian grammar and was the staunch supporter of Dobrjǎnszki. After 1859, he labored as the parish priest in the village of Iza and therefore it comes as no wonder that in the two decades before the World War the village was the center of orthodox separatism and schism, supported from Kiev.

From among their followers we have to single out Anatolij Kralickij (1834-1893). He was the provost of the Basilian monastery of Ungvár and a talented writer. His novels describing the everyday life of the people of Subcarpathia were, however, published in journals in Lemberg, thus having no impact on the local population. As a historian, he enthusiastically collected the cultural

relics of the area for his Church and people, unfazed by imitations and fakes (Remember the Kurucz poems of Kálmán Thaly!). In all probability, he is the author of the Chronicle of Munkács, dated to 1458. The literary work *CaptainLaborc* was also written by him, but later generations made use of it as an authentic historical source.

Among the others, Iván Szilvay (1838-1913) had an interesting life worthy of mention here. A descendant of an old Hungarian noble family, he was brought up in Ugocsa county at a time when language use was indeterminate and unregulated. He tried his hand at literature at a time when Hungarian culture was repressed by Austrian policy. This and his Greek Catholic faith led him to the priesthood and later to join the autocratic Russophile movement. Under the nom de plume Uriel Meteor, he became one of the most prolific writers of the mid- to late 19th century. His biography is revealing. He admits that, at the beginning of his literary career, he knew little Russian. Therefore, he wrote in Hungarian and then translated them using as dictionaries the Church Slavic Bible and the Latin Vulgate. Acknowledging that his Russian is still weak, he was infuriated by those "who think that the birth and growth of literature is dependent on an oral, everyday language".

The name of Jevhen Fencik has already been mentioned in connection with the journal *Lisztok*. It should also be added to his contributions that he was the author of the work *Koriatovics*, another work of mythic value akin to Králickij's *CaptainLaborc*. Alekszander Mitrák (1837-1913) had ambitions as a poet but, seeing the linguistic challenges, turned to compiling a dictionary. In 1881, he published, at his own expense, a Russian-Hungarian dictionary in Ungvár and donated 3,000 copies to the St. Basil Society. The complementing Hungarian-Russian volume was not published until 1932.

In spite of the fact that many Rusyns still esteem these members of the Russophile movement and their cultural contributions, in reality their works had no connection with the life and language of the people, their efforts, in a sense, remained isolated. Their intentions, although admirable, their influence was negligible. In spite of it, during the first Czechoslovak period, the movement was still the direction adopted by the media even without the support of the populace, the Church or political parties.

The Hungarian government wished to change this perplexing situation of Rusyn culture and education and appointed László

Csopey to publish schoolbooks in Rusyn. The language of his books was, indeed, close to the spoken Rusyn but the content was merely a translation of existing school texts. The government published a popular weekly *Nedilja* (Sunday, 1898-1919) and at the same time a scientific journal, *Nauka* (Science), appears in Ungvár from 1886 on. Among the writers, many felt it important to educate the public and wrote in the vernacular. György Zsatkovics, pastor of Malmos (1855-1920) published his historically accurate works in Hungarian and his short stories in Rusyn. Ágoston Volosin, better known in later life for his political activities, also began as a writer in the Rusyn idiom. He edited the journal *Nauka* (Science) and also published a high quality Rusyn grammar text in 1907.

Folk culture, the pure fountain.

The culture closest to the people, at this stage, was folk culture - folklore in all its various forms. We have already seen that folk mythology was present in the *zborniks*. As Sándor Bonkáló points out, lacking the refined readership, Ruthenian folk poetry was created without the artistic self-censure that was present in Hungarian cultural creations. Hence these candid, sometimes brutally honest works, folk songs, ballads and folk tales reveal a great deal about the Ruthenian past. Hungarian ethnography was present when the collecting of Ruthenian folk poetry was begun. The early collectors (Tivadar Lehoczky, Mihály Finciczky, Antal Zloczky, Kálmán Zsatkovics, etc) initially published in Hungarian folklore journals. It was not by chance that the Ungvár branch of the Hungarian Ethnographic Society was founded as early as in 1891.

Sándor Bonkáló, always unbiased in his monographs, always open to arguments, himself becomes lyrical when writing about the ballads, the songs, the animated Ruthenian landscape and people in them. He emphasizes that the socioeconomic conditions of Ruthenian society can be gleaned from these songs. Also characteristic is that we are introduced to almost the whole fauna and flora of the Carpathians, as well as the geographic region wherein the Ruthenians moved comfortably whether looking for work, serving in the army or working as servants. He deems the romantic ballad-like songs and ballads to be the most esteemed works of Ruthenian folk poetry. In relation to the historical songs, he notes that the characters in this genre are not the heroes of Ruthenian history, but King Matthias of Hungary, Rákóczi and Kossuth. (The latter is especially interesting as some researchers tried to demonstrate the hostility of Ruthenian poetry towards Kossuth). Reproduced is a fundamentally Kurucz song, containing later stylistic elements, which he found remarkable.

Hungarians are suppressed,	(A Magyarat elnyomják,)
Germans elevated.	(Németet emelik,)
Our liberties	(Szabadságainkat)
Are trampled.	(Semmibe se veszik.)
Our liberties	(Szabadságainkat)
Are dispensed totally	(Elmellőzték végkép)
Those Germans	(Azok a németek,)
Who desolated our land.	(Kik hazánkat tépték.)
Poland they tore,	(Széttépték Lengyelhont,)
Hungary they tear,	(Tépi már Magyarhont,)
They see in her,	(Ugy tekintik azt csak,)
Merely wilderness.	(Mint valami vadont.)

Gyula Ortutay finds, in his study *Hungarian-Ruthenian connections in folk poetry*, this historical song as typical. In light of similar songs, Sándor Bonkáló states that Cossack and Ukrainian motifs crossed the Carpathians only recently. (This is what makes the efforts to prove the contrary during the Soviet era so deplorable.) Ortutay points out other parallels as well, establishing a connection between Ruthenian folk poetry and the history of the Danube basin. He goes on to show that ethnographic data - folk tales, songs, proverbs - are more reliable indicators than political assertions. They effectively prove that the Ruthenian people had deep acquaintance with Hungarian history and even within their tight ethnic borders, in spite of the decades of anti-Hungarian propaganda, they sided with Hungarians.

Referring to Antal Hodinka, Ortutay points out that perhaps the most decisive period of Ruthenian history was the Kurucz age. Hodinka proved convincingly that during the fight for freedom one third of the Ruthenians followed Rákóczi and almost half of them lost their life for Hungarian - and Ruthenian - freedom. The people have not forgotten. And really, in the resigned tone of a downtrodden people (Búde jak Rákóczi príjde - It will happen when Rákóczi returns, i.e., Never) and in the legends about the wandering prince (or his son), the idea is always present that the fight took place in their - the poor peoples - interest. In 1738, three years after the death of the prince, news spread in Northeast Upper Hungary that József Rákóczi, son of the prince, had returned and was travelling in disguise among the people. The atmosphere was tense as the poor were cherishing hopes while the new landowners saw

Kurucz agitators in every merchant or traveler. Gyula Ortutay found a legend about the concealed Rákóczi and his betrayal among the stories of his best known storyteller, Mihály Fedics, who was of Ruthenian ancestry born in Hungary and whose stories combined the folklore heritage of both people. Simple folk do not think in terms of historical dates but in eternal truths that grow out of events. Ortutay also re-tells the Ruthenian stories about King Matthias (Mátyás) with their local historical connections. It is interesting that Ortutay also accepts the view, one that gained ground in our century, that the relationship between Kossuth and the Ruthenians was not totally harmonious. This stems from the fact, mentioned earlier and unknown to him, that the anti-Kossuth Ruthenian songs were written to order in the Galician regiments of the Emperor. The surviving copies were cited in our century by historians and folklorist researchers who went off on a false trail. At the same time, Ortutay points out, in the Ruthenian songs quoted by him, the recognition of Hungarian heroism and the voice of sympathy. Thus, the contradiction is illusory, all the more as he finds extensive expressions of a kindred soul in Ruthenian folk - especially soldier - songs.

Ortutay is still optimistic in the brief period of peace. He invokes the spirit of Ede Egán, Miklós Bartha and Endre Ady, and dreams of an independent Hungary where freedom and social justice prevail, where the Hungarian and Ruthenian nations can meet on common ground to become the loyal nations of the Prince. Their fate, the fate of the future Hungary, depends on realizing these principles. History - as so often - betrayed both nations, but also the whole East Central European region. Moreover, Ortutay himself strayed from these ideals.

Studying the ballad collections subsequent to 1945, László Vári Fábián is working to translate this folklore treasure into Hungarian, characterizing the ballads and analyzing their basic motifs. In the material published to date, the intent is obvious to separate this ethnographic material from its Central European roots. In the works of László Vári Fábián, we can see that this was only partially successful. Alongside the authenticated influences from beyond the Carpathians, Western European ones can also be found. Over and above, the effect of Hungarian folklore is very strong (although the collections deliberately avoid material from areas with mixed population), and similarly, the incursion of the Hungarian language into that archaic, or even into the more recent, text material which makes up the most valuable part of Ruthenian folk ballads. The

millennium of coexistence has left natural and enriching tracks; if the amount of translated material grows, perhaps in both directions.

As far as the musical material of ethnography is concerned, Ivan Harajda, one of the leading figures of the Subcarpathian Society of Science had pointed out that a certain duality could be noticed in this field. In the Eastern corner of the territory, kolomejka-like melodies dominate, while in the West a more song-like performance is typical. Another early researcher of Ruthenian folk music, Dr. Mária Pataky, noted this duality. She emphasized that the church music of the Ruthenians shows fundamental Eastern influences. At the same time, of all the disciplines of Ruthenian folk arts, it is folk music that absorbed the most Hungarian influence. This influence is, however, mutual. Béla Bartók, who collected around a hundred tunes in the Subcarpathian Ruthenian villages (he was born in the region), pointed out during his comparative analysis that Hungarian swineherd songs were born under the influence of Ruthenian kolomejka, and later developed into the Hungarian verbunk style. If we consider the similarities of wars and army service, the raising of animals in close proximity, the conclusion of Bartók can only be confirmed. As such, the influence of Ruthenian folk music on its Hungarian counterpart is of historical evolutionary importance. At the same time, the new Hungarian folk songs had a great influence on the development of the Ruthenian melodic collection. As Philaresz Kolessza points out in his Ruthenian collection in 1923 and his Galician collection in 1929, forty percent of Subcarpathian songs are of Hungarian origin, and even beyond the Carpathians, their proportion can reach twenty percent. Hungarian influence is clearly shown by the distorted Hungarian refrains at the end of the tunes. Frequently, a Hungarian melody turns up with different lyrics or function in Ruthenian folklore. There are, furthermore, Ruthenian songs that show this relationship in its secondary characteristics (cadence and rhythm, new Hungarian melodic line, the music's Hungarian-ness, etc.). These can be traced back to the already mentioned common army service and farming similarities, as well as the practice of migrant labour on the Great Plains during harvests. This last one was a tradition going back to the period of the Compromise of 1867.

The Czechoslovak period brought about the popularization of modern music, the work of the refugees from communism, and encouraged by the Czechs. Their success was illusory. In the brief period of the autonomous Rusynsko state, the writers of the bilingual journal, *Zorja-Hajnal*, made considerable advances.

Worthy of note is the work of Dezso Zádor who, like Bartók, was a composer, folk music collector and publisher. His study, *Kolomejka in Ruthenian folk poetry*, was published in 1942 in the *Zorja* and co-authored a book of Ruthenian folk songs with Jurij Kosztyuk and Pjotr Miloszlavszkij. This 1944 publication marked a long hiatus in his collecting and publishing activities. Cultural activities were closely supervised during the Soviet era, especially the ethnic press. Every effort was made to stamp out the emergence of local cultural or linguistic values that differed from the approved Great Ukrainian model. It is indicative, that only V. Gosovszkij, no friend of Ruthenia or Hungary, was able to publish a book on the musical aspect of Ruthenian folk poetry - in Moscow. The Moscow musicologists, it seems, were not under the influence of the local underbosses. The book analyzes in detail the eight musical dialects of Ruthenia, their unique melodic character and defines the boundary of the kolomejka. It is evident that, if the Ruthenians wish to create a new, modern style while building their 'eminent culture', they must follow the Bartók-Kodály path and base their efforts on folk music.

Wooden churches are the oldest relics of Rusyn folk architecture. Unfortunately, a great number were razed as the villages became better off and could afford to build in stone. György Domanovszky documented this transition in a paper published in 1936. The churches that remain serve as particularly charming examples of rustic wood construction. As a result of historical influences, three church styles can be seen. In Máramaros (due to Transylvanian influence) Gothic predominated (Ósándorfalva, Száldobos, Szeklence, Husztsófalva, Darva, Mihálka, Taracújfalu, Közep Apsa), in Bereg and especially the Latorca River valley Baroque dominated due, to a large degree, to Zsófia Báthori and the Rákoczi court's tastes. (The monastery of Csernekhegy is one, although built of stone, it served as a model and example for the village churches in the upper valley such as Bisztra, today a part of Szolyva, Kanora in Verhovina and the - several times - transported one in Selesztó.) In the Lemák region can be found the majority of structures exhibiting a strong eastern influence (this area had the least 'landowner' influence). The Rusyn churches of the Northwest, mostly the Ung River and its tributaries, were built with steep, gabled roofs and three-aisle interiors. The ones at Uzsok, Szárazpatak, Viska, Csontos, Sóslak, Sónát are particularly nicely executed examples of artistic execution. The church interiors show occasional hints of renaissance, baroque and plait stylistic influences but mostly reveal the ingenuity and craft of the local builders.

The ethnographic village collection of Ungvár is a superb collection of rural buildings. A house in the local building style, complete with matching interiors, represents every part of Subcarpathia. Here it is easy to discern the differences, also present in other branches of folk culture, starting with the unique hucul grazsda (an enclosed farmyard with some defensive functions) to the transitional, inter-ethnic houses of the Highlands, lower Máramaros and dolisnyák villages. The latter ones are only marginally different in structure and function from buildings in neighboring Hungarian villages, or ones from the Great Plains. The main, eye-catching difference is their color. There is a widely utilized tint of blue that distinguishes them from the white, adobe brown and occasional black of the upper Tisza villages. Roofing material is uniform in both Rusyn and Hungarian villages, dictated by their proximity to the forests, and consists of shakes. The interiors of both churches and dwellings are the handiwork of Rusyn industry and craftsmen.

The industry dependent on forestry is exhibited in the 'Logging and log-rafting outdoor museum of Szinevir'. The exhibition contains buildings and articles of great ethnographic significance, as well as chronicling the declining economic conditions. At the same time, the public buildings bear the marks of the builder's attempts to include local variations, especially the structures connected with the travel trade (pubs, eateries and inns). Their work was greatly aided by their medium - wood.

The most showy and predominant of the Rusyn folkloric arts are handicrafts, the theme of numerous, almost legendary, studies. To illuminate the actual situation, we will cite an earlier study from the period of the collapse of the first Czechoslovak republic. Iván Kerekes, a teacher at the technical school of Ungvár, dedicated a series of radio broadcasts to the topic in the winter of 1939. In the series, he tried to sketch the development of Rusyn folk culture, specifically certain seminal points. Instead of a highly detailed seminar, he acquainted the inexpert viewers with the small details that normally elude the eye to present a well-rounded view. At the beginning, he stated that at the middle of the 20th century, the Rusyn's folk-arts are in a developed and mature phase. "The artistic and decorative ability displayed by the simple practitioners of the folk arts, these ... ordinary, everyday people, in whose works and practices we can not only multi-facets but also a unique, clear dependence on a nation and its traditions, which is the definition of the Rusyn culture" - he writes in his script. The author, while doing

ethnographic fieldwork, became acquainted with the land that sheltered - untouched - this unique culture for centuries. This part of the Forested-Carpathians is referred to as Verhovina. The most important settlement, in every respect, is Końrosmezoń, in the hucul valley of Máramaros. The cottage industry products present a true picture of Rusyn life, states Kerekes. So unique are the hucul-rusyn influences that folk art creations, produced in number for the market, barely bear the marks of mass production. Even today, they carry the character of the religious mystic traditions, transmitted by their priests, of their ancient past.

The original Rusyn folk arts are conspicuous by their versatility and delicate colors. Rusyn handicrafts display not only a unique artistry, apart from the mystic traditions mentioned previously, but also a total meshing with the national ethos, the spirit of the people. The product of a Rusyn craftsman always vividly displays the faith of the Savior carver's naïve, yet pervasive, religiosity. The sheepskin vests (kacagány), with their hand painted decorations, are so individual that any similarity is displayed only in the fine details. The shirts, with their high, collarless closures, (so-called faranetli) are richly decorated with embroidery. Even here, it is impossible to find two pieces with identical decorations - only broadly recurring similar motifs - the variations only limited by the imagination and creativity of the makers.

Beside the master's sure touch, the execution shows sparks of child-like, naïve playfulness and flashes of insight. Their unselfconscious creations allow an insight into their distinctive view of, their uncomplicated relationship with, the glories of the natural world. Their treasury of motifs is full of terrible seven-headed dragons, mysteries and miracles. Who could understand the thoughts of a young Rusyn woman of Máramaros, daydreaming of her suitor while working on a sheepskin jacket (Kazajka, ködmön)? What phantasm of flora and fauna pass before her mind's eye, unfettered by logic, as she works with the colored threads to decorate the sheepskin or homespun linen article, whose intrinsic value is undiminished by the fact that it is intended for sale?

Their handicrafts are technically robust and durable. This is understandable as they are the product of undisturbed hours and quiet days. The village, in its simplicity, stands in contrast to the towns, with their architectural creations. We can't compare the inventiveness of the simple folk with the cultural refinement, often over refinement, of the learned person. It seems as if the worth of

the first lags behind the second but we can never wholly learn their crafts, based on long traditions, as they are instinctive and inborn. Working at home, the simple village craftsman does not mind the passage of time, does not stint with it. Time passes slower for him, seems to stand still, compared to the town dwellers driven by work battles and the opportunity to get rich - sacrificing personal life. In contrast, the villager finds contentment in the work at hand, which oftentimes is reflected in the - seemingly unnecessary - lengths he will go to address insignificant details. This quality of fundamental care is what shines through their handiwork.

Among the decorative elements, linearity predominates, deviations resulting from individual circumstances, religion and belief, superstition and tradition. The dignity and uniqueness of their articles raises interest in Subcarpathia's folklore, with its blissful blend of embroidered, woven and carved ornaments.

At the Prague Exposition of 1935, the tangible differences between articles of clothing and their decoration became perceptible for individual villages. This is natural as clothing has a closer relation with a place than, say, carving or ceramics. The cut-decorated ceramics of Huszt can be found all over Verhovina, as the hucul-carved crosses decorate every church and chapel from Sztavna to Terebes but sewing, and its decorative elements, define a place.

Rusyn folk arts can be divided into four broad areas. The most unique is the world of the high elevation, laterally broadening valleys, the *Verhovina*, typically with a cross-stitch patterns using red, blue and black thread to express itself. Between Ökörmezo and Huszt, they are called foresters (*lyiszak*) while Northeast of the upper Tisza they are called hucul. "The Verhovina mountains are a barely arable, poor area, culturally lacking locale with log huts lacking chimneys - reads a description of the area's condition from between the wars. Inside, a floor-to-ceiling fence separates the co-habitation of man and animals. Bread is baked from ground corn. Basic clothing is made from barely processed hemp. Wealthier and well-to-do areas are minuscule."

From the Ung to about the Latorca, to around Szolyva, embroidery is characterized by the *turja type* stitching. Characteristic of this type is the colorful infill, using various techniques, between patterns outlined in black. The infills are without regularity, either of stitch or relief, a seemingly chaotic variation in white yarn that sometimes rises 3-5 mm. above the material. The cut of women's

blouses is also different. The turja needlework strikes one as particularly modest. In some villages, men's shirtsleeves and collars are lightly decorated, or not at all.

Previous to the World War, weaving and carving were encouraged. On occasion, we can still see a self-taught talent among them and find in the houses original, antique cupboards, tables, wooden spoons and shelves. These are ornamented with innovative decorations. This trove of unique decoration has been erased further South by the robust mixing of Polish, Slovak and Hungarian ornamentation. What remains of the stitching pattern, takes a long, narrow form that was, in all probability, copied from books. Although these repetitive infill-like patterns are tasteful, they fail to achieve the impact of the original. A few isolated oases remain where outstanding weaving is still done, such as Nagy Lucska (South of Munkács), Onukije (near Nagyszólo's) and some places around Ungvár, although here the Hungarian-Romanian influence can be felt in the patterns. The gorgeous red stripes with their green, blue and yellow flowers display no relationship with the ancient geometric and solid color ornamentation.

The third decorative regional area, the *lyiszak's* begins at Upper-Szinevér, where women wear ankle length blouses, to the South to the plains of Máramaros. This is Máramaros proper. Here the patterns are cross-sewn using yarn or wool, which presents large blocks of color on the 'good' side, in sharp relief from the material. On the back, the various strands criss-cross and overlap, blurring the finer details of the design. The size and color of the patterns varies greatly from village to village. In Lower-Szinevér, women's blouses have triangular kerchiefs decorate the outer strip of sleeve, while in Dolha it is replaced with narrow strips. On girls' dresses - to differentiate them from women - the pattern is filled with colorful weaving.

On the sunflower and corn growing plain of Máramaros, women show off in multi-colored dresses and in inclement weather wear intricately decorated leather vests. Silk accessories complete their wardrobe. Young-married women wear ribboned headdresses and their glass-bead necklaces are especially beautiful in the villages of the Tarac valley.

The most distinctive of the four is the *hucul embroidery* of the Black and White Tisza valleys. Starting at Nagybockó, the bravado of style and virtuosity of color reminds one of the East. The

crossweaving, often mixed with semi-crossweave and other, tighter weaves is an adaptation of older methods. Regardless of the parentage and current state of hucul folk arts, the artistic virtues of this small region merit attention in the Southeast corner of Subcarpathia, between the mountains and Romania.

At the turn of the century, the cottage industry in clay articles, which developed in several of the smaller centers, could not compete with the ceramics factories. What survived was basic pottery without special ornamentation: simple glaze and outside finishing. Ceramics in Draho are of this kind today. The overview of cottage industry in Subcarpathia is completed by the plate pottery of Halics, along both arms of the Tisza River, while the standard of Verhovina households is enhanced by the products of the potters of Ungvár, Huszt and Nagyszólo's. These are completely of a Hungarian character.

Hucul needlework is in no way inferior to that of Halics, in fact, the quality of the products of Ko'rosmezo', Kabola, Poljana even outdo it. Following in quality is woodcarving but carving is now merely a tradition rather than an active industry. It is very difficult to find the ornately carved and burnt wooden crosses, pictures, copper-iron ashtrays, old vessels, spoons, weaving and spinning looms that have been put aside or relegated to the attic. The tradition hasn't died out completely, however. It is still possible to find skilled woodcarvers and burners who display all the virtuosity of the past.

The quality of artistic materials of the Ruthenian people demonstrates surprising originality and aesthetic value, leading to a resurgence of Ruthenian folk motifs. The primary task here as elsewhere, is the creation of a Ruthenian art based on folk arts, which can draw on the amassed artistic treasures hidden for centuries.

There are two branches of the arts where, pre-1918, we hardly find any material that conforms to the criteria of a nation, a people. These are painting and music. Of the latter, besides folk music we can only speak of the foreign influenced church music, while the graphic arts only began to exhibit distinctive local character after the First World War.

The history of Subcarpathia and the Ruthenian people after 1918

The organs of self-administration in the Ruthenian inhabited areas - contrary to the Romanian, Croatian, Serbian and Slovak National Councils, which were established earlier - were set up only after Hungary's 'Michaelmas Daisy' Revolution of 1918. A 35 person Hungarian-Ruthenian People's Council was set up in Ungvár on November 9, 1918 with a fundamental belief in territorial integrity. It was their belief that "the national councils are necessary to resist the annexing efforts of the Ukrainians, Romanians and Slovaks, and to keep all the Ruthenians united". The president of the People's Council (*ráda*) was Simon Szabó, its secretary Ágoston Volosin. The Ruthenian *ráda* of Máramaros joined them on November 21 and 22 settlements of Ugocsa county on December 5. Only the People's Council of Eperjes was partially under Czechoslovakian influence. The Károlyi government of Hungary, in its X. People's Decree issued on December 15, 1918, defined the territory of Ruska-Krajna as 17,945 square kilometers. It should be noted, however, that this territory size is identical with the whole of Ung, Bereg, Máramaros and Ugocsa counties, including the Romanian and Hungarian settlements as well. It did not include the Ruthenian settlements of the uplands in Zemplén, Sáros and Szepes counties. Defining the borders of the autonomous region was postponed. The total population of the counties affected by the law was 848,428 in 1910, of which 356,067 were Ruthenian and 267,091 were Hungarian. The remainder was made up of 94,273 Romanian, 93,047 German and 37,950 Slovak nationals. Projected over today's Subcarpathia, the total population was 602,774, of which 184,789 identified themselves as Hungarian, 334,755 Ruthenians (very similar to the figure shown above), 63,561 Germans, 6,344 (!) Slovaks and 11,460 Romanians. The number of people belonging to other nationalities was under 200.

Commissioner Oreszt Szabó became the government's Minister responsible for the Ruska-Krajna Ministry, created by the X. People's Decree, and Ágoston Stefán was appointed as governor of the province with the capital in Munkács. During the French-Czechoslovak occupation of Northern Hungary (Felvidék), the line of demarcation was drawn in today's Slovakia, at Bajánháza in Ung county. According to the secret agreement of 1916, Tomas Garrigue

Masaryk and Eduard Benes considered Ruthenian populated Subcarpathia and the towns of Munkács and Ungvár in the Russian sphere of influence. The Hungarian People's Republic of Béla Kún left the decrees of the Károlyi government essentially unaltered. It intended to cede to Ruska-Krajna the parts of Zemplén and Sáros counties inhabited by Ruthenians.

After the collapse of Russia, the birth of the Bolshevik regime and in consultation with the Allies and the short-lived Ukrainian Republic, Prague began its armed and political conquest to occupy the land of the Ruthenians. They made use of the People's Committee of Hungaro-Russians, émigrés to the United States, who drafted a resolution, at a congress in Scranton, supporting the annexation of Subcarpathia to Czechoslovakia, albeit with 'wide ranging autonomy'. This explains why Gregory Zsatkovics, legal counsel of General Motors, could participate at the Paris Peace Talks as a fully authorized representative of the Ruthenians. The Subcarpathian People's Councils - represented by no one at the Peace Talks - were forced to accept the plans of Prague, partly in reaction to generous promises made at the time of the Romanian-Czechoslovakian occupation, partly in response to the reprisals. Accomplishing the plans of the Czechoslovakian occupiers was made easier by pro-Ukrainian sentiments, whose leader, Ágoston Volosin was, and continued for decades to be, a double agent.

The September 1919 Treaty of Saint Germain annexed the Ruthenian lands to Czechoslovakia and declared that the inhabitants should have wide-ranging autonomy in the region. The peace treaty defined the border between Slovakia and Rusinsko along the Csap-Ungvár railway line and the Ung river, different from the line of demarcation. In all, 11 settlements of today's Subcarpathia were ceded to Slovakia. At the same time, to ensure the Little Entente's direct railway connections, a strip of Hungarian populated territory along the Csap-Bátyu-Királyháza-Nevetlenfalu rail line was transferred to Czechoslovakian control.

Ruthenian territory now comprised 12,656 square kilometers with a population, according to the first Czechoslovakian census of February 1921, of 604,593. (Taking the 11 settlements in Ung county into account, it is 612,442). The difference of 8,000, except for 500 persons, is comprised exclusively of Hungarians. Beginning with the first Czechoslovakian census, the statistical and comparative possibilities of historical demographics should be taken into consideration when talking about the size of the Hungarian

population. In the first census, Jews were tabulated as a separate minority, whereas before they had been divided between the German and Hungarian minorities. Jews identifying themselves as Hungarians were punished by imprisonment for attempting to mislead the authorities. At the same time, Gypsies, who were also tabulated as an independent minority, were partly accounted as Hungarians during the census. Deliberate falsification was practiced, on the basis of their religious denomination, in the case of the ethnic Hungarians of Greek Catholic religion of Ugocsa county (especially in the settlements of Batár, Csepe, Nevetlen). This is still the practice today! The identity shift in the towns, on the other hand, is a natural phenomenon, typical of the whole of Northern Hungary. The number of repatriated persons can only be estimated.

Taking all these into consideration, according to the census data, 372,278 Ruthenians and 103,690 Hungarians lived in Subcarpathia. With an extremely small potential for statistical error, we can include as Hungarian the 7,217 persons recorded as 'Uncertain'. Jews numbered 80,117. The number of Germans fell below 10,000; by moving administrative staff into the region, the number of Czechs and Slovaks reached almost 20,000. The number of Romanians, recorded as 'Other', was less than 11,000. The numbers for the 1931 census: Ruthenian: 446,478, Hungarian: 116,975, Czechoslovak: 34,700, Jew: 91,845, German: 12,778, Romanian: approx. 12,000. The increase of foreign citizens is striking: 16,558.

The history of Rusinsko while part of the first Czechoslovak Republic

The administrative activity of Ivan Brejcha, the first governor of the Ruthenian lands annexed to Czechoslovakia (officially called: Podkarpatska Rus = Subcarpathian Rus), lasted only short period, followed in April of 1920 by Gregory-Gergely Zsatkovics, the delegate from Detroit (!). He resigned in less than a year, and moved back to the United States, when it became apparent that Prague had no intention to implement the terms of the peace treaty concerned with regional autonomy (introducing self-government, summoning the Sojm, realigning the borders of the region with the areas of Ruthenians populations). Following him were Antal Beszkid and Konstantin Hrabár, loyal executors of Czechoslovakian politics, all the more as vice-governors of Czech nationality (Ehrenfeld, Rozsypál, Meznik) oversaw their actions. Rozsypál functioned as the longest serving vice-governor, who went beyond serving Czechoslovak interests by shamelessly promoting his own Agrarian Party as well. The illusion of autonomy survived until 1928, when a new provincial redistribution was carried out and Subcarpathia became one of the Republic's provinces.

The first Czechoslovak Republic entered European public consciousness as the eastern bastion of democracy. The election of village governments and the language laws permitting use where the minority exceeded 20%, seemed extremely good opportunities to establish a cultural life for minorities. This was, however, made impossible by the statistical distortions in many settlements, most obvious in Ungvár where, after 1930, the proportion fell under the crucial 20%. The manipulated nature of the census is brought out by the data of the national and local elections. The organizational structure of the parties came into existence immediately after the change of government. Party affiliation was, however, influenced by the nationalistic trends begun in the mid-19th century. The Subcarpathian people, who identified themselves as Ruthenians, besides demanding their autonomy, also wanted to association with Hungary. The spirit of Pan Slavism was represented by the Russian faction, while the Ukrainophiles, who were reinforced by the Ukrainian nationalists exiled the Soviet power, considered themselves to be a part of the Pan-Ukrainian nation. Hungarophile Ruthenians gathered around the Autonomous Peasant Association,

which was founded between the two world wars by János Kurtyák and led, after his death, by András Bródy. The Autonomous Social-democratic Party and the Hungarian-Ruthenian Political Party also represented a similar policy.

The Autonomous Russian National Party, lead by Stepan Fencik, held different views on both language and religion (Pravoslav) from the Ruthenians, its stand on autonomy only a clever political ploy. Among the Russian parties, we must mention the Russian Labour Party and the Russian National Union. At the same time, the governing coalition members, the Agrarian Party and Czech Popular Socialist Party, also had Russian factions. The most important representative of the Pan-Ukrainian movement was the National Christian Party, lead by Augustin Volosin, but we should also mention the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party and the Ukrainian Peasant Party. Following the instruction of the Komintern, the Communist Party treated the Ruthenians as Ukrainians. The Podkarpatska Rus Communist Party, at the same time, had a large number of Jewish and Hungarian supporters. Their support helped elect the greatest number (3-3) of representatives into the Prague parliament, in both 1919 and 1935.

Among the Hungarian Parties, an important role was played by both the National Christian-Socialist Party and the Hungarian National Party - from 1936, amalgamated as the United Hungarian Party -, the National Hungarian Smallholders' Party and the Subcarpathian Justice Party, founded by dr. Endre Kolláth in 1920. These parties proclaimed the doctrine of territorial integrity, but many of their political principles were outdated: the obstinacy of 'we will survive, we will outlive', inherited from the resistance movements of the 1850's, which became totally untenable after the Second World War. As for national policy, the Ruthenian direction was pro-Hungarian, but with an increasing nationalistic core. The Communists were immune to national issues; they sided with one or other movement only for tactical reasons - at instruction from above. The Russian and Ukrainian parties made the defense of the interests of both the Hungarians and Ruthenians difficult. This served the interests of Prague, which acknowledged with substantial state support.

By the end of the thirties, it was the national and minority issues that caused the crisis and ultimate dissolution of Czechoslovakia. Benes found that autonomy for Podkarpatska Rus was too early and unnecessary, in his 1934 speech in Ungvár, saying that it favored

only the Jews and Hungarians. Party struggles for autonomy became considerably stronger subsequent to 1936 and fought more intensely not only for the status of the province, but also for self-determination, which for Prague meant the possibility of voluntary annexation to Hungary. The decision was continually delayed until the weeks preceding the re-annexation of the strip populated by Hungarians.

The economic situation of Subcarpathia, 1918 - 1938

Subcarpathia was perhaps the poorest small-region in East-Central Europe after the political upheavals following the First World War. The cause of this, apart from the reality of the existing geo-economic conditions, was the result of two centuries of colonial exploitation as practiced by the Schönborn family (on an area of 2,531 square kilometers, acquired in lieu of war loans from the former Rákóczi 'empire' and which constituted about 70% of Bereg county). The crown properties in Ung and Máramaros counties, roughly similar in size, were also operated in an intensive way to realize short term profits. This, as already noted, could not be altered radically by the so-called 'Highland Action' initiated by Bishop Gyula Firczák and the government in the fifteen years before the First World War. The murder of the coordinator of the Action, Ede Egán, who dreamt of a 'Ruthenian Switzerland', is symbolic: it represents the hopelessness of messianic initiatives.

The strip of the Plains inhabited by Hungarians was no better off, economically. Besides the scarcity of land and the lack of industrial development, the trade effect of the market towns lessened as railway lines were relocated to other multifunctional, regional centers closer to the center of the country.

After the peace treaties, the envisaged autonomous state could have concentrated on these tasks, as well. The unaccomplished autonomy created a graver situation for this most distant and underdeveloped province of Prague. The facts bear out that there was no intent, on the part of the Czechoslovakian government, to carry out changes.

The Czechoslovak National Assembly passed a law, on April 16, 1919, regarding the redistribution of land. The intention of the government was, in practice, to divide the Hungarian populated strip of land along the border. In Subcarpathia, 35,000 settlers received lands, mainly the properties of landowners that found themselves on the other side of the border. In addition, Czech civil servants and prominent representatives of Czech friendly parties acquired significant estates. The total land distributed was 4,538 hectares. (The Hungarian population received a total of 2 hectares near Bányú - for a cemetery.) The bulk of the Schönborn property was sold to

the Franco-Belgian Latorica firm. The Teleki family domain in Máramaros was leased on a long-term basis to the Order of the Knights of Malta. Industrial development was not felt to be important. Only the development of traffic infrastructure, the network of roads, was considered significant by the government to allow the transportation of raw materials to the Czech industrial regions. Between 1920 and 1933, 570 km. of roads were built, 170 km. of which had hard, asphalt surface. During the same period, 129 bridges were erected, 114 of which were of ferro-concrete and one of iron structure. The contribution of industry in the economy was only 2.2%.

The 1929 - 1933 economic crisis was a more serious blow to this underdeveloped region than to other parts of the country. Official statistics record 110,000 unemployed; wages in the various sectors fell to 40% of their previous levels. The world first heard about the tragic economic situation of Subcarpathia in 1932 (when Ludwig Renn and George Hamilton traveled in the region and when Zoltán Fáy wrote *The legend of hunger*). The Hungarian and Ruthenian opposition had already indicated the problems earlier and urged aid. As a delegate of the Ruthenian Autonomous Party, Secretary Iván Bródy visited Verhovina in the spring of 1929 and called the attention of the world, and Ruthenians living in America, in shocking articles of the economic situation that, if not remedied, will lead to the annihilation of the population. Only one man profited from the hunger in Verhovina: Scsereckij, leader of the local agrarian party, who gave a dowry of 1.5 million to his daughter out of agrarian aid monies.

The Czechoslovak political and economic leaders were aware of the facts. Analysis of the economic data of the 1930 census made it clear that Subcarpathia is the most underdeveloped region in Europe, its standard at an 18th century level. Instead of helping the region, Prague further aggravated the situation through selective, colonial tax discriminations. The Muzsaly-Beregszász wine region, enjoying similar features as the Tokaj region, especially on its southern slopes, could sell its wine under conditions five times as difficult as the low-quality Czech wines. Similarly discriminated were the lumber and rudimentary forest product industries of the mountains. As everywhere else in a similar situation, the powers-that-be tried to find a scapegoat for their political and economic sins. This is how the popular novel of Ivan Olbracht, *Nyikola, The Highwayman*, became the first anti-Semite film of Europe, to the eternal shame of Czechoslovak democracy.

The state of religion and culture in Rusinsko between the World Wars

It came as an unpleasant surprise for the Czechoslovak colonizers that, in spite of the misery and the deliberate anti-Hungarian propaganda, the Ruthenian people still spoke with nostalgia about the earlier regime, about the free movements of the raftsmen, the harvesters of the Plains and the pilgrimages to Máriapócs. In the discussion of the general situation, we have already seen the "Divide and Conquer" principle of Prague, its support of political and linguistic efforts alien to the indigenous people. All this had a palpable effect in applied culture, in everyday life. The relentless propaganda, hammering home the oppression of a thousand years, proved ineffective. The war for the minds of the thinking people was opened on two new fronts: religion and education. Around 1920, religious persecution was begun. Prague tried to demonstrate that the Church Union was in the interest of the Austrians and the Hungarians and that the Ruthenian people should return to the faith of their ancestors.

The former soldiers of the Czech Legion (the so-called White Army, recruited from prisoners of war and who returned home via the Far East) often brought Pravoslav wives with them. The Russian and Ukrainian nobles, intellectuals, officers who escaped from Bolshevism were also of the Pravoslav religion. In many villages, the Hungarian seminary trained priests were driven out, to be replaced by semi-literate Pravoslav priests. More educated priests and bishops were imported from Serbia (!). This is how it came to be the number of Pravoslavs, who numbered one or two thousand in the first decade of the century, rapidly swelled to 120,000 strong.

At the same time, they tried to push the Greek Orthodox Church, loyal to its traditions, into the background. Bishop Antal Papp was removed from his position and consequently expelled from the country. The Holy See appointed Péter Gebé as his replacement, under whose leadership the status of the church and its priests was settled, although under miserable conditions. After his death in 1931, Sándor Sztojka followed, first as a vicar of the chapter, then as bishop of the Greek Catholic diocese of Munkács. Bishop Sztojka was a real father to his flock. He organized the so-called '*pászka action*', through which poor Ruthenian families were provided with white bread and *pászka* during the Easter holidays.

(This small gesture was important, in light of the event, when some stone-hard 'bread', which had seen neither wheat nor corn, was exhibited in the Prague parliament as the daily fare of the impoverished Ruthenian people.) He tried to exemplify the paths chosen by the Subcarpathian Ruthenians almost three centuries before in the religious, literary and moral fields.

The most influential Panslav propagandist was Hilarion Curkánovics, a Russian immigrant from Bukovina, who established a Russian language printing press, organized a Russian party - financed by Czech money - and through it became a representative in Parliament. In Ungvár, they maintained a Russian residence where needy Ruthenian children were educated by Russian immigrants - in the Panslav spirit. Their generation, understandably, became indifferent to the issues concerning Hungary and the Carpathian basin.

The Russian tendency was represented by the Duhnovics Cultural Society, founded in 1923, which did not serve the Panslav principles, but in the literary, linguistic field it followed the Panrussian trends of the late 19th century. It carried out a serious cultural mission - it had 30,000 members and maintained headquarters in Ungvár. Between 1928 and 1933, it published a literary journal with the title *Karpatski Svjet* (Carpathian World); Eumén Szabó was its president, Dr. Iván Fenczik its secretary. Among its distinguished members were found the representatives of economic and cultural life of Subcarpathia. It should be noted that the political opposition parties in favor of autonomy also supported the Russophile cultural policy, the Duhnovics Society. The main reason was that, until now, the threat from this direction was taken to be insignificant.

The menace was the Pan-Ukrainian movement, reinforced with the assistance of immigrants, was felt to be a lesser problem in relation to the Russian trend, but through their aggressiveness they soon gained the upper hand in Subcarpathia. (This trend was also observed in St. Petersburg in 1917, as well.) The Ukrainian movement attacked in a more dangerous field than the church - in education. Primarily, they carried out aggressive propaganda among the intellectuals and teachers. They lured Ágoston Volosin to their cause, then principal of the teachers' college in Ungvár. Subsequently, they gained control of the secondary grammar schools in Ungvár and Beregszász, the men's and women's teachers college in Ungvár (Ukrainian nuns were settled in the latter by

Volosin), the commercial school in Munkács, the secondary schools at Nagyszőlös, Ilosva, Bocskó, Rahó. This movement succeeded through the Ukrainian University in Prague, in Ukrainian students' societies and at various colleges.

The best known Ukrainian immigrant was Dr. Pankievics, a secondary school teacher, who published his own Ukrainian grammar in contravention to the prevailing Russian grammar. Other notable locals who embraced this trend, besides Volosin (who published, in 1920 and 1923, Russian books containing Ruthenian elements), chief inspector Gyula Revaj, the lawyer brothers Brascasjkó and the most distinguished poet Grendzsa-Donszkij. The center of the pro-Ukrainian movement was the Prosvita Society, which, similarly to its rival, the Duhnovics Society, established local offices and public libraries all over Subcarpathia. (By 1938, they had 250 reading societies and 8 affiliated sites.) These reading circles also organized amateur theatricals; over one hundred choirs were in existence, as well.

During the increasingly heated debate about heritage language, in 1937, the Czech leadership organized a test vote in the schools among teachers and parents. The vote had an unexpected outcome. In spite of similar funding, the Russian faction, containing Ruthenian elements, came out as winner with 70%; the Ukrainian grammar received barely 15% of the votes. Many voters were indifferent. No decision was made; the voting pattern reflected the local power conditions. However, in public life the more aggressive Ukrainian movement prevailed, which set up its headquarters in Huszt after re-appropriating a strip of land in the Tiszahát region.

As far as the economic and technical infrastructure of culture is concerned, 35 printing presses operated in Subcarpathia between the two World Wars. The technical conditions were out-dated, of course, and they were far from the standards of the Hungarian capital or of the Czech territories. Typesetting machines existed only in the three bigger towns (Ungvár, Munkács and Beregszász), in other places manual typesetting was used. It was a basic necessity for each printing office to publish a newspaper as it was the only way for them to collect advertising revenues. As previously mentioned, the printing offices were under party or church influence. The printing offices of *Státni tiskarna* (State printers), *Svoboda* (Liberty) and *Skolnaja pomoscs* (School assistance printing office) were funded and maintained by Czechoslovakia. The first represented state interests in its publication policy, the second

was the base for the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party and the third displayed a strong Communist influence.

The centers for Slavic publications, books, journals and religious texts, were the Unió Ltd. and the printing press of the St. Basilian Order. The printing press of Mózes Gellis, in Ungvár, was Jewish (Yiddish). Over and above, all liberal and independent printing presses involved some degree of Jewish investment. Hungarian language products were printed in all the printing offices of Subcarpathia. Gyula Földesi, who played an important role in the printing and publishing trades in the preceding decades, printed Hungarian, Ruthenian and Old Slavic (church Slavic) without discrimination. The offices of the Viktória published the *Carpathian Hungarian Popular Paper* (Kárpáti Magyar Néplap) and *Jewish Popular Paper* (Zsidó Néplap), while the Unió Ltd. printed the *Greek Catholic Review* (Görögkatolikus Szemle) and the *Hungarian Farmer* (Magyar Gazda). The offerings of the presses were surprisingly rich and varied. In 1927, Subcarpathia saw 58 newspapers being published: 22 in Hungarian, 10 in Ruthenian, 10 in Russian, 5 in Hebrew, 4 in Czech, 2 in Ukrainian, 1 in Ruthenian-Hungarian, 1 in Russian-Hungarian, 1 in Czech-Russian-Hungarian and 2 in Czech-Ruthenian. Apart from the linguistic and political debates, useful scientific articles were born, mainly in the fields of history and local history. Ruthenian papers on history naturally touched upon Hungarian history, as well as the other way.

Andor Sas, a scientist in Hungary, wrote a small monograph on Munkács in 1928, *Out of the past of Munkács*, (Munkács város multjából). Even more important and useful work for today's local historians is his 1927 work *The archives of the free town of Munkács, 1376-1850*, (Szabadalmas Munkács város levéltára, 1376-1850), which is both a monograph and a collection of data. The researcher of the collection of the Lehoczky museum, the outstanding teacher and archaeologist, József Jankovics, published his *Podkarpatska Rus in prehistory* in Munkács in 1931, which has been indispensable to this day. Iréneusz Kontratovics excelled with *The history of Subcarpathia*, written as a secondary school text, reaching three editions. Sándor Ilniczky, assessor of the Holy See produced important linguistic and literary results. He organized the Central Office for the Defense of the Religion, whose publications were popular among the Ruthenians. István Hladonik became known as the collector of folk songs.

In spite of this chaotic situation, a good number of works saw the light of day that attempted to describe the Ruthenian reality, independent of the language of publication. The people did not take part in the language debates, but continued to speak their language, formed through the centuries. It is worth recalling the observation of Tivadar Ortutay, an important representative of the Greek Catholic Church in connection with the 1931 census in Poland. According to it, in the eastern parts, 3,250,000 people identified themselves as Ukrainian, 1,138,000 as Belarus, and 1,219,000 considered themselves to be Ruthenian.

It is important to note this fact, among the others, concerning the emergence of ethnogenesis. The most essential is identity awareness and a cultural self-image based on language. Unfortunately, the various political parties manipulated most of the authors of Russian-Ruthenian-Ukrainian Subcarpathian literature. Olexandr Markus, Grendzsa-Donszkij, Luka Demján, Borsos-Kumjatszkij on the one side; Emil Balezky, Jozsip Zsupán, Patrusz Karpatszkij on the other. Fegyir Potusnyák, this very talented young poet, who was very sensitive to modern European literary trends and who became a reputable folklorist later on, can't be easily categorized.

Their achievements survived as footnotes of literary history. The period following the Czechoslovakian era was a short experiment to create culture and literature.

The political history of Subcarpathia, 1938 - 1944

Following the First Vienna Decision, the portion of the Plains populated by Hungarians was reattached to the one-time provinces, as before. This affected 1,523 square kilometers and 173,233 inhabitants. The re-annexation of Ruthenia was imminent, however, the Great Powers managed to delay it for several months. In September 1938, the struggle between the Ukrainian nationalists and the autonomists came to a head. On September 4, the *Ukrainska Centralna Narodna Rada* (Ukrainian Central People's Council) held a congress in Ungvár, whose demands were transmitted to Prague by Volosin, which were refused. At the next meeting, on September 20, the delegates sided with action to fulfil the Wilson principles. After the Slovaks declared their autonomy in Zilina (Žsolna) on October 6, Prague was forced to recognize the autonomy of Podkarpataska Rus on October 8.

The autonomous government of Subcarpathia was formed on October 9, under the leadership of András Bródy as Prime Minister; Volosin became Minister of Public Health. In Prague, Bródy submitted his views on autonomy, according to which Ruthenians should fill all the leading posts in the government and bureaucracy and in religious affairs, Ruthenians must have rights equal to those of the founding nations. His proposals did not find acceptance in Prague. When he also proposed a referendum concerning Subcarpathia's right to secede, his parliamentary immunity was withdrawn and he was imprisoned - not to be released until 1939.

It is likely that Volosin had reliable sources in Prague and took power on behalf of the minority Ukrainian party on the day after Bródy's arrest. He removed the representatives of the Ruthenian movement, banned the Ruthenian and Hungarian language newspapers, barred the opposition political parties and societies. At the same time, he was not willing to follow the Prague line, either. He did not acknowledge general Prchala, commander of the Czechoslovakian forces stationed in Subcarpathia, as a minister appointed by the central government to his government.

After the re-annexation of the Hungarian populated ribbon to Hungary, Volosin moved his seat to Huszt. There, under pressure

from the Ukrainian immigrants who played an ever more important role and from the organized armed groups that arrived, he set up a mini-state on the Galician pattern and organized its armed force, the Szics Guards. According to the negative evaluation of Soviet historians, Volosin based his defensive power on White Guardists and Petljurists (Petljura: a Ukrainian political, later military leader). It might be more correct to say that the mass of enthusiastic young Ukrainians were organized by leaders from Galicia who were not without their own agenda in coming to aid the puppet regime. Volosin, vacillating in his views, soon became their captive figurehead.

The Czechoslovakian parliament accepted the constitution of the autonomous *KarpatskaUkrainia* on November 22. The territory of the new state was 11,085 square kilometers with a population of 545,131. Three quarters of them were Ukrainian (Ruthenian), along with a significant number of Hungarian, German, Romanian minorities. As well, more than 65,000 Yiddish-speaking Jews lived in Karpatska Ukraine.

Carpathian Ukraine, born with the support of Germany, was incapable of sustaining itself. Neither its food production nor its industry was significant. The exceptions were lumber and rock salt, their market, however, was alienated because of the political circumstances. As all states born out of a crisis, Volosin's puppet regime resorted to terror. He maintained his anti-Ruthenian and anti-Hungarian measures, which were decreed back in Ungvár. He had the representatives of these two ethnic groups incarcerated in a concentration camp in the Dumen Alps. Volosin was willing to accept the cooperation of the Minister of the Interior, Prchala, whom he had not recognized before, only on one condition. On January 6, 1939, they began a terrorist attack against Munkács which, by this time, belonged to Hungary.

On February 12, 1939, they organized 'elections' where the people were allowed to vote only for the nominees of the Ukrainian parties. In the style of later Soviet farcical elections, ignoring the 'No' ballots, Volosin's nominees garnered more than 90% of the votes. Under this pseudo-legitimacy, he summoned the *Podkarpatska Centralna Rada* (Subcarpathian Central Council) which, in the end, did not assemble as the relationship between Huszt and Prague had deteriorated in the meantime. Volosin wanted to rid himself of the 15,000 Czech public servants who settled in the previous two decades. They, in turn, turned against the government at Huszt with the help of general Prchala, who did not hesitate to

resort to force in order to take his office as Minister of the Interior. His agents sent alarmed messages to German Foreign Minister Ribbentrop. As well, Hungary was perturbed by the plans of Berlin's bridgehead. On March 14, 1939, the National Assembly in Bratislava (Pozsony) declared a sovereign Slovak state. The next day, Zakarpatska Ukraine also declared itself an independent state. German strategy had, by this time, changed and looked beyond the Carpathian mountains. While immediately following the First Vienna Treaty, in November Germany emphatically prevented Hungarian aspirations, now it silently consented that, during the 24 hours between the Slovak and Carpath-Ukrainian declarations of independence, the Hungarians could also realize their ambitions. At dawn, on March 15, Hungarian forces moved towards the peaks of the Carpathians. Volosin tried, in vain, to secure a German protectorate. He initiated negotiations with Budapest - also in vain - which he had rejected until now. On March 16, he declared the annexation of Karpatska Ukraine to Romania and on the same day, following the fleeing commander-in-chief of the Szics Guards, who was the first to escape, he also fled to Romania, along with his government.

On March 17, the Hungarian forces reached the Polish border along the line of peaks of the Carpathians. The Central European and Western powers all accepted the occupation. Two ambassadors wrote their governments regarding the actions. The Hungarian ambassador to Paris, Khuen-Héderváry, reported the following on March 22, 1939: "French public opinion ... found the preliminary news about our occupation of Carpatho-Russia as natural and received calmly, as the logical conclusion of the dissolution of Czechoslovakia ... I heard from parliamentary sources that the establishment of a common border (Polish-Hungarian - S.B.A.) was sympathetically received here. The press has not voiced disapproval in principle of the re-annexation of Carpatho-Russia." The Hungarian ambassador to London reported in his telegram on March 28, 1939: "The Hungarian actions in Ruthenian and Slovakian found agreement both in public opinion and in official circles."

The Hungarian armies crossed the provisional, never clearly defined as a provincial boundary, Subcarpathian-Slovak border. As a consequence, Slovakia initiated an air attack against Szobránc and Ungvár. Under German pressure, they ceased military actions, but the 1,056 square kilometers occupied by Hungary, the districts of Szobránc and Takcsány, became integral parts of Subcarpathia-

Rusinsko. The area detached from Slovakia, predominantly inhabited by Ruthenians but also partly by Slovaks, became part of the administrative section of Ung. This district, in addition to the Máramaros and Bereg administrative section, formed the basis of the Ruthenia, codified in law 6200/1939 M.E. The expression 'administrative section' indicates that their connection with the earlier counties was maintained. This was necessary both from an administrative (the seat of Ruthenia, Ungvár, lay outside the autonomous region) and economic (the center of economic activity was Munkács, e.g.- this was the head office of the Latorica firm) necessity. The educational and cultural centers, as well as the press, were also extra territorial. The fundamental unity of Subcarpathia was not dissolved; rather, it was restored to the pre-Treaty of Paris (pre-Trianon) status.

After re-annexation, for a short period Subcarpathia came under military administration. The local 'national councils', along with the 'national guards', attempted to filter out hostile elements. Pál Teleki, Prime Minister of Hungary, tried to minimize the length of the military administration in order to avoid atrocities. To ease the transition, the Minister of the Interior appointed a commissioner, Gyula Marina, professor of theology, to assist retired lieutenant general Béla Novákovics (head of the military administration). The two of them - in order to ease the work of construction and organization, to avoid further conflicts - abolished the camps 'with and without barbed wire' even before civil administration was introduced. Civil administration was restored on June 7, under the direction of a crown commissioner residing at Ungvár. Teleki, and like-minded people, wanted to restore autonomy to Ruthenia at this early stage but the Cabinet Council, under pressure from the military lobby, refused their proposal.

During the subsequent debate, the representatives of local population also expressed their views, especially Fenczik and András Bródy. The latter's concept was published in the April 2 (Easter) special issue of *Rusky Vestnik*, in 50,000 copies, under the title 'What kind of autonomy do we want?' In the end, the de facto future of Ruthenia was settled by the July 1940 bill 'The Subcarpathian Voivodina and its autonomy'.

Although the Second World War, which was declared in the meantime, was not favorable to this autonomy along the border, the office of the crown commissioner functioned until 1944, along with the Ruthenian advisory council and the especially crucial institution

of the Agricultural Ministry's Ruthenian branch. The Ruthenians were also represented in both houses of the Hungarian parliament, lead by very vocal and opinionated András Bródy. Bilingualism of official documents became the accepted practice. In *Podkarpatski Vistnik* (Subcarpathian Gazette), the decrees concerning the region were published in two languages, in parallel columns. Similarly, the decrees of the crown commissioner and the public administrators were also published in both languages.

In the five years following the re-annexation of Subcarpathia, as if continuing the Highland Action, the Hungarian government took serious measures to enhance food production and supply, public education, road construction and communication. The budget for Ruthenia was designated as 1,000,000 pengo". At the same time, deteriorating war conditions frustrated the implementation of development programs, many of which remained at the proposal stage.

Religion and culture during the period of the re-annexation

From the beginning, the stand of the Greek Catholic Church was unambiguous. The two most loyal colleagues of bishop Sztojka, Sándor Ilniczky (as life member of the Upper House), main advisor of Subcarpathia) and Dr. Gyula Marina (as ministerial advisor) became part of the state administration. The episcopacy urged, as opposed to the puppet regime in Huszt, urged the return of the parishes of Rusinsko to the motherland and announced a movement to activate the masses for this purpose.

Bishop Sztojka did not live to see the next change of realm. In light of the uncertain political and military conditions, the Holy See appointed no replacement to fill the void. Instead, Miklós Dudás, bishop of Hajdúdorog, was directed to temporarily oversee the affairs of the diocese. On September 24, 1944 - three days before Soviet troops crossed the ridge of the Carpathians through the Tatár Pass - Miklós Dudás and István Madarász, Roman Catholic bishop of Kassa, appointed and ordained Teodor Romzsa as assistant bishop, who later suffered martyrdom.

During the short period, while part of Hungary and enjoying Ruthenian autonomy, the Hungarian government did not begin hostilities with the Pravoslavs, as it did not want a multi-front struggle. At the same time, they did a number of things to enhance the cultural and intellectual level of the Ruthenians. Miklós Kozma, the crown commissioner, in 1940 submitted his proposal about establishing a Subcarpathian Scientific Society, which became a reality in January of the following year. In his opening speech, Miklós Kozma emphasized that the expected aims of the new organization were not the support of the current policies but the service of the Ruthenian people. The specialist departments of the Society were science, arts, ethnography, as well as Ruthenian language and literature. Among its members we find Sándor Bonkáló, Tibor Gerevich, Antal Hodinka, József Harajda, József Illés, István Kniezsa, János Melich, Gyula Ortutay (all university professors), as well as representatives of other arts, like the painters Tivadar Manajló, András Boksay, András Koczka, Béla Erdélyi, the conductor of the cathedral István Hladonik, the composer and folk song collector Dezső Zádor, the outstanding representative of the

Hungarian musical aspirations associated with the names of Bartók and Kodály. Antal Hodinek, retired historian and university professor, was elected president; Iréneusz Kontratovics became his deputy and János Harajda the managing director. The career and participation in the work of the Society of the latter is itself instructive.

He was born in Drugetháza, Ung county, in 1905. His headmaster father, like many other teachers and government workers, did not take the oath of allegiance at the time of the Czechoslovakian change of the government. The family settled in Székesfehérvár where János Harajda matriculated in 1924. He took the entrance exam for the faculty of law of Pázmány Péter University of Sciences but also regularly attended the lectures of the distinguished Slavic scholar, János Melich. After completing his law degree, he received a scholarship at the faculty of philosophy of the Erzsébet University of Sciences of Pécs, thanks to the intervention of Antal Hodinka. In 1930, with the scholarship of the Polish government (again won with the help of Hodinka), he is in Krakow doing research on the history of Hungarian-Polish relations. At the same time, he is also carrying on postgraduate studies. In 1934, he attains a master's degree in history and, in 1935, becomes a lecturer of Hungarian at Krakow University. He contributes to the activities of the Polish-Hungarian Friendship Society, translating both from Polish into Hungarian, and vice versa, works intensely at the compilation of the Hungarian-Polish dictionary. In November 1939, he was interned by the German occupation forces and was released in the spring 1940 after the intervention of the Hungarian government. He returned to his homeland and took an active role in the activity of the Subcarpathian Scientific Society. In November of 1944, the Soviet occupation forces arrested and tortured him to death.

Distinguished and dedicated scientists assisted in the birth of the Subcarpathian Scientific Society. Reporting about the foundation session *Carpathian Sunday* (Kárpáti Vasárnap, with the subtitle - journal of Hungarian-Ruthenian friendship) published the intention of the society that in the language debate it does not wish to side either with the Russian or Ukrainian currents but will publish based on Ruthenian language foundations. In his memoirs, Gyula Marini finds it very important to note that under the diplomatic direction of Kozma, the Ruthenian politicians of the Panslavic trend were gradually retired from public life. As the representatives of the Russian current were also present at the cradle of Ruthenian culture,

this was achieved naturally, without extremes and acute recriminations. It is typical that when the grammar text of Gyula Marina was published at the beginning of 1941, it played an important role from both political and literary respects. Elements of Russian grammar were still found in it, yet it can be considered an important step in the direction of the Ruthenian popular language.

It is in this language that the four series of the Subcarpathian Scientific Society were published. In the *Literaturno-Naukova Biblioteka* (Literary-Scientific Library) more than forty publications were printed in Ruthenian and Hungarian. The journal *Zorja-Hajnal* (Dawn) and the biweekly *Literaturnaja Nedilja* (Literary Sunday) were also part of these series. Alongside these, the popular volumes of the *Narodnabiblioteka* (People's Library, more than 30 volumes in Ruthenian), as well as the volumes of the *Gytocsa bibliotyeka* (Children's Library) were also published. The Society also published the *Ruszka mologyezs* (Ruthenian youth), 8,000 copies at its peak, and the *Szelszko-Hoszpodarszkij Kalendar* (Agricultural Calendar), 10,000 copies sold. During its short existence, the Subcarpathian Scientific Society published several dozen significant books, among them the bibliography compiled by the co-authors Lelekács - Harajda, still an important source for all Ruthenian (or Subcarpathian) research.

All this ended with the Soviet occupation. The leaders of the Society were treated as enemy agents. The fate of János Harajda was already mentioned. Sándor Illiczky, chairman of the Society was also murdered in prison, a few days after his arrest. Soviet studies, university and college textbooks treated the whole initiative as the machinations of bourgeois nationalism. The participants in the active creation of a Ruthenian culture were branded as traitors. In the 90's, several things changed, especially the attitude of scientists. Books and monographs were published - in Hungarian, Ukrainian, Ruthenian, Polish and English - about the journal *Zorja-Hajnal* (Dawn), the very brief but useful activity of the Society and last, but not least, about János Harajda, one of the outstanding scientists of the period.

From October 1944 to the present

The Soviet army occupied the first settlement of Subcarpathia, Verbiás in the district of Volóc on October 2, 1944 and Ungvár was occupied by October 27. Following the terms of the Soviet-Czechoslovak treaty, the Soviet army handed over civil administration to the Czechoslovak government delegation in London. The representatives of the delegation arrived in Huszt on October 28 and, under the leadership of Frantisek Nemeč, tried to restore the situation to what was pre-1938 Czechoslovakian conditions. As revealed by documents published in the early 90's, the Hungarian population, having to choose between two evils, supported the government in this. In the meantime, the NKVD and the troops of the Interior Ministry arrived and began to arrest and transport the Hungarian and German adult male population. Under the shadow of collective 'punishment', the randomly recruited 600 participants of the Munkács 'congress' adopted the manifesto, which declared the annexation of Subcarpathia to the Soviet Union. At the request of Ivan Turjanica, chairman of the group calling itself the Transcarpathian People's Council, Benes recalled the Czechoslovakian delegates in January of 1945. The governments of Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union signed an agreement in Moscow on June 29, 1945 that severed Subcarpathia from Czechoslovak territorial administration. The Soviet Union originally intended to draw the border along the line of the Tisza River, but they had to hand back the so-called Small Bereg to Hungary under pressure from the Control Committee of the Allies. The Czechoslovak-Soviet treaty created today's Slovak-Ukrainian border along the line of Ořrdarma-Kisszelmenc-Salamon-Stráz.

Apart from the transportation of male adults between 18 and 50, the Soviet regime exacted its revenge on the pastors and representatives of the Greek Catholic, Roman Catholic and Reformed Churches in several 'show trials'. Also dealt harshly were teachers, public servants, and especially foresters (an armed body!) who did not leave Subcarpathia with the retreating Hungarian army as they considered themselves innocent. The Soviets did not spare the leaders of the Ruthenians either, among them András Bródy, who was sentenced to death on May 26, 1946 by the Transcarpathian District People's Tribunal as 'a Horthy-fascist hireling, a Vatican agent and an American spy'. The sentence was

carried out in the greatest secrecy in November 1946. The location of his grave is not known to this day.

A 'Soviet republic' was installed between November 26, 1944 and January 1946 in Subcarpathia with ministries and an organizational, power structure. At its head was Ivan Turjanica, a trade union leader of the thirties, who emigrated to Moscow and returned as the political commissar of the Czechoslovakian army corps. In this state only Communist ideas and the allied Ukrainian nationalism could exist. While the Soviets were exterminating the 'wealthy peasants' - kulaks - and forced collectivization of farms, depriving the minorities of their intellectual leaders, the Ruthenian and Hungarian ethnic groups could have organized themselves only with the leadership of the Communist elite. Under the political conditions, however, even the local Communists only played a secondary role. The Soviet Communist party sent 40,000 party members from the interior of the Soviet Union to give aid to the local Communists in Subcarpathia, who were suspected to have been 'infected by bourgeois contagion'.

A completely different situation emerged in 1946, when Subcarpathia was relegated to a territory of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Its media and governing bodies, all for show, were abolished. The party and Russian and Ukrainian chauvinism, all dressed in red, attempted to ban all manifestations that could have differentiated the Ruthenians as an independent ethnic group. Hungarians were, of necessity, treated as a requisite on the palette of the friendship of peoples.

The Age of Changes, 1989-1991

In 1989, the Greek Catholic Church was allowed to function again. Events sped up after this. On January 1, 1991 the Ruthenian, Hungarian, Romanian, Slovak, German and Gypsy minority organizations were the first to support the intention, declared by the Ruthenian association, of autonomous status for Subcarpathia. This declaration was confirmed by a referendum held on December 1, 1991, where the overwhelming majority decided voted for the special status of Subcarpathia and the population of Beregszász expressed their intention to create an autonomous district. Although the leadership in Kiev has sabotaged both decisions until the present day, these manifestos released the genie from the bottle. Beyond a few intellectuals and churchmen who managed to preserve their sense of Ruthenian identity during the whole period, more and more young people, misled and miseducated by the Soviets, are beginning to realize their origins and the related tasks facing them.

In the early 90's, considerable efforts were made to prove the Pan-Ukrainian origin of Ruthenian people. The arguments employed by the 'official' scientists, following the usual Soviet line of reasoning, were based on rehashing old legends and fabrications. Among the Ruthenians, a reconstructing-creating effort has begun, which can not be stopped by the power of any state authority. The Ruthenian representatives, having rid themselves of the early arrogance, are making headway toward their objectives. One visible proof was the Ruthenian World Congress, held in Ungvár three years ago.

Kiev's current policy is to acknowledge the Ruthenians if, unaided, they are able to have their language and culture accepted by the masses. The old sins have not been rectified, allowing the members of the old regime in Subcarpathia to wage a bloody rear-guard action against the new Ruthenian spirit.

The economy of Subcarpathia in the Soviet era

The totalitarian Soviet regime reached its economic objectives relatively quickly and easily. The state companies and factories, the traffic and telecommunication infrastructures were first subjected to military administration at the time of the Soviet occupation, and later declared to be 'communal property'. Craftsmen and tradesmen were also forced to join cooperatives, as the free trade of raw materials and finished goods was ended.

A somewhat more difficult task was the 'collective reorganization' of agriculture. Redistribution of agricultural land (between 1945 and 1947, 68,500 hectares of church or private property was distributed) and converting the private economy to state ownership in the form of collective farms were proceeding at the same time. (Velikij ... 1970: 350) The 'Trojan horse' of collectivization was the creation of 'land communities' and 'production groups' connected with the redistribution of land. The first of this type was created at Eszeny, in the region inhabited by Hungarians, with the union of 13 poor peasants. (This later became the core of the Avangard - Vanguard Collective Farm). A month later, 23 farmers united at Oroszvég, on the outskirts of Munkács, in the Dimitrov-collective. This 'people's initiative' was embraced by the district party committee in June 1946. At the beginning of the following year 630 'land communities' of this type were functioning in the region. (Isztorija: ... 1982: 69)

Development, however, could not stop at this low level of Socialist economy (corresponding to Hungarian trade groups). After a centrally organized mass exchange of know-how in the Ukraine, the number of real collective farms (kolkhoz) increased from 27 to 188 in 1948, to 478 in 1949, and by 1950 the collectivization of agriculture was completed. During the 'strengthening' of the collectives, they were clustered into 294 estates. This tendency continued and in 1968 only 148 collectives and 16 state farms were found in the region. No large-scale establishment of industries took place in Subcarpathia. On the lowlands, brick making factories, tobacco processing plants, wood processing were collectivized to create the pride of the new socialist industry. In the mountains, chemical factories with out-dated technology based on byproduct of lumbering continued to supply the raw materials to socialist heavy industry (Methyl alcohol, cellulose, sulfuric acid, etc.).

The minor changes in economic policy of the empire, announced at the various party congresses, were barely felt in this region. Only people working in agriculture felt the dramatic effects of the changes of political directions. Following Stalin's dictatorship, farm workers could breathe easier for a few years, but Krushchev's voluntarist ideas about the factory-like transformation of agriculture brought about dramatic changes. Villagers were denied the right to use the pastures, the compensation for working units with produce, household plots were reduced, in all, the conditions of self-sufficiency were abolished. The peasants traveled daily into the towns by the thousands to buy cheap bread in order to feed it to the remaining animals. The subsequent bread riots in some central areas of the empire contributed to the fall of Khrushchev and the coming of a new dictatorship.

The Brezhnev era economic policy was invented in central offices and the political elite did not want to take note of the birth of a double economy, later the appearance of the black market. It tried to reach its objectives with the help of the bank-note presses and the unlimited exploitation of natural resources and the 16 million strong, armed police force, including an army of 5,000,000. The double characteristic of the economy was even more obvious in Subcarpathia because of its proximity to the border. However, inertia prevailed; the majority of people accepted the social-economic conditions as a natural calamity, later called stagnation. This 'stagnation' was torn apart by internal and external forces and began the decay of both the system and the empire. The artificially propped up economy collapsed almost immediately. The rate of inflation reached thousands of percent during the period from the 80's to the birth of the independent Ukraine. The coupon-karbovanec financial system, introduced due to the lack of economic stability, turned almost everyone into a millionaire, while pensioners received a few hundred thousand.

The creation of the independent Ukrainian currency, the *hrivna*, sprang from the hope that the economy had bottomed out but the 163% drop in the exchange rate compared to the dollar does not confirm this. Statistical data shows unemployment at 10-15% but the reality is closer to 70%. The information one can get about the annual rate of inflation is still not reliable. The early reports in January 1999 showed 20% inflation for the preceding year with an upward tendency. In any case, we must evaluate the consequences of the collapse of the artificially maintained financial system and the data of the economic production. According to Polish experts, the

1997 Ukraine economy produced 38.3% of its 1989 output. For 1998, an economic growth of 0.8% had been planned but in reality there was a 2% decrease. The World Bank measured a 0.4% negative economic growth in the Ukraine in 1998, and expects another 0.6% decrease in the following year.

All these facts are, of course, cover the whole of the Ukraine with 50 million inhabitants but the trends are valid for Subcarpathia and the Hungarian minority as well. Survival strategies are, however, different here. The population of Tiszahát does not expect miracles from central directives, as they did not readily identify themselves with the unrealistic situation of the previous decades either.

Religion and culture after 1945

The use of the Ruthenian language and its teaching were banned immediately after the occupation. A short time later, another symbol of their identity, the Greek Catholic religion, was also banned. The most active priests had already been collected earlier, and the last legitimate bishop, Tivadar (Teodor) Romzsa was murdered, under mysterious circumstances, disguised as an accident. While there was no way of fostering the Ruthenian linguistic culture for decades, the church, through its dedicated members willing to accept even martyrdom, survived until the end of the 80's, when the authorities were forced to acknowledge it and even to partially rehabilitate it. Unfortunately, the Pravoslav church, which had been imported and supported by Kiev, still enjoys priority over the Greek Catholic Church in the return of churches and other church properties. For the Ruthenians, though only as Ukrainians, the Khrushchev period brought some easing of conditions - but not for long. The Brezhnev administration, which instinctively refused reforms, used ever more brutal methods to prevent the emergence of any group's self-identity. It is no accident that, even in this remote corner of the over centralized and over controlled empire, dissidents were in the ideological crossfire. From the beginning of the 70's, all over the Soviet Union, intolerance of minority languages and national traditions grew in an attempt to create a homogeneous 'russianized' empire. This was a logical step on the path of a centrally directed administration dedicated to the task of mass population behavior modification. In the multinational empire, only sham folk-ensembles symbolized national traditions to deceive foreigners. Recently declassified documents revealed that, while the propaganda campaign stressing the overwhelming importance of the Russian language was going on, Moscow was urging the cultural ministries and education authorities of the 'allied' republics to drive the learning of Russian more effectively, even to the point of relegating native languages to the background. This, as it later turned out, brought the Russian people and culture into a tragic situation.

The number of cases of 'Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism', in other republics other 'bourgeois nationalism', grew with the consequent exposure, followed by 'exemplarily' strict sentences, passed sometimes at an open trial, sometimes in camera. The anti-nationalist campaign became a movement that found supporters

among the Subcarpathians, as well. The recognition and awareness of national identity was difficult for the Ruthenians, even in the years of 'glasnost'.

In the meantime, the exertions of the Ruthenian movement became internationally known. Now, it is not only in North America where legitimate Ruthenian organizations exist but the Ruthenians in Voivodina (Yugoslavia), Hungary and Slovakia have also set up their own organizations. Ever so slowly - facing deliberate obstacles, overcoming their own dilettante initiatives - the bulk of the native Ruthenian population of Subcarpathia has also become organized. The World Meeting of Ruthenians, held two years ago in Ungvár, was an exceptional opportunity of the declaration of a homogeneous identity, one which was unthinkable a mere decade ago. Established were the World Council of Ruthenians, the Council of Ruthenians of the Visegrád Countries and finally, the Union of European Ruthenians was set up in June 2000. (Gábor Hattinger, President of the National Ruthenian Minority Council of Hungary, was elected president.) The Ukrainian government, trying for closer contacts with Europe, is not able to openly oppose the endeavors of this minority. At the same time, certain official plans have become known, which aim at 'settling' this issue and an apparent information vacuum has been created, isolating Ruthenian intellectuals both from the Ruthenian population and from any opportunities of contact with neighboring nations. The historical values demonstrated by the Ruthenians and their present achievements are suppressed by the manipulated media. As an example, the aims and press releases of the Ruthenian World Congress saw the light of day only in papers of limited circulation or abroad.

The pure sources of Ruthenian self-knowledge

The forgetfulness of Soviet historical science is almost legendary. This is also true in the case of Subcarpathia, where the occupying power had to make up for a lag of a quarter century - on an ideological plane, too. The command of "Nothing existed here for a thousand years" made the names of all those people, who did not measure up to the expectations of Marxist-Leninist ideology, disappear from the textbooks of universities, collages and secondary schools. As a reverse of the Aurul process, it made the golden, valuable works vanish from public - as well as the private - libraries of Ruthenian and Hungarian intellectuals who were carried off to the gulag. What remained was poisonous dross, intellectual dregs.

The Ruthenians, deprived of their language, religion, their past and fragile culture, were given perhaps their last historical chance after nearly half a century to regain their cultural accomplishments, to prove their national identity. This must happen amid the suspicious local population, many of whom have become Ukrainians after the brain washing of the preceding decades and especially at the focus of the hatred of local 'scientists' with hidden agendas, riding the tail of the Stalin-Zdanov cultural comet. These latter are the most dangerous, as it would mean the admission of failure of their whole life if they acknowledged the facts, the truth. No wonder then that in their Ungvár forum, in the fourth issue 2000 of *Karpatszkij Holosz*, they started a desperate attack against the falsifiers of Ruthenian 'history', the leaders of 'political Ruthenianism', against university and college professors, some past and present scientists who have betrayed their homeland, sold their body and soul for large sums. The 'buyer', here the enemy, need not be looked for long. The author of the articles, Heorhij Laver, even names the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. (Looking at the budget of this institution, this statement - in our view - is laughable.)

We may imagine that, when this view existed in the form of sanctioned cultural-political ideology, what chances the literature of Ruthenian had not only in Subcarpathia, but also in Hungary and in the somewhat more tolerant Czechoslovakia and Voivodina. A talented Subcarpathian writer could choose from a few possibilities. One solution was that of Jurij Skrobinec who, after absorbing Hungarian schooling and culture moved a thousand kilometers to the

literary milieu around Poltava-Harkov and became an internationally known translator. Volodimir Fedinisinec existed through the difficult period, struggling between his native tongue and the expectations. Ivan Petrovcij, the younger, became a translator as a result of his love of French literature. He also translated several Hungarian poems - into Pan-Ukrainian. He became aware of his own origins only in the 80's and 90's - that he was a Ruthenian from Bereg - and had to absorb the fact that his uncle, Fegyir Potusnyak, who died at an early age and whom he had respected only as a teacher-scientist, was also an outstanding personality of folklorism.

In addition, there are some who risk all for conviction. Among these is Szlavko Szlobodan (Ivan Kericsa) whose translations of Petoófi make him the best representative of Ukrainian/Ruthenian philology. The detached director of the professional workshop in Nyiregyháza, István Udvari said: "If there will be a literary language, it will be born out of this volume." A courageous prophecy. The synthesizing language, the masterful application of meters justifies it. The volume points, however, beyond microphilology. The selection of the poems by Petoófi and the foreword of the translator (Petoófi is our poet, too) conjures up the example of coexistence in Central Europe, Europe on the border of the worlds.

Igor Kericsa, as a linguist and participant of language codification undertakings, has produced a significant feat. In his studies, published in Hungarian journals, he clearly outlines the group of dialects on which a literary Ruthenian language can be based. These are the dialects of Southern and Northeastern Máramaros, Ugocsa, Bereg and Southern Zemplén. This language synthesizing efforts had precedents in the Ruthenian literature in Hungary, and he also makes use of these.

Ruthenians struggling to regain their language and culture and the other side, the 'experts' fighting a rear-guard action, these days frequently mention the same scientist, the same name: Antal Hodinka.

The achievement of the most outstanding Ruthenian researcher of the century is really an example and a model. The politics that have claimed both past and present are responsible that his name is not mentioned in any of the subject matter's "Who's Who". His current renaissance is the credit of István Udvari, head of the

Ukrainian-Ruthenian Department of the Nyiregyháza College. (See: Kálmán Sós: The precedents to the Hodinka renaissance in Subcarpathia. In: On this side of the Tisza - Intermix Edition, Ungvár - Budapest)

An anonymous epilogue to a short monograph of Hodinka's regarding the Ruthenians clearly and passionately states all that that is germane regarding their renaissance. It posits as absurd idea the kind of 'liberation' in which the 'liberated' must vanish from the face of the earth. We could join the author in stating that the multinational, interrelated mosaic of the Carpathian basin is such a treasure which the new Europe can not lose. If Hodinka were alive today, he would perhaps write to concur. His texts certainly suggest so. This message is well and truly understood by the Subcarpathian Ruthenian intellectual, who thirsts for the 'pure well'. They are not only the philologists compiling textbooks, educational auxiliary materials, and dictionaries. They are men of letters, among them Szocska-Borzsavin, who started his career during the life of Hodinka but who was silenced for decades as a poet. Others as well who had to be silent for even longer periods, or the younger generation that came to realize their language and culture only about a decade ago. Their dream is a more human world, the reviving Central Europe. Their task is nearly impossible. They are attempting to mould national rebirth and the wealth of ideas of the Age of Reformation of the 19th century using contemporary poetry. If they succeed, the spiritual cathedral erected by Hodinka, and a few others, will be ready for the believers.

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