

Abstract:

*Subcarpathian Ruthenia within Czechoslovakia in 1933-1939. Autonomy and state forming efforts*

Subcarpathian Ruthenia was an integral part of Czechoslovakia in the interwar period. On the basis of the peace treaty contracted in Saint-Germain-en-Laye (September 10, 1919) and the Constitution of the Czechoslovak Republic (February 29, 1920), Subcarpathian Ruthenia should have had an autonomous position in the political-judicial system of Czechoslovakia, its autonomous council and an autonomous government corresponding to the council. The central government in Prague was hesitating to impose a real autonomy of Subcarpathian Ruthenia within the republic because it did not demonstrate satisfying political, national, confessional and economic conditions and represented a continual threat of irredentism from various Carpathoruthenian elements and revisionism emerging from the neighbouring states – mainly Hungary. The central government established it only after Munich Agreement which considerably weakened Czechoslovakia as for its power. The government made an effort to consolidate Czechoslovakia by declaring autonomy of Slovakia and Subcarpathian Ruthenia. This had not happened until the moment when Czechoslovakia was on its way to cease. These autonomous tendencies had its place in a complex game of the neighbouring countries (Germany, Poland, and Hungary) whose main objective was to destroy Czechoslovakia. The whole interwar period was a complicated stage for the inhabitants of Subcarpathian Ruthenia. Then, in spite of the numerous obstacles, an appropriate formulation of national identity was in need to be looked for. More precisely, some representatives declared their national group as the Russians, others as the Ukrainians and other ones as the Subcarpathian Ruthenians (also Carpatho-Rusyns). The central Czechoslovak government permitted the existence of all the three orientations, the government first supported pro-Russian movement (under the influence of K. Kramář and T. G. Masaryk), later pro-Ukrainian movement (during the second Czechoslovak Republic). While the economic-social state of the population was very difficult and any improvements were slow, on the other hand there were several positive aspects in the Czechoslovak-Ruthenian relations. As a matter of fact it was the central government in Prague which was the first to establish the principles and the practice of a democratic government and enabled a considerable progress in education and in a cultural life of Subcarpathian population.

My diploma work deals with the autonomy and state forming efforts of Subcarpathian Ruthenians in 1933-1939.

Key words:

Subcarpathian Ruthenia, autonomy, state, democracy, autonomous government, national identity, constitution, political-juridical system, irredentism, territorial revisionism.