

Munkácsy Tudományos Diákköri Konferencia-2017

InBetween: A study visit in Transcarpathia

Motto: The Beauty of the World lies in the Diversity of its People

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ABSTRACT

We are all taught at a very young age that once before Hungary was much bigger than it is today, having borders stretching further in every possible direction. In the South our lands created even a narrow channel with access to the sea. As a little girl, without historical background knowledge, I was always wondering...How could that be possible? If it's really the truth, how come we don't have beaches now where we can spend the holidays? As I have been folk dancing for 11 years now, keeping old Hungarian customs, traditions has become more and more important for me. Now I know what happened, but still...the former little girl's curiosity never seem to decrease. Questions like these have always bothered me: What about those poor Hungarians being trapped unwillingly in a different country? Were they forced to drop their roots, culture and assimilate to the new country that had annexed them? Is it possible to be fully Hungarian there? In this September I had the chance to travel to one of this lost regions digging a little deeper into its history and ask the locals similar questions mentioned above. Let me present my experience from a visit to Transcarpathia/Subcarpathia.

Introduction

First of all I should admit that I inherited the love of traveling from my mother so much that last year I was about to grasp every opportunity to appease my itchy feet. I was lucky to get to know that the EU offers as youth mobility and I have already participated in several Youth Exchanges abroad. In the summer holiday I was searching for my next project when I happened to find a more enticing one.

With increasing excitement was I reading the description of a history-based international project, InBetween, still in need for Hungarian applicants. The organizer is a Warsaw-based institution called European Network Remembrance and Solidarity (ENRS) aiming to study, document and promote European 20th century history and the methodology of its remembrance by organizing projects, conferences, exhibitions, workshops, film-screening and so much more.

Finally I was selected to participate in the project; it consisted of 2 parts. The first phase was held in Warsaw, Poland where we got an introduction to our topic, to the history of 4 ethnically mixed border regions in Central-Europe and we were taught how to use the methods provided for our soon-to-follow field study. After that, I was glad to join a little team doing the 1 week long research in Uzhhorod, Transcarpathia (Ungvár, Kárpátalja)

Here would raise the question. What were we searching there? The key is the title of the project: InBetween. Our topic was to examine this phenomenon in the selected borderland through a study visit. What could 'inbetweenness' mean?...

Before my departure I felt the eager to get as much familiar with the region's history as possible. I had read several essays that helped a lot to get a better insight and understand things more easily while being there. As my main source, I used a summarizing paperwork created for an ECPR General Conference held in Iceland in 2011 by István Csernicsekó (Transcarpathian Hungarian College, Ukraine) and Viktória Ferenc (University of Pécs, Hungary). I would stick to that work, here as well, entitled Six Lessons From History: Regional, Minority and Language Policy in Transcarpathia / Subcarpathia Between 1900 and 2010.

Method

During our stay in Uzzhorod, Ukraine we all, as an international team, were able to speak in our mother tongue with some representatives of the minorities living in Transcarpathia. This place is a perfect example of an ethnically and culturally mixed region with several religions living side-by-side and, surprisingly enough, without a lingua franca (common language). My mates were talking with Poles, Rusyns (Ruthenians), Jews, Ukrainians and Gypsies. I was conducting 4 interviews with Hungarians; however, I managed to meet and talk with a dozen. We were not just asking our questions mainly regarding history or listening to life stories of the elderly but we were scanning old family pictures, texts that arose our interest. We were asked to use quite an intricate archiving method in order to produce proper materials for further and future use.

Interviewing was a new challenge for me, but I adapted to the situation so quickly and easily that even I was surprised. My first interviewee was a traditional and very religious old man dwelling in Vynohradiv (Nagyszőlős), which was originally an ethnically homogeneous Hungarian village. His name is Ferenc, Kreiner who dedicated his life to gather all folksongs he got to know during his 87 years to a notebook. He was living under the Russian rule and was involved in several great stories that even brightened his fame in the newspapers. On the same day I was introduced to Judit, Szabó as well, living in the same village. She is a very kind and generous old lady with such a good sense of humor that I would have not expected from one having had a life like hers. She is 81, the oldest of my women interviewees, but still, we received the most heart-warming welcoming at her place. The next day we travelled to Mali Selmence (Kisszelmenc) to the Slovakian-Ukrainian border, which was set up unfairly during Russian times, so as to ask the elderly about the unbelievable story of the border. They guided our group to the 75-year-old Miklós, Ádám, the first who volunteered for hosting us there. I was told a lot about those horrible times and how hard people were able to accept the new border which separated even families for a while. After all, similar stories were continued by Erzsébet, Tóth, 76, from the same little village. She was my last interviewee, but her moody emotional state made the conversation a bit more difficult.

In my work I am planning to review the history of Transcarpathia with the help of that essay which already been mentioned but I will let you see more through a witness' eye. I would try to prove that although it is a very diverse region, all ethnicities and denominations are getting on well with each other with the help of some great, personal stories. The interviews' language is Hungarian that is why I think it is essential to be able to read the excerpts in the original version as well.

The Geographical position of Transcarpathia/ Subcarpathia

Firstly, I would like to refer to the name of my chosen region. As you may noticed several times I used two names: Transcarpathia and Subcarpathia. But they are just the most commonly used names today. Now it is an administrative region, a county in the Ukraine bordering Poland, The Slovak Republic, Hungary and Romania. As it is today was only established some decades ago. During the 20th century this territory belonged to several states due to political reasons. Each and every time the peoples living there faced a new authority. They had to adapt to the new governing system and accept the nation-in-power's culture. The usage of these two versions reflects geographical and political views at the same time. Russians and Ukrainians refer to the region as Transcarpathia meaning over the Carpathian Mountains while from the Hungarian and Czech point of view it is situated at the foot of the mountains so they call it Subcarpathia. (Map1)

The outlined history of the region

Originally this territory was mainly Hungarian and it belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy between 1867-1918. But losing the First World War for the Monarchy was a disaster, especially for Hungary. After the disintegration of the Monarchy in 1918 the territory was still under Hungarian control but unfortunately just for one more year. The state was called People's Republic of Hungary and the Hungarian Soviet Republic in the year right after the disintegration.

Then harder times began....

*'Time flies so fast above my head,
brooding on the past, looking back again and again,
Why I am not happy? this secret can't be explained ,
Somewhere a man always makes a mistake.
Today I am lonely with a sad heart,
Because I always denied,
Why am I not happy? I am not, I always explain it:
Somewhere a man always makes a mistake.'*

*"Fejem felett gyorsan elszállnak az évek,
Merengek a múlton, vissza-vissza nézek.
Miért nem lettem boldog ezt a titkot senki meg nem magyarázza
Valahol az ember mindig elhibázza.
Ma szomorú szívvel egyedül maradtam,
Mert én mindig megtagadtam.
Miért nem vagyok boldog? nem vagyok, én mindig magyarázom:
Valahol az ember mindig elhibázza."
Ferenc, Kreiner, Vynohradiv (Nagyszőlős)*

Under the peace-treaty of Saint-Germain and Trianon the Northern parts of the historical Hungary with significant Hungarian, less Slovak and Rusyn population were annexed to Czechoslovakia.

'I was born in 1929 under the Czechoslovakian rule. There was Tamás Maszalik (in fact Tamás Masaryk, the first president of Czechoslovakia) governing. He died and Eduard Benes seized the power in '37. Politics got confused at that time. Benes issued a decree in which he expelled all Germans and Hungarians from the country.

This policy was going on till Hitler conquered Transcarpathia in '38.... When the Russians came I was only 16 years old.

“Én 1929-ben születtem a Csehek alatt., akkor volt a Maszalik Tamás. Ő meghalt és akkor '37-ben eljött a Benes Eduárd. A politika megzavarodot...A Benes kiadatott egy olyan dekrétumot, hogy a németeket és a magyarokat kiutasította az országból. Ez a politika ment tovább, aztán '38-ban Hitler elfoglalta Kárpátalját. Amikor bejöttek az oroszok én még csak 16 éves voltam.”

Ferenc, Kreiner, Vynohradiv (Nagyszőlős)

We can talk about the Czech rule only from 1919 till 1939. Surprisingly, the annexed territories were given back to Hungary by the First Vienna Award (2nd, November, 1938) and could join their former counties again. But on 15th of March, the same year, an unexpected event took place. After the declaration of the independent Slovak Republic the region had proclaimed its independence as well with Hust as a chief town. They called the new state Carpathian Ukraine. It was a nice try but soon the Hungarian Army reoccupied its former territories and seized the power again through this military action. The independent state only existed for 3 days. Instead of incorporating them again into the previous administrative units, Hungary decided to establish a new and separate one. It belonged to the Hungarian Kingdom between 1939 and 1944 as the Subcarpathian Province.

In 1944 the Soviet Army 'liberated' the region and a quasy-state was established called Transcarpathian Ukraine which had existed only for a few months (1944.XI.26.-1946.I.22).In 1946, according to the Soviet-Czechoslovakian agreement, the region became the part of the Soviet Union. To be more precise it belonged to the Ukrainian member state. As a consequence of the agreement the borders were re-set at some parts.

' It was '45 when the front went through us, and they closed this border in '46. But at first, the border wasn't here but, I don't know if you've been there already, right near Ungvár (Uzzhorod)at Őr. Then it was placed to Sislóc and for the 3rd time here to Mali Selmence. Unfortunately the magistrate of this time wanted to benefit from this, so he supported the idea of placing it here. 2 villages, Kisszelmenc and Nagyszelmenc existed at that time also, even before the war. They thought that if they seperate Kisszelmenc from Nagyszelmenc, plenty of lands owned by the inhabitants of Nagyszelmenc would stay here without any owner. So they could have seized their lands for free and could have used them for agriculture. But it was such a miscalculation as in '48 they introduced collective farming. They took away all lands, stock, cart and every vehicle as we began to cultivate land collectively. That meant the end of all good...'

“1945-ben ment keresztül itt rajtunk a front, és 46-ban lezárták itt a határt. De legelőbb nem itt volt a határ, hanem, nem tudom jártak-e arra, Ungvár mellett Őrnél. Hát legelőbb ott volt a határ. Aztán áttették Sislóchoz.. Harmadszorra itt helyezték el, de sajnós az akkori helybeli bíró aki itt volt hasznot akart húzni a helyzetből. Két falu volt akkor is, a háború előtt is: Kisszelmenc és Nagyszelmenc. Úgy gondolták, hogyha elválasztják a határral Kisszelmencet Nagyszelmencről akkor majd itt marad a sok föld, a nagyszelmencieké gazda nélkül, és akkor majd azon fognak gazdálkodni. Csakhát ez óriási tévedés volt, mert már '48-ban jött a kolhosz Elszedtek minden jószágot, földet, szekeret, mindenféle járműveket be kellett szolgáltatni, mert mi közösbe fogunk gazdálkodni.”

Miklós, Ádám, Mali Selmence (Kisszelmenc)

'Oh the border, the border....

Me: Can you tell me something about it?

I was not yet living here, but in Palágykomoród when the border was set up. We were working on the fields next to the border and one day my cousin brought her 3-year-old daughter also to show her to us as we were separated by the line. The immigration officer caught us talking and he almost took my cousin to office. The border was very strict here. There was a 3-meter-high fence made of reed in order not to be able to see the other side. If we were in the fields and so did others in the other side we were communicating by singing. Pretending they're folksongs we could inform each other about recent events. (The officers didn't speak Hungarian.)'

"Jaj a határ, a határ...

ÉN:Mesélne róla kicsit?

Még otthon laktunk Palágyon és jártunk ki a mezőre. Az unokatesóm kihozta a 3 éves kislányát, hogy lássuk meg, mert jó messze laktak a határtól. Aztán a katona, amilyen van most is a határnál, észrevette, hogy beszélgetünk által. Az unokatestvérem volt az egyik csoport vezetője, de így is majdnem elvittek minket a stábra. Nagyon szigorú volt itt a határ. Itt az úton keresztül nádból volt egy olyan magas kerítés, hogy talán 3 méteres is volt, hogy ne is lehessen által látni. Ha úgy dolgoztunk a mezőn, hogy a másik oldalon is voltak akkor úgy beszélünk az asszonyokhoz, mintha daloltunk volna. Énekelve kérdezgettek, hogy ne vegyék észre, hogy beszélgetünk, azt higgyék csak dalolnak."

Erzsébet, Tóth, Mali Selmence (Kisszelmenc)

'For a long time we were not allowed to communicate with the others living on the Slovakian side. It was forbidden to even go closer. It was so strict that if we had been working late night in the fields that were closer to the borderline, we would have been caught and taken to guard where we would have had to clarify what was our reason for being there. Furthermore, at the time of my childhood we had to darken all houses, all streets at 8 o'clock. There couldn't be any light coming out. We were living just like people do in jails, for a while.

Me: For how long?

I can say that for about 5-6 years. It was just after setting and closing the border here.'

"Egy jó ideig nem lehetett mégcsak átszólni se a határon. Akik ott maradtak rokonság....meg se lehetett közelíteni a határt. Annyira szomorú volt, hogy mégha a mezőn dolgoztunk is késő estig, ha közel a határ mellett találták az embert elfogták és bekísérték az őrségre és tisztázni kellett, hogy mit keresett ott. Gyerekkoromban volt az az idő, mikor este 8 órakor be kellett sötétíteni az ablakokat, hogy még világ se szűrődjön ki az utcára. Mint a börtönben, úgy éltünk egy jó ideig.

ÉN:Mennyi ideig?

Mondhatnám vagy 5-6 évig biztos. Ez rögtön a határlezárta után (volt)."

Miklós, Ádám, Mali Selmence (Kisszelmenc)

The region was ruled by the Soviet Union officially until Ukraine was formed from post-soviet territories and gained its independence in 1991. Since then, Transcarpathia belongs to the Ukraine. (Table1)

Population of the region

The region has mixed population concerning linguistic, ethnical and denominational points of view. Today Rusyns/Ukrainians make up the absolute majority. The biggest minority group is the Hungarian mainly settled in the southern parts, whereas there are some Slovaks in the western parts of the region. Romanians mainly dwell along the Romanian-Ukrainian border. Germans were considered to be a significant minority group only till the 18th century. The Roma population has been constantly increasing just like in Hungary. Censuses did not indicate Jews as a separate ethnic group but they were added to the one whose language they were speaking, mainly to Hungarians or Germans. (Map2)

Changing the ethnical picture was always the main aim for the governing power. Every time a new state annexed the region, they settled their representatives/people so as to integrate the rest more effectively. (Table4)

'I can tell you that in the past there were much more Hungarians here (in Vynohradiv/Nagyszőlős), but now there's just a few left. When the Russians came they were giving territories to everybody, everyone could start building a house. Only until '47 was it possible as after they introduced collective farming. From this time lot of people left this village as they didn't want to join. Village-dwellers moved to towns and bought lands there. That was the time when lots of people of Rusyn origin moved to Szőlős. From that time this village is quite rousinized. But if it's God's will, let it be this way.'

"Megmondom magának, hogy régen itt sokkal több magyar volt, de mostmár kevesebb. Aztán mikor jöttek az oroszok csak úgy adogatták a telkeket, mindenkinek lehetett építkezni. De csak amíg '47-ben bejött a kolhosz. A kolhoszból meg mindenki szaladt elfele a faluból. A falusiak meg jöttek be a városba és megvették a telkeket. Azóta ez a Szőlős kicsit elruszinósodott. De ha isten így akarja, legyen így."
Ferenc, Kreiner, Vynohradiv (Nagyszőlős)

'The village paid for the priest from that time. (Her father was a priest). They invited experts in many fields graduated mainly from the Ukraine or Russia. They immediately got flats, the so called communal flats and the locals were building houses at that time. Communal houses were sold out at a very cheap price after all so today there are not so many left.'

"A falu tartotta a papot. Külföldön végzett szakembereket telepítettek be, általában oroszból, ukránból küldtek. Egyből kaptak is kommunális lakást, a helybeliek pedig építkeztek. A kommunális lakásokat pedig elég gyorsan megvették ezért már kevés van belőlük."

Judit, Szabó, Vynohradiv (Nagyszőlős)

'Now this village and Palágy are both mixed (concerning ethnicity). There are fewer and fewer old people (Hungarians). There are so many houses with Ukrainian families. If the elderly dies Ukrainians coming down from mountains settle down here instead of them. There are 17-18 Ukrainian families here already. My house will be sold for them after my death. That's where we are....'

"Mostmár úgy van ez a falu, Szelmenc is, meg Palágy is, hogy kevert. Az öregek, idősek már alig vagyunk egynehányan. De igensok ház van már, hogy ukránok laknak benne. Ahol kihalnak az öregek, oda jönnek az ukránok le a hegyekből és veszik el. Itt is már 17-18 házban ukránok vannak, ha nem több. Ha meghalok az én

házam is ukránoké lesz. Hát így állunk...”

Erszébet, Tóth, Mali Selmence (Kisszelmenc)

The question of religion

Regarding religion there are 5 denominations living side-by-side in the region. Ukrainians mainly belong to the Orthodox Church but there are some Greek Catholics as well. Hungarians are scattered belonging to the Reformed, Roman Catholic or Greek Catholic Church. Russians and Romanians are Orthodox while Slovaks outstandingly are Evangelists. Roma people are Reformed too as they live mainly next to Hungarians. The last one is the Jewish community having been present in huge numbers....till 1944.

This year carries disastrous events. The Nazi Germany obliged Hungarian authorities to create and close the Jews to ghettos and then deport them to concentration camps. ¾ of the Subcarpathian Jewish community disappeared.

During my stay in Uzhhorod we visited a Jewish Institution helping the Transcarpathian Jewish community, mainly Holocaust survivors. I met so many Hungarian Jews there and they were all so kind and excited about me as a Hungarian girl. Unfortunately I was not the one but my roommate who conducted the interviews there, but I would really like to mention one story here which I can only recall. One of our interviewees was Mrs. Tilda Halpert a 93-year-old still active representative of the Jewish community. She was telling us her life story which is a very compelling but tragical one. She is an Auschwitz survivor who was deported as a little girl there. Her entire family was deported and out of her parents and many siblings only she and one of her brothers returned. I remember at one point during the conversation she started crying. Then one of my friends translated what she had just mentioned as the interview was in Russian. She was telling us about her staying in the camp separated from the rest of her family members. She asked another girl next to her who had been there before her whether she could see her mum some day. The girl answered something like: Yes, you can. Right now. Look! There she is! –pointing at the smoke coming out of the chimneys!- Having been told about it even I almost started crying...

All ruling powers have the desire to oppress the minorities as the examples showed. I assume that is why other discriminating events took place in '44. When Russians took the power they simply denied the existence of Rusyns and listed them as Ukrainians claiming that the Rusyn language is only the dialect of the Ukrainian one. Not to mention that in the same year the Soviet Army deported Hungarian men between 8-50 years of age and the local German population to Stalinist lagers.

‘(When Russians arrived it was just like this): They made the common crier sit down and they decided upon people coming in: ‘you are Greek-catholic, from now you’re Ukrainian. You’re Calvinist so Hungarian. ‘Roman- Catholics, so the half of the Hungarians were deported to the Lager (camps). Hungarians who were Greek-Catholics counted as Ukrainians from then, but they were not deported.’

/Crier: in the past, a person whose job was to make official announcements in a town or village./

“Leültették a kisbíró: te görög katolikus vagy, te ukrán vagy; te református vagy, te magyar vagy. A magyarokat elvitték a Lágerbe. A görög katolikusok ukránok lettek,

de őket nem vitték a Lägerbe!”

Szabó, Judit, Vynohradiv (Nagyszőlős)

‘ I regularly went to church even after moving here to my husband (from Feketepatak). My boss said just that: You can go, if you’re that conservative!’

“Amikor Patakról felkerültem Szőlősre (beházasodott) is rendszeresen jártam templomba. Az igazgató erre azt mondta: -Járjon, ha ilyen elmaradott!”

‘I really liked mathematics; I had only the best grades at school. I wanted to be a teacher and I applied for a school in Munkács. But.....Somehow they got to know that I’m a daughter of a priest. I received their refusal within 3 minutes. They didn’t even take the small effort to at least call me in to the entrance examination and make me fail it. I was an excellent student; I did know how to study. My father always said that to me:

- Oh, my dear daughter, listen, just don’t make me ashamed, never!’

“Én nagyon szerettem a számtant, tiszta 5-ös tanuló voltam. Munkácsra jelentkeztem tanárnak, de besúgták, hogy pap lánya vagyok. 5 perc alatt odaadták nekem (az elutasítást). Még annyi fáradságot sem vettek, hogy beültettek volna felvételizni aztán elbuktattak volna. Tiszta 5-ös tanuló voltam, jól tanultam. Édesapám mindig azt mondta:

-Jajj lányom, figyelj ide! Csak szégyent ne hozz rám soha!”

‘My husband was a footballer, he was regarded as a Calvinist. But he rarely went to church.

Me: What did your father think about your husband being a Calvinist?

It was not a problem for him. It was just natural that our children became Calvinists just like their father.’

A férjem futbalista volt, ő reformátusnak számított. De ő keveset járt templomba.

Én: Az apukája mit szolt hozzá, hogy református férje lett?

Nem szolt hozzá semmit, nem csinát belőle problémát. A gyerekek reformátusok lettek de ez magától értetődő volt.”

Judit, Szabó, Vynohradiv (Nagyszőlős)

‘Regarding religion, here in Selmence only us and another family are Calvinist, 3 other are mixed so the husband is Catholic while the wife is Calvinist. The majority is Catholic. The Ukrainians are Greek-Catholic; they have their own mass in Palágy. So we have 3 (kinds of religion).’

“A vallás az úgy van, hogy itt Szelmcen csak 2 család vagyunk reformátusok, meg van 3 olyan család, hogy kevert, tehát az úr katolikus, az asszony református. A többség katolikus, az ukránok meg megint Palágyba, a görög katolikus templomba van nekik ukrán mise. Ugyhogy 3 (féle vallás).”

‘Those who are in mixed religion always make an agreement. Usually the son follows his father’s and the daughter follows her mother’s religion’.

“Akik vegyes vallásban vannak azok is csak megegyeznek. Általában a fiú megy az apja után, a lány megy az anyja után.”

Erzsébet, Tóth, Mali Selmence (Kisszelmenc)

Language Policy

Due to the constantly changing ruling authorities in the past 110 years the official language was modified 6 times. 4 languages were introduced, some more than once. The original one was Hungarian until 1918; then it was set again between 1938 and 1944. The Slovak was spoken between 1918 and 1938, the Ukrainian from 1991 until now. Russian was taught for the longest time (1945-1991). (Figure1) I have also found another fact which is interesting enough to mention. As I have already stated Rusyn as an independent nationality was denied, so as their language. But if we assume these two to exist, then not once was the state language matching with the language of the majority group of the region. Not only in everyday life but in education does it cause problems. Each and every time a new state language was declared the languages taught in schools differed from the ones before. Every such change was followed by a transitional period in which education was stuck for a while due to the lack of suitably-trained teachers and proper course books to use. (Table2)

'I attended a Hungarian school but it was compulsory to study Russian. At the beginning I studied Ukrainian as well, at least it was taught. We studied how to read and write in Russian, but at home we were always speaking Hungarian, so we didn't get so far.

Me: What languages do you speak?

I know little Russian, I can't be stolen for sure. All I know I learnt in military. I served 3 years in the Taiga. It was a big thing. As if it would've been my option to go there....I was serving in a labor-camp for 3 years. It was fantastic what we went through. Having as cold as -45-50 degrees we were cutting out trees in the snow.

Me: Can you tell me where this was exactly?

I couldn't tell exactly in which part it was. It was a secret even for us where we were. We had only numbers. We could only get letters or packs through Moscow. It was a secret place as we were building a launcher base for rockets. After finishing it, we went on.

Me: And when were you serving there?

From '62 till '65.'

"Magyar iskolába jártam de azért kellett tanulni az orosz. Még eleinte tanultam ukránt is...vagyis tanították. Megtanultunk oroszul írni, olvassni, de itthon magyarul beszéltünk, tehát nem sokra mentünk vele.

Én: Milyen nyelveken beszél?

Törve tudom az orosz, el nem lehet adni. De azt is amit megtanultam a katonaságnál. 3 évet leszolgáltam a tajgában. Az óriási dolog volt.. Mintha önként mentem volna oda jóformán. Én munkásszázadban szolgáltam 3 évet. Az valami fantasztikus, hogy mit kellett átélni. Minusz 45-50 fokos hidegbe, hóba, vágni az erdőt.

Én: Ez hol volt pontosan?

Pontosan meg sem tudnám mondani melyik részen van az. Nekünk titkos volt; csak számunk volt. Levelet vagy csomagot is ha küldtek azt is csak Moszkván keresztül kaptunk. Az titkos hely volt, mert rakétáknak építettünk kilövőállomást. És mikor azt befejeztük mentünk tovább.

Én: És ez mikor volt?

Ez '62-től '65-ig."

Miklós, Ádám, Mali Selmente (Kisszelmenc)

As a consequence there has never been one language that everybody was speaking or was understood by all. It has always been serving for a reason to discriminate some but I have heard counter-arguments as well. (Table3)

'At universities you could feel that Ukrainians are always the first. Hungarians are pushed back a bit. Those who have learnt the languages don't let themselves. But the others always have to withdraw a bit.'

“Ha valaki egyetemre vagy főiskolára járt ott azért úgy volt, hogy aki ukrán volt, az első volt. A magyarokat kicsit hátrébb tolták. Aki megtanulta a nyelvet, az nem hagyta magát. Aki nem, annak muszály volt mindig hátrébb húzódni.”

Erszébet, Tóth, Mali Selmence (Kisszelmenc)

'Me: Have you ever faced a discriminating situation?

No, I wouldn't say that. I was hard-working throughout my life. I had Russian bosses at first, then, when my daughter was getting married I started working for a car service (owned by Ukrainians), and I was an accountant for the church as well.'

“Én: Érte valaha hátrányos megkülönböztetés?

Nem, nem mondanám, én becsületesen dolgoztam. Ugyanúgy orosz embereknél is voltam voháter (könyvelő), aztán mikor a lányom férjhezment egy ukrán autószerveznél is vohátereskedtem. Az egyháznak is dolgoztam.”

Judit, Szabó, Vynohhradiv (Nagyszőlős)

Conclusion

I decided to conclude two projects here at the same time. My original task was to study the phenomenon of 'inbetweenness' meanwhile I was concentrating on my own research.

To my view, being inbetween can be explained several ways. It can be meant in geographical sense. Transcarpathia is bordering now four member states of the European Union while the enormous, non-EU member Ukraine is standing behind. The region is in between the eastern and western Christian civilization and culture. As for an individual aspect, children of mixed marriages can be in between different cultures, languages, religions of their parents.

As I experienced, we had rather examined a younger generation in search for the meaning of this word. My interviewees were all over 70 which was good on the one hand as they could tell me their stories about historical events. On the other hand they are not so influenced by the present government as probably their children and grand-children. There were not as many mixed marriages as today at their time. They were not always forced to assimilate and were not oppressed. When today's elderly was brought up they could attend Hungarian schools even in higher education. While today some nursery schools, elementary and secondary schools still educate the children in Hungarian classes but there is only one college which is totally a Hungarian one financed by the Hungarian Government. If the youngsters would like to study in their mother tongue, they have to leave their country of origin. Is it not strange a bit?

'At that time (Russian rule) the usage of the Hungarian language was not prohibited. We still got the newspapers in Hungarian. Furthermore, I dare to say that nowadays the ideas of nationalism are more widespread. From this aspect Ukrainians are more about to suppress the minorities than Russians did. To tell the truth Russians were more lenient with the different nationalities. Let me give a simple example. In my

military booklet and in my identity card, as we call it today: passport, it was always written down which nationality I belonged to, I was regarded as a Hungarian. Now I have my Ukrainian passport and my identity card about not being Hungarian anymore but Ukrainian. How can they do this?...

“ Abban az időben nem tiltották a magyar nyelvet, sőt járt is mindig a magyar nyelvű újság stb. Sőt merem mondani, hogy most már nagyobb a nacionalizmus. Most már ebből a szempontból az ukránok jobban nyomják el a magyarokat, mint azt az oroszok tették. Valójában akkor sokkal elnézőbbek voltak azzal, hogy milyen nemzetiségűek vagyunk. Csakhogy egy egyszerű példát mondjak: a katonakönyvemben is, vagy a személyigazolványomba bele lett írva milyen nemzetiség; hogy magyar. Most meg van az ukrán paszportom, a személyigazolványom, hogy nem vagyok magyar. Én ukrán vagyok. Hát hogy lehet ilyet csinálni?

Miklós, Ádám, Mali Selmence (Kisszelmenc)

In my opinion nationalism has always existed, but Miklós, Ádám might have been right...probably it is increasing in the 21th century we just cannot see it...or we don't want to see it to be more precise.

As a conclusion, this region can serve as an example for all of us. I gave all the necessary details to prove that this region is a really special one. So many different nations, cultures, diverse languages, various religious aspects but to my view it can be surely stated that people living there are of the most tolerant type. Since the end of World War II. there have been no military action nor severe conflicts in the region. Generally speaking, even if the locals differ in every possible way, they can still accept and respect each other's habits, traditions and morals. Let Transcarpathia be a role-model in this sense.

*'Don't think that it's spring if roses bloom in trees
The oak flowers are green again, birds are singing on trees.
Don't think that this tree only opens its petal in spring,
Spring is when one heart finds out the secret of another.'*

*“Ne gondold, hogy az a tavasz amikor rózsa nyíl a fákon,
Tölgyfavirág újra zöldül, dalosmadár csicsereg a fákon.
Ne gondold, hogy ez a kertfa csak tavasszal bontogatja szirmát.
Az a tavasz amikor a szív a szívnek megtalálja titkát.”
Ferenc, Kreiner, Vynohradiv (Nagyszőlős)*

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Map1: Transcarpathia/Subcarpathia in Ukraine



Map2: Ethnic map of Transcarpathia/Subcarpathia according to the 2001 census

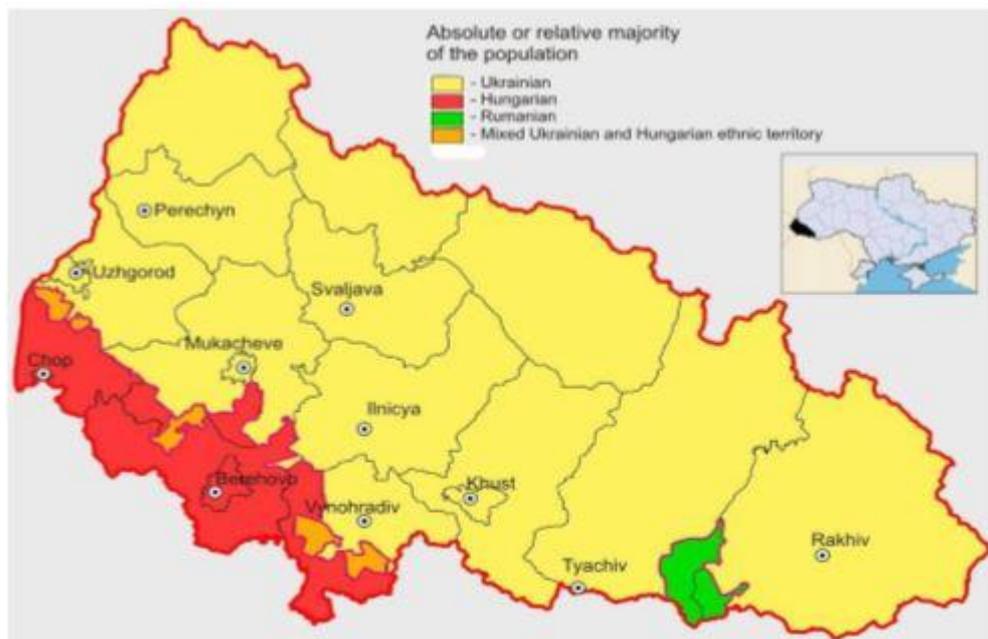


Table1: Status of the region between 1867 and 2010

State affiliation	Period	Name of the region	Status of the region
The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy	1867–1918	Ung, Bereg, Ugocsa, Máramaros counties	In geographical and administrative sense it was not a unified region, but four counties of the Hungarian Kingdom, the member state of the Monarchy.
People's Republic of Hungary and the Hungarian Soviet Republic	1918–1919	Ruska Craina (1918.XII.25.); Hucul Republic (1919.I.8.); Ung, Bereg, Ugocsa, Máramaros counties	The autonomy named Ruska Craina was not realised practically. The Hucul Republic referred to the eastern part of the country; however the Romanian Army winded it up in a short time. In reality the region was not an independent administrative unite.
(the first) Czechoslovakian Republic	1919–1938	Podkarpatska Rus (Podkarpatská Rus)	The autonomy existed just in theory; its sphere of authority was restricted.
(the second) Czech-Slovak Republic	1938–1939	Podkarpatska Rus (Podkarpatská Rus, Подкарпатська Русь)	It was an autonomous territory within the federal Czechoslovakia.
Carpathian Ukraine	1939.III.14–15.	Carpathian Ukraine (Карпатська Україна)	Declared itself as an independent state, however it was not recognised by the international public.
Hungarian Kingdom	1939–1944	Subcarpathian Province	The territory was ruled by a 'temporary' central direction until giving the autonomous status (however the Rusyn autonomy did not realised)
Transcarpathian Ukraine	1944.XI.26.–1946.I.22.	Transcarpathian Ukraine (Закарпатська Україна)	It was a temporary state without international recognition.
The Soviet Union	1946–1991	Transcarpathian district (Закарпатская область)	It was a simple administrative region within the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic without any kind of autonomy.
Ukraine	From 1991	Transcarpathian district (Закарпатська область)	It is a simple administrative region within the independent Ukraine without any kind of autonomy.

Compiled from: Fedinec 2002, Fedinec–Vehes eds. 2010, Vehes–Fedinec eds. 2010

Table2: Changes of the state language and obligatory school medium on the example of 5 generations of a Subcarpathian family

Generations	Year of birth	Place of birth (town, country in English)	Place of birth (town, country in the original)	Years of 1-6 grades in school	Language taught as state language
1.	1896	Hust, Austro-Hungarian Monarchy	Huszt, Osztrák-Magyar Monarchia	1902–1907	Hungarian
2.	1925	Hust, Czechoslovakia	Chust, Československo	1931–1936	„Czechoslovak” (Czech)
2.	1930	Hust, Czechoslovakia	Chust, Československo	1936–1941	„Czechoslovak” (Czech), then Ukrainian, finally Hungarian
2.	1933	Hust, Czechoslovakia	Chust, Československo	1939–1944	Ukrainian, then Hungarian
2.	1940	Hust, Hungarian Kingdom	Huszt, Magyar Királyság	1946–1951	Russian
3.	1955	Hust, Soviet Union	Хуст, СССР	1961–1966	Russian
3.	1960	Hust, Soviet Union	Хуст, СССР	1966–1971	Russian
4.	1982	Hust, Soviet Union	Хуст, СССР	1988–1993	Russian, then Ukrainian
4.	1986	Hust, Soviet Union	Хуст, СССР	1992–1997	Ukrainian
5.	1995	Hust, Ukraine	Хуст, Україна	2005–2010	Ukrainian
5.	2000	Hust, Ukraine	Хуст, Україна	2006–2011	Ukrainian

Compiled from: Cserniczkó-Ferenc 2011 (Table6)

Table3: Characteristic features of the language policies of the different states

States	Insistent spread of the majority/ state language	The usage of minority languages in official status	Insistent spread of the state language in education	Type of the developing bilingualism
Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (1867–1918)	Gradual strengthening of the positions of the Hungarian language.	Only Hungarian (and German) was used as official language.	Insistent spread of the Hungarian language in the sphere of education (e.g. Lex Apponyi).	Asymmetrical.
Czechoslovakia (1918–1939)	Moderate strengthening of the positions of the 'Czechoslovak' language.	Rusyn was obligatory used official language. Other minority languages should have been used where the ratio of minority was above 20%.	Teaching Czechoslovak language was obligatory, but the right to study in ones mother tongue works as well.	Asymmetrical.
Carpathian Ukraine (1939)	Strengthening the situation of the Ukrainian language.	The state has only one official language the Ukrainian.	The medium of education is the Ukrainian language.	Asymmetrical.
Hungarian Kingdom (1938/39–1944)	Strengthening the state language status of the Hungarian language.	Hungarianrussian (Rusyn) language was obligatorily used official language in administration and in offices.	There were schools where the medium was minority languages, however authorities made Hungarian medium education gradually spreading.	Symmetrical: it was obligatory to learn the local Slavic population's language for Hungarian officials, executives, officers, teachers.
Soviet Union (1945–1991)	Forcing the use of Russian language as 'the language of international communication' (язык межнационального общения).	In the territory of the USSR it was possible to use the Ukrainian language besides Russian.	There were schools instructed in minority languages, however the power supports Russian medium education.	Asymmetrical.
Ukraine (From 1991)	Gradual strengthening the state language status of the Ukrainian language, extending its sphere of applicability.	In those territories, where national minorities make up the majority besides the state language the use of the mother tongue is also permitted. However the country has only one state and official language, the Ukrainian.	In the beginning the minority school system developed rapidly, however recently the strengthening of the status of the state language is characteristic in the education.	Asymmetrical.

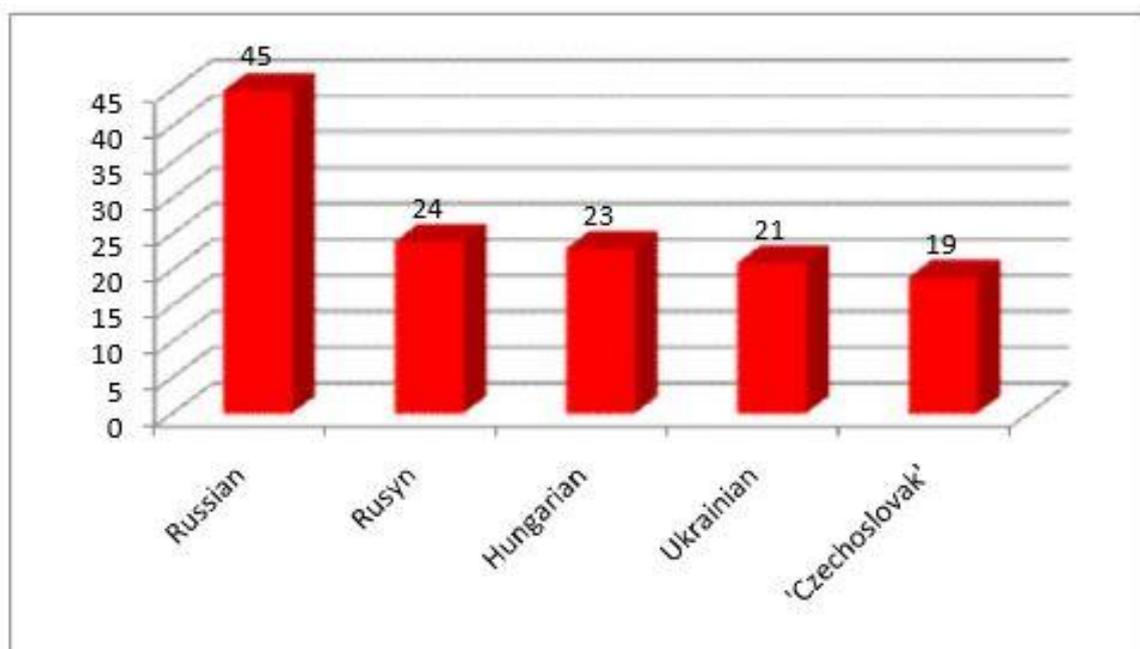
Compiled from Cserniczkó 2010a, Cserniczkó–Fedinec 2010, Cserniczkó–Melnyk 2010a, 2010b, 2010c, Melnyk–Cserniczkó 2010a, 2010b, 2010c.

Table4: Changes of ethnic and national relations in the territory of the present-day Transcarpathia/ Subcarpathia in %(1880-2001)

	1880	1900	1910	1921	1930	1941	1959	1970	1979	1989	2001
Rusyns/Ruthenians	59,80	58,91	55,54	60,79	60,80	58,81					
Ukrainians							74,60	76,42	77,75	78,41	80,51
Hungarians	25,47	28,18	30,66	18,13	15,93	27,41	15,89	14,37	13,71	12,5	12,08
Russians							3,22	3,33	3,61	3,97	2,47
Germans	7,59	9,43	10,54	1,57	1,74	1,55	0,38	0,40	0,32	0,28	0,29
Romanians	1,86	1,88	1,90			1,83	1,99	2,22	2,35	2,37	2,56
(Czecho)slovaks	1,96	1,30	1,05	3,21	4,73	0,80	1,34	0,97	0,77	0,59	0,45
Jews				13,08	12,51	9,25	1,32	1,03	0,33	0,21	0,04
Roma people						0,14	0,54	0,56	0,48	0,97	1,12
Other	3,32	0,28	0,31	3,23	4,29	0,19	0,72	0,71	0,67	0,69	0,48

Compiled from: Cserniczkó-Ferenc 2011 (Table2)

Figure1:How many years was it obligatory for everybody to learn the given languages in theregion?(1900-2010)



Compiled from Cserniczkó-Melnyk 2010b and Melnyk-Cserniczkó 2010c.

Miklós, Ádám



Judit, Szabó and her husband



Ferenc, Kreiner



Erzsébet, Tóth



The Transcarpathian Team, Mrs. Tilda Halpert and her son
(Lena Nikulina, Júlia Németh, Nella McNicol, Mrs Tilda Halpert, her son, Galya
Vasylenko, Anastasia Soroka, Pawel Drymajlo)



Photo taken by our coordinator: Zhanna Wróblewska