

## Protecting Primeval Mountains, Hutsul Distinctiveness, and Hutsuls Themselves: The Eastern Carpathian Nature Conservation Discourse in the Second Polish Republic (1918–1939)

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### ABSTRACT

This article explores the discourse of nature conservation in the Eastern Carpathians (specifically the Gorgany and Chornohora ranges) during the Second Polish Republic (1918–1939). It demonstrates how environmental protection was conceptualized not only as an ecological and scientific enterprise, but also as a tool for nationalist, pedagogical, and assimilationist agendas. Drawing on a wide array of sources—from academic texts and government documents to literary works—the study reveals how the idea of conserving “primeval” nature became intertwined with efforts to shape regional and national identities. Central to this discourse was the representation of the Hutsuls, whose cultural and ecological distinctiveness was simultaneously celebrated and subjected to paternalistic management by Polish intellectuals, officials, and institutions. The conservation movement in the Eastern Carpathians was deeply enmeshed in state-building processes, wherein protecting nature served as a symbolic and material assertion of Polish sovereignty. The article applies approaches from environmental and cultural history to examine how nature, culture, and power converged in the interwar conservationist project. It argues that conservation discourse operated as an instrument of symbolic appropriation and territorial integration, advancing modernization while reinforcing hierarchical ethnic relations under the guise of stewardship and education.

**KEYWORDS:** Eastern Carpathians, nature conservation, Hutsuls, nationalism, environmental discourse, Second Polish Republic, cultural landscape

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The author has declared that no conflicts of interest exist.

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## 1 Introduction

In the wake of the geopolitical transformations brought by World War I and the subsequent “Central European Civil War,”<sup>1</sup> the reborn Second Polish Republic obtained approximately 600 kilometers of the Carpathian mountain range, stretching along the south and south-eastern border of the country. The newly Polish Carpathians included the Eastern Carpathians with the Gorgany and Chornohora mountain ranges, or—in ethnographic terms—the Hutsul region, which Poland shared with its neighbors, Czechoslovakia and Romania. Shortly after the end of the fighting and the stabilization of the state borders, the creators of the dominant Polish discourse, first and foremost scholars but also state and local authorities, began to promote the idea of nature conservation as a strategic concern tied to “political landscapes.”<sup>2</sup> This agenda extended beyond the Tatra Mountains—already established as a “national landscape” for Poles<sup>3</sup>—and the newly regained Baltic coast, which was to become the cornerstone of the emerging narrative of “Maritime Poland.”<sup>4</sup> Special attention was also directed toward the Eastern Carpathians. Though situated on the remote periphery of the Polish state and inhabited by highlanders who differed in distinctive ways from Poles,<sup>5</sup> Gorgany and Chornohora were considered very attractive in terms of natural beauty and interesting in ethnic terms. Moreover,

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1 JOCHEN BÖHLER: *Civil War in Central Europe, 1918–1921: The Reconstruction of Poland*, Oxford 2018, p. 9 et seq.

2 RAINER GULDIN: *Politische Landschaften: Zum Verhältnis von Raum und nationaler Identität*, Bielefeld 2014.

3 See: PATRICE M. DABROWSKI: “Discovering” the Borderlands: The Case of the Eastern Carpathians, in: *Slavic Review* 64 (2005), 2, pp. 380–402, here pp. 380–381; PATRICE M. DABROWSKI: *Constructing a Polish Landscape: The Example of the Carpathian Frontier*, in: *Austrian History Yearbook* 39 (2008), pp. 45–65; DAVID CROWLEY: *Finding Poland in the Margins: The Case of the Zakopane Style*, in: *Journal of Design History* 14 (2001), 2, pp. 105–116. See also: ALEXANDER MAXWELL: *From Wild Carpathians to the Pusztas: The Evolution of Hungarian National Landscapes*, in: RUTH BÜTTER, JUDITH PELTZ (eds.): *Mythical Landscapes Then and Now: The Mystification of Landscapes in Search for National Identity*, Yerevan 2006, pp. 53–77.

4 See: DARIUSZ KONSTANTYNÓW, MAŁGORZATA OMILANOWSKA (eds.): *Polska nad Bałtykiem: Konstruowanie identyfikacji kulturowej państwa nad morzem 1918–1939* [Poland on the Baltic: Constructing the Cultural Identification of the State by the Sea 1918–1939], Gdańsk 2012.

5 The ethnic specificity and ethnogeny of the Hutsuls, Eastern Slavs of Greek Catholic or Orthodox rite and of close linguistic kinship with Ukrainians, were the subject of many studies, dating back to the mid-nineteenth century, starting with: VOLODYMYR SHUKHEVYCH: *Hutsulshchyna*, Lviv 1899–1908, vol. 1–5. More recently, Paul R. Magocsi fostered the idea that the Hutsuls belonged to the separate Carpatho-Rusyn nation; see, e.g.: PAUL R. MAGOCSI: *Shaping of a National Identity: Subcarpathian Rus’*, 1848–1948, Cambridge, MA 1978; PAUL R. MAGOCSI: *The People from Nowhere: An Illustrated History of Carpatho-Rusyns*, Uzhhorod 2006; PAUL J. BEST: *The Carpatho-Rusyn Question in Poland*, in: PAUL J. BEST, JAROSŁAW MOKLAK (eds.): *The Lemkos of Poland: Articles and Essays*, Cracow—New Haven 2000, pp. 73–81.

they were highly valued in the Polish national memory as being linked to the heroic past of the Polish Legionnaires and their battles with Russian troops in the winter of 1914/15.<sup>6</sup> These factors visibly increased interest in the region and the idea that its nature should be conserved, an interest that lasted throughout the existence of the Second Polish Republic, until 1939.

The Eastern Carpathian nature conservation movement was shaped by domestic and international influences, drawing on both Western European and American efforts to protect areas deemed valuable for their natural beauty, resources, and cultural significance. Originating in the mid-nineteenth century, these initiatives evolved into complex, widely embraced movements that emphasized nature as a multifaceted asset—economic, aesthetic, and spiritual.<sup>7</sup> Domestically, Polish scholars and institutions looked to precedents set during the late Habsburg era, such as the 1869 ban on hunting marmots and chamois in the Tatras, as well as the foundational work of figures like Maksymilian Nowicki and Marian Raciborski. Simultaneously, they were inspired by international examples, including the establishment of Yellowstone National Park in the United States (1872), Sarek in Sweden (1909), and various Alpine conservation efforts, all of which demonstrated the integration of scientific management and national symbolism.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, the German *Heimatschutzbewegung*,<sup>9</sup> which merged nature and cultural heritage preservation, left its mark on East Central Europe. While in Czechoslovakia, this movement fos-

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6 ANDRZEJ CHWALBA: *Legiony Polskie 1914–1918* [Polish Legions 1914–1918], Kraków 2018, pp. 44–66.

7 See, e.g.: JOHN MCCORMICK: *The Global Environmental Movement: Reclaiming Paradise*, Bloomington—Indianapolis 1991, pp. 1–25; MARTIN HOLDGATE: *A History of Conservation*, in: PABLO LORENZANO, HANS-JÖRG RHEINBERGER et al. (eds.): *History and Philosophy of Science and Technology*, vol. 2, Oxford 2010, pp. 32–54.

8 See: BEATA SADOWSKA, DOMINIK BOREK, GRAŻYNA SAPIŃSKA, JOZEF POLACKO, BARTOSZ PILECKI: *Nature and Forest Conservation Management in Poland: Origins, Practices, Law and Importance on the Example of the Tatra National Park*, in: *European Research Studies Journal* 27 (2024), Special Issue A, pp. 756–777; MONIKA ANNA KRÓL: *Historical Parks and Gardens Legal State in Poland for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* [article with unclear publication status], [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/375083789\\_Historical\\_Parks\\_and\\_Gardens\\_Legal\\_State\\_in\\_Poland\\_for\\_the\\_Fiftieth\\_Anniversary\\_of\\_the\\_Convention\\_Concerning\\_the\\_Protection\\_of\\_the\\_World\\_Cultural\\_and\\_Natural\\_Heritage](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/375083789_Historical_Parks_and_Gardens_Legal_State_in_Poland_for_the_Fiftieth_Anniversary_of_the_Convention_Concerning_the_Protection_of_the_World_Cultural_and_Natural_Heritage) (2025-10-30); IZABELA KRZEPTOWSKA-MOSZKOWICZ: *Zainteresowanie ochroną przyrody i historią botaniki w Polsce oraz pasja popularyzacji wiedzy przyrodniczej w twórczości Seweryna Józefa Krzemienieńskiego (1871–1945)* [The Interest in Nature Conservation and the History of Botany in Poland in the Work of Seweryn Józef Krzemienieński (1871–1945), and His Passion for Popularizing the Natural Sciences], in: *Studia Historiae Scientiarum* 19 (2020), pp. 53–74. See also: JAN SZTOLCMAN: *Żubr: Jego historia, obyczaje i przyszłość* [The Bison: Its History, Habits, and Future], Warszawa 1926.

9 On the concept and historical development of the *Heimatschutz* movement, see: THOMAS LEKAN: *Imagining the Nation in Nature: Landscape Preservation and German Identity, 1885–1945*, Cambridge, MA 2004.

tered decentralized, grassroots initiatives,<sup>10</sup> in Poland's Eastern Carpathians, it became a state-led, centralized project aimed at educating and "civilizing" the local highlander populations. Thus, the Polish conservation discourse interwove nationalist, pedagogical, and environmental narratives, positioning nature preservation as both a cultural and political endeavor.

The campaign for nature protection in the Eastern Carpathians yielded undoubted achievements in interwar Poland. Soon after the restoration of the state, it obtained an institutional infrastructure and a permanent legal basis, which "caused a great revival of its activities,"<sup>11</sup> according to one of the first commentators. The movement attracted a sizable group of prominent Polish specialists in animate and inanimate nature, sightseeing, tourism, construction, and transportation, and even writers, who presented their ideas in a number of works of literature on the subject. Strikingly, they used not only arguments from the field of natural science, but also tourism, culture, social, and pedagogical arguments, which revealed an ideological background. Polish authors stated that the idea of nature conservation was one that ought to penetrate every social class. The venture would help to form a new society that would be attentive to the preservation of the natural environment. Simultaneously, they associated that attentiveness with an affectionate attitude towards local homelands and the state fatherland among both lowland and highland Poles and, in the case of the Eastern Carpathians, the Hutsuls. This ideological modelling of the idea of Eastern Carpathian nature conservation ensued from its indissoluble connection to four issues in the dominant Polish discourse: first, tourism; second, the concept of protecting local distinctiveness (*ochrona swojszczyzny*); third, the need to assist the Hutsuls in preserving their natural surroundings; fourth, education encouraging local, state, and national patriotism.

The subsequent sections of this article explore how institutional frameworks supported conservation initiatives in the Eastern Carpathians and how the concept of nature preservation intersected with the aforementioned ideological concerns. The analysis examines a diverse corpus of texts, including academic articles, conference papers, a travel essay, and three novels, illustrating how the discourse on nature protection permeated various genres, extending its reach to both specialized and general audiences. This study aims to uncover the ideological underpinnings of environmental conservation initiatives, particularly in relation to the Hutsuls. It interrogates how nature protection discourse operated not only as a mechanism for preserving the landscape but also as a conduit for advancing nationalist and assimilationist agendas, thereby aligning conservation with broader state-building projects in the Second Polish Repub-

10 On regional variations of the *Heimatschutz* movement in East Central Europe, see: JANA PIŇOSOVÁ: *Inspiration Natur: Naturschutz in den böhmischen Ländern bis 1933*, Marburg 2017.

11 WANDA KULCZYŃSKA: *Organizacja ochrony przyrody w niepodległej Polsce* [Organization of Nature Conservation in Independent Poland], in: WŁADYSŁAW SZAFAER (ed.): *Skarby przyrody i ich ochrona: Wiadomości z dziedziny ochrony przyrody*, Warszawa 1932, pp. 258–272, here p. 264.

lic. By tracing these intersecting narratives, the article further examines how the rhetoric of nature conservation in the Eastern Carpathians became a vehicle for modernization, nationalism, and pedagogical imperatives. It reveals the ways in which environmental preservation served as a strategic tool for shaping regional identities and reinforcing state control.



Fig. 1: Tourist map of the Polish section of the Eastern Carpathians, in: Mapa automobilowa Polski 1:2,000,000: Wraz z wykazem stacji benzynowych firmy “Karpaty,” Lwów [1933]. Polona, public domain, <https://polona.pl/item-view/3e03b062-85ed-4835-940b-6ed66c5484fe?page=15> (2025-09-15)

Methodologically, the article draws on the approaches of environmental and cultural history, which emphasize the entanglement of ecological knowledge, symbolic landscapes, and collective identity. It follows the foundational thinking of Carl Sauer, whose 1920s reflections on cultural landscapes laid the groundwork for later interpretations, as well as the perspectives presented in William Cronon’s 1990s edited volume *Uncommon Ground*, which reconceptualized nature as a culturally and ideologically constructed category.<sup>12</sup> Rather than focusing on legal policies or practical preservation results, the analysis is concerned with discursive representations—how nature and its protection were articulated, moralized, and embedded in the broader nationalist, pedagogical, and civilizational projects of the time. The article thus contributes to a growing body of scholarship that locates environmental discourse at the confluence of

12 CARL O. SAUER: The Morphology of Landscape, in: University of California Publications in Geography 2 (1925), 2, pp. 19–53; WILLIAM CRONON (ed.): *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, New York 1995.

knowledge production, cultural meaning-making, and state-building in twentieth-century Central Europe.<sup>13</sup>

## 2 Institutional Framework of the Eastern Carpathians' Nature Conservation

The first efforts towards nature conservation in the Second Polish Republic began despite the ongoing military and diplomatic battles over state borders. In December 1919, the Provisional State Commission for Nature Conservation was set up as an advisory body to the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Education. The first Board of Supervisors for Nature Conservation was formed in Lwów (Ukr. L'viv) on 4 February 1920, under the leadership of Jan Hirschler, a biologist and professor of zoology and comparative anatomy. This body addressed issues in the provinces that were then unofficially, and later officially, designated as the Lwów, Stanisławów (Ukr. Stanyslaviv), and Tarnopol (Ukr. Ternopil') voivodeships following the administrative reform of December 1920.<sup>14</sup>

According to a regulation issued by the Council of Ministers of 10 June 1925, the Provisional State Commission was restructured as the State Council for Nature Conservation, which was granted broader powers and tasked with implementing its decisions through the Ministry. In 1928, an additional social organization, the League for Nature Conservation, was established under the Council's initiative to further strengthen preservation efforts. This expanded institutional framework attracted prominent scholars, fostering cooperation between state and social entities and facilitating the implementation of various environmental protection measures.

Though not the primary focus, nature conservation in the Eastern Carpathians was a significant concern for both experts and authorities at various levels. They elaborated on the topic in journals such as *Ochrona Przyrody* (Nature Protection) and *Wierchy* (Peaks), as well as in collective volumes, notably the 1932 publication *Skarby przyrody i ich ochrona* (Nature Treasures and Their Protection). The most substantial platform for discussing Gorgany and Chornohora's nature conservation was the "Ankieta w sprawie Karpat

13 CLAIRE E. CAMPBELL: *Nature, Place, and Story: Rethinking Historic Sites in Canada, Montreal—Kingston 2017*; FRANK UEKÖTTER: *The Green and the Brown: A History of Conservation in Nazi Germany*, Cambridge 2006.

14 See: Ustawa z dn. 3 grudnia 1920 o tymczasowej organizacji władz administracyjnych II instancji (województw) na obszarze b. Królestwa Galicji i Lodomerii z W. Ks. Krakowskiem oraz w wchodzących w skład Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej obszarach Spisza i Orawy [Act of 3 December 1920, on the Provisional Organization of Administrative Authorities of the Second Instance (Voivodships) on the Territory of the Former Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria with the Grand Duchy of Cracow and the Areas of Spisz and Orawa Forming Part of the Republic of Poland], in: *Dziennik Ustaw* (1920), 117, poz. 768.

Wschodnich” (Survey on the Eastern Carpathians) conference, held in Stanisławów (today Ukr. Ivano-Frankivs’k) on 29–30 May 1931. The event followed the analogous “surveys” on the Tatra Mountains and Podhale, held in 1919 and 1929,<sup>15</sup> and on the Polish Baltic coast, held in 1927.<sup>16</sup>

Organized by the Ministry of Public Works at the request of the Union of Polish Tourist Societies, the conference brought together state, social, and hobbyist organizations, including the Polish Tatra Society, the Union of Polish Spas, and the Carpathian Ski Association.<sup>17</sup> Topics ranged from the protection of natural landscapes and highland areas to the preservation of Hutsul folk culture, regional farming rationalization, and public education about the region’s uniqueness. One of the most pressing concerns discussed at the conference was the overexploitation of local raw materials. The production of mountain pine oil in Chornohora, conducted by the “Olearta” company (1912–1914) and later by the “Howerla” distillery (1922–1927, 1930–1931),<sup>18</sup> was cited as a particularly damaging example.

The idea of creating a national park in Chornohora, which gained traction at the Stanisławów conference, was not new, but it had encountered numerous obstacles, including the exclusion of specific areas from use and ongoing industrial exploitation. The concept of establishing a nature reserve in Chornohora dated back to 1910. The initiative was led by Polish botanist Władysław Szafer, a prominent figure in natural sciences and a professor at the Jagiellonian University, and forester Stanisław Sokołowski, known for his influential work in forestry and nature conservation. At the time, both were affiliated with the

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15 STANISŁAW LENARTOWICZ, MIECZYSLAW ORŁOWICZ (eds.): *Sprawy Tatr, rozwój Podhala i Zakopanego (ochrona przyrody i turystyka, sprawy komunikacyjne, szkolne, postulaty kulturalne, plan rozwoju Zakopanego i innych letnisk i uzdrowisk w powiecie nowotarskim): Protokół ankiety odbytej w Zakopanem z inicjatywy Ministerstwa Robót Publicznych w dniach 8, 9 i 10 marca 1929 roku* [Matters of the Tatra Mountains, the Development of Podhale and Zakopane (Nature Conservation and Tourism, Transport Matters, School Matters, Cultural Demands, a Plan for the Development of Zakopane and Other Summer Resorts and Spas in the Nowy Targ District): Minutes of the survey held in Zakopane on the initiative of the Ministry of Public Works on 8, 9 and 10 March 1929], Warszawa 1930.

16 MIECZYSLAW ORŁOWICZ (ed.): *Plan rozwoju polskiego wybrzeża morskiego. Protokół ankiety odbytej w Gdyni z inicjatywy Ministerstwa Robót Publicznych w dniach 7, 8 i 9 października 1927 r.* [Plan for the Development of the Polish Sea Coast: Minutes of the Survey Held in Gdynia on the Initiative of the Ministry of Public Works on 7, 8, and 9 October 1927], Warszawa 1928.

17 MIECZYSLAW ORŁOWICZ, STANISŁAW LENARTOWICZ (eds.): *Ankieta w sprawie Karpat Wschodnich: Protokół ankiety odbytej na zaproszenie Urzędu Wojewódzkiego w Stanisławowie z inicjatywy Ministerstwa Robót Publicznych w dniach 29 i 30 maja 1931 r.* [Survey on the Eastern Carpathians: Minutes of the Survey Held at the Invitation of the Provincial Office in Stanisławów on the Initiative of the Ministry of Public Works on 29–30 May 1931], 2nd ed., Kraków 2015 [1932], p. 5.

18 See: M[ARIAN] SOKOŁOWSKI: *Eksploracja kosówki w Karpatach Wschodnich* [Exploitation of Mountain Pine in the Eastern Carpathians], in: *Ochrona Przyrody* 6 (1926), pp. 135–138.

High Forest School in Lwów. The first reserve was established in 1921, encompassing 447.5 hectares, but expansion efforts continued throughout the 1920s. By 1928, the reserve area had grown to 823 hectares and further expanded to 1520.51 hectares in 1932.<sup>19</sup> Despite being referred to as a “national nature park” within the Second Polish Republic’s framework,<sup>20</sup> it was officially incorporated into the Carpathian National Nature Park, Ukraine’s first national park, only in 1980.<sup>21</sup>

### 3 Eastern Carpathian Nature Conservation and Tourism

Almost from the beginning of the development of the Eastern Carpathian nature conservation discourse in the Second Polish Republic, the central subject of the discourse was connected with the increase in tourism, an issue that was in itself of great interest to the Polish authorities on various levels, as well as to hiking and travel organizations. Not only did not the most influential defenders of nature in Poland see the contradiction between the protection of the natural environment and the tourist exploitation of the Eastern Carpathians, but they also emphasized the two-way link between the phenomena.

First and foremost, Polish authors argued that tourism played a crucial role in promoting nature conservation in the region. Jerzy Smoleński, a geographer and geologist known for his work on the Carpathians and contributions to regional studies, suggested that tourist traffic to “wild” areas, largely untouched by human activity, increased their perceived value and, consequently, fostered their conservation.<sup>22</sup> Walery Goetel, a geologist and paleontologist, co-founder of the Polish Tatras National Park and a prominent advocate of nature protection, emphasized that “tourist societies, and above all mountaineering societies,” advanced “the slogan of a return to nature.”<sup>23</sup> Jan Gwalbert Pawlikowski, an economist, politician associated with the agrarian and national movement,

19 S[TANISŁAW] KULCZYŃSKI, A[LEKSANDER] KOZIKOWSKI, T[ADEUSZ] WILCZYŃSKI: Czarna Hora jako rezerwat przyrodniczy [Chornohora as a Nature Reserve], in: *Ochrona Przyrody* 6 (1926), pp. 23–34; J[ÓZEF] KOSTYRKO: Czarnohorski Park Narodowy [Chornohora National Nature Park], in: *Wierchy* 11 (1933), pp. 131–146.

20 WŁADYSŁAW SZAFAER: O parkach narodowych [On National Nature Parks], in: SZAFAER, *Skarby przyrody*, pp. 65–80; WALERY GOETEL: Parki narodowe w Polsce [National Nature Parks in Poland], *ibid.*, pp. 273–293; WŁADYSŁAW SZAFAER: Rezerваты w Polsce [Nature Reserves in Poland], *ibid.*, pp. 294–317.

21 IURI NESTERUK: Istoriiia okhorony pryrody v Chornohori [The History of Nature Conservation in Chornohora], in: *Pratsi Naukovoho Tovarystva imeni Shevchenka* 3 (1999), pp. 254–261.

22 JERZY SMOLEŃSKI: Ochrona krajobrazu [Landscape’s Conservation], in: SZAFAER, *Skarby przyrody*, pp. 37–49, here p. 46.

23 [The talk by WALERY GOETEL], in: ORŁOWICZ/LENARTOWICZ, p. 24, 26. Here and throughout, the term “talk” refers to the extended statements delivered by participants of the conference devoted to the Eastern Carpathians, later reprinted in the published report on the event.



and a pioneer of nature conservation in Poland, elaborated on these ideas in even greater detail:

“Mountain tourism [...], which has a connection with primeval nature, thus becomes a promoter of its preservation in reserves and national parks; we also see this in mountaineering associations [...]. These are the areas where planned propaganda can most easily and effectively instill the idea of nature conservation and gain dozens of partners for it.”<sup>24</sup>

According to the aforementioned authors, tourism clearly stood up for nature, whose last stronghold was the mountains, particularly the Eastern Carpathians, in the nature conservation discourse often referred to as “wild,” “primeval,” or “pristine.” Tourists, in the authors’ view, could provide conservationists with valuable information about these “unspoiled” areas and become their advocates. Some even argued that hunter-tourists could play a beneficial role in protecting the region. Ferdynand Antoni Ossendowski, a traveler, wildlife expert, and writer involved in nationalist and anti-communist circles, presented an exoticizing, almost orientalizing perspective on the region in his 1936 sightseeing essay *Huculszczyzna*. He claimed that the Eastern Carpathians surpassed Central Africa and India in terms of forest quality and wildlife abundance, though he noted that the “animals and birds’ Eldorado” had been depleted before World War I. Nevertheless, he argued that responsible Polish hunters and foresters had facilitated the revival of both wildlife and mountain pine after 1918.<sup>25</sup> The Polish educator and social activist Rudolf Wacek took a similar stance, blending scientific aspirations with exoticist imagery. He suggested that restoring the Eastern Carpathian “hunting Eldorado” would not only require combatting local poaching but also establishing a “hunting reserve” for controlled, “rational” hunting by professional hunters and “their guests.”<sup>26</sup>

What is striking is that many of the authors who argued that tourism supported Eastern Carpathian nature conservation then managed to seamlessly take the argument a step further and state that the nature conservation argument actually stimulated tourist traffic in the region. Smoleński, having praised tourism for promoting the Eastern Carpathian “wildernesses,” mentioned that the wildernesses were “a force that attracts the masses, who leave their urban environment for the mountains and forests in order to enjoy the delights of free, unspoiled nature, to admire its majesty, to be nourished by its silence.”<sup>27</sup> Goetel, in the same talk in which he pointed to the power of tourism in lobbying for nature protection, stressed that “together with the organization of nature

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24 JAN GWALBERT PAWLIKOWSKI: Ogólny rzut oka na istotę ochrony przyrody, jej znaczenie, zadania i sposoby realizacji [A General Look at the Essence of Nature Conservation, Its Importance, Tasks, and Means of Implementation], in: SZAFER, Skarby przyrody, pp. 1–15, here pp. 11–12.

25 F[ERDYNAND] ANTONI OSSENDOWSKI: *Huculszczyzna: Gorgany i Czarnohora* [The Hutsul Region: Gorgany and Chornohora], Poznań [1936], pp. 24–25.

26 [The talk by RUDOLF WACEK], in: ORŁOWICZ/LENARTOWICZ, pp. 165, 179, 181.

27 SMOLEŃSKI, *Ochrona krajobrazu*, p. 46.

protection in the Eastern Carpathians and the establishment of national parks in their best-preserved parts, the same [huge—J.W.] stream of tourists will start flowing into the Eastern Carpathians and contribute to an economic boom in the area.”<sup>28</sup> Other authors expressed a similar opinion—that the nature reserve, and even the “hunting reserve” envisioned by Wacek, would become “the most vibrant hubs of tourism” in Gorgany and Chornohora and thus contribute “immeasurably” to the industrial and commercial development of the region.<sup>29</sup>

The texts analyzed above indicate that the authors often used arguments following the reversal pattern of the rhetorical figure of chiasmus: Tourism supported environmental protection, environmental protection drove tourism. Such a structure of the discourse on the mutual entanglements of Eastern Carpathian nature conservation and tourism reveals that the former goal was not (only) a value in itself for the authors, and not (only) an “expression of spiritual needs” of an “ideal nature,”<sup>30</sup> as Pawlikowski put it. It was also, or first of all, a way to economically activate the region. That activation was to be achieved by increasing the presence of tourists in Gorgany and Chornohora, which in practice meant increasing the presence of Polish tourists in the region. The creators of the Eastern Carpathian nature conservation discourse, while using the tourism argument, did not make the equivalence as obvious as the producers of strictly tourist discourse in interwar Poland did. The latter spoke quite openly of the need to lure Polish visitors to the Eastern Carpathians and discussed various ways of meeting that objective.<sup>31</sup> In turn, the former group of authors commonly emphasized that the nature of Gorgany and Chornohora would attract tourists from the “urban environment” of erstwhile Eastern Galicia and, especially, from the center of the Polish state.<sup>32</sup> Additionally, the authors in question repeatedly described the Eastern Carpathians using words such as “our” and “Polish,” as a “source” of natural beauty and “wealth” for both the region and the whole country.<sup>33</sup> Therefore, they must have thought of tourists as representing the Polish nation in the Second Polish Republic. It was for those tourists that the Eastern Carpathians were supposed to be a natural place for sport and for recreation in both senses: connected with the mountains as an unspoiled area and as a part of the tourists’ native country.

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28 [The talk by GOETEL] (as in footnote 23), pp. 29–30.

29 SZAFER, *O parkach narodowych*, p. 79; see also: [The talk by WACEK] (as in footnote 26), p. 167.

30 PAWLIKOWSKI, p. 2.

31 See: JAGODA WIERZEJSKA: *Aspekty ideologiczne turystyfikacji Karpat Wschodnich w Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej (1918–1939)* [Ideological Aspects of Eastern Carpathian Tourism in the Second Polish Republic (1918–1939)], in: EWA GRZĘDA (ed.): *Od Kaukazu po Sudety: Studia i szkice o poznawaniu i zamieszkiwaniu gór dalekich i bliskich*, Kraków 2020, pp. 267–294.

32 SMOLEŃSKI, *Ochrona krajobrazu*, p. 46; see also: [The talk by EMILIAN BÜRGE], in: ORŁOWICZ/LENARTOWICZ, p. 88.

33 See, e.g.: [The talk by WŁODZIMIERZ KRYŃSKI], *ibid.*, p. 76.

When they emphasized the links between nature conservation and tourism, the Polish authors had literal economic wealth in mind. They believed that the influx of tourists to the Eastern Carpathians brought about by the establishment of reserves and national parks would contribute to the development of the region and be a source of income for the local people. However, they did not suggest that sport and recreation in the “unspoiled” area might engage the Hutsuls themselves in any other way than by serving tourists. As Zygmunt Klemensiewicz, a prominent physical chemist associated with Lviv Polytechnic, put it: “the drive for tourism and the ability to satisfy it appear only at a certain higher economic level in the urban population.”<sup>34</sup>

The exception was a three-day cross-country ski competition known as the March along the Hutsul Route of the Second Brigade of the Polish Legions, organized from February 1934. The biggest sporting and tourist event in the Eastern Carpathians, it aimed to commemorate the military achievements of the Polish Legionaries, later called the Second Brigade, who had fought the Russian troops in the Eastern Carpathians in the winter of 1914/15. The second goal of the event was to commemorate the cooperation between the Legionaries and the Hutsuls during that military campaign and, as a result, to strengthen the connection between the Hutsul region and the Hutsuls with the rest of Poland and the Poles. The latter objective was particularly important, which is why civil teams taking part in the competition always included Hutsul representatives.<sup>35</sup> The March was depicted in the novel *Wilczur z Prohyby* (The Wolf from Prohyba) by Helena and Jerzy Mieczysław Kozłowski,<sup>36</sup> both of which were known for their nationalist and patriotic themes in literature. Tourism, sporting, and military themes merged with the subject of conservation in this literary work with evocative drawings by Władysław Czarnecki, a Polish graphic artist, educator, and scout instructor. In Czarnecki’s illustrations, the joint participation of Polish and Hutsul protagonists in the March was shown by placing them on one plane and distinguishing them only by their clothing and headgear (Fig. 2). In the plot of the novel, this commonality was further emphasized by comparing it to the earlier military cooperation between Poles

34 [The talk by ZYGMUNT KLEMESIEWICZ], *ibid.*, p. 59.

35 See: Huculskim szlakiem II Brygady Legionów Polskich [The Hutsul Route of the Second Brigade of the Polish Legions], Warszawa 1934; Az: Marsz Szlakiem II Brygady Legionów [The March along the Route of the Second Brigade], in: *Turysta w Polsce* (1936), 1–2, p. 6; Marsz Narciarski Huculskim Szlakiem Drugiej Brygady [The Ski March along the Route of the Second Brigade], in: *Turysta w Polsce* (1936), 3, p. 2; WŁADYSŁAW KRYGOWSKI: Gorgany—góry czaru [Gorgany—Mountains of Enchantment], in: *Turysta w Polsce* (1936), 7, p. 8; STAR.: Wśród gorgańskich szczytów i dolin [Among the Peaks and Valleys of Gorgany], in: *Turysta w Polsce* (1937), 8, p. 7; WALERY GOETEL: Zagadnienia regionalizmu górskiego w Polsce [Issues of Mountain Regionalism in Poland], in: *Wierchy* 16 (1938), pp. 132–165, here p. 133; OSSENDOWSKI, Huculszczyzna, pp. 20, 29–38, 86.

36 HELENA and JERZY RYTARDOWIE [HELENA RÓJ-KOZŁOWSKA, JERZY MIECZYSLAW KOZŁOWSKI]: *Wilczur z Prohyby: Powieść* [The Wolf from Prohyba: A Novel], Warszawa 1935.

and Hutsuls during World War I. The best and most military-like proof of the Polish-Hutsul friendship is the help given by the Polish skiers to the Hutsuls in defeating forest poachers and killing the dangerous wolf of the title. I will return to the thread of this cooperation later in the article.

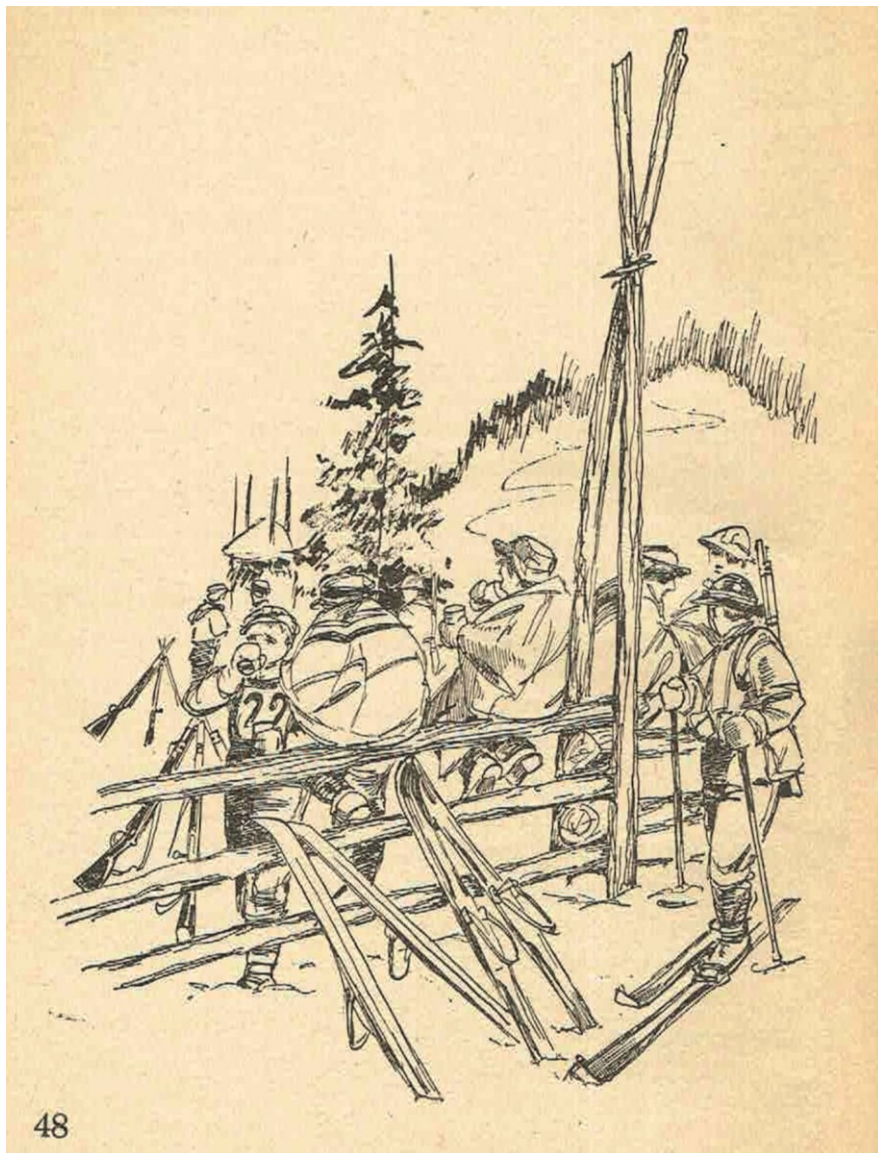


Fig. 2: Polish skiers and Hutsuls as participants in the March along the Hutsul Route of the Second Brigade of the Polish Legions. Drawing by Władysław Czarnecki in the first edition of the novel *Wilczur z Prohyby*. From the author's collection

#### 4 The Protection of Local Distinctiveness as a Part of Eastern Carpathian Nature Conservation

Numerous prominent creators of the Eastern Carpathian nature conservation discourse in interwar Poland drew attention to the inextricable link, in their view, between nature conservation and the protection of the local distinctiveness of the region. As they saw it, the aim of nature conservation was to preserve the “special features” of the landscape. Those “special features,” however, comprised not only the landscape in the natural sense, i.e. animate and inanimate forms of nature, but also the “cultural landscape.” The latter term was introduced into the discourse by Smoleński, who understood it as a complex of “anthropogeographical” landscape elements, valuable from an ethnographic or cultural-historical standpoint.<sup>37</sup> The protection of this type of landscape was strongly recommended by, among other people, Pawlikowski,<sup>38</sup> Henryk Jasiński<sup>39</sup> (an architect, urban planner, and conservationist, involved in regional architecture initiatives), Szafer,<sup>40</sup> Goetel,<sup>41</sup> Adam Fischer<sup>42</sup> (an ethnologist, ethnographer and folklorist focusing on Carpathian folk culture and Hutsul traditions), and Henryk Gąsiorowski<sup>43</sup> (an ethnographer, teacher, and photographer, documenting the Carpathians). Unlike Smoleński, however, these experts most often used the category of local distinctiveness instead of the “cultural landscape.”

The issue sparked a particularly lively discussion during the conference in Stanisławów in 1931. Virtually all speakers agreed that the Hutsuls in the Eastern Carpathians—like the shepherds (called *juhas i baca*) in the Tatra Mountains—“belonged organically to the natural image of these mountains and to

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37 SMOLEŃSKI, Ochrona krajobrazu, pp. 42–43. Smoleński’s reflections on the cultural landscape probably stemmed from his studies with Albrecht Penck, Felix Wahnschaffe and Otto Schlüter in Berlin, in 1906–1908. It was then that he acquired much of his knowledge of geomorphology and anthropogeography, but also a great dislike of Germans (see: MIECZYŚLAW KLIMASZEWSKI: Jerzy Smoleński 1881–1940, in: Rocznik Polskiego Towarzystwa Geologicznego 19 (1950), 1, p. 255). The latter factor was probably the reason why he never spoke much about his studies in Berlin and kept in much more lively contact with French scientific circles. Smoleński’s thought, however, betrays German inspiration. In his 1912 work, he already viewed landscape as a phenomenon that developed according to the laws of living beings. In his view, it was a dynamic and changing landscape, with its own geological time of development and erosion, but nevertheless subjected—as a landscape that was already cultural—to human transformation. He compared the landscape to a palimpsest, in which different, overlapping layers of the past were recorded. See: JERZY SMOLEŃSKI: Krajobraz Polski [Poland’s Landscape], Warszawa 1912, p. 98.

38 PAWLIKOWSKI, p. 13.

39 HENRYK JASIŃSKI: Stosunek techniki do ochrony przyrody [The Relationship between Technology and Nature Conservation], in: SZAFER, Skarby przyrody, pp. 58–59.

40 SZAFER, O parkach narodowych, p. 72.

41 GOETEL, Parki narodowe w Polsce, p. 293.

42 [The talk by ADAM FISCHER], in: ORŁOWICZ/LENARTOWICZ, pp. 115–123.

43 [The talk by HENRYK GĄSIOROWSKI], *ibid.*, pp. 126–149.

the national parks located there.”<sup>44</sup> Therefore, the entirety of the Hutsul folk culture, including construction, art and craft, costume, customs and so on, needed to be protected. For authors with ethnographic interests, like Goetel, Fischer or Gąsiorowski, the protection of local distinctiveness was not only inseparable from the preservation of the Eastern Carpathians’ natural landscape, but it also constituted the most important aspect of the region’s nature conservation. Usually, the need for such protection was overtly motivated by the Hutsul culture’s intrinsic value. However, some authors revealed that there were also other reasons for it. According to Pawlikowski and Goetel, the protection of local distinctiveness would convince the indigenous people of the idea of natural landscape conservation because it would more easily gain their acceptance and trigger their gratitude and loyalty towards the Polish state and the Poles.<sup>45</sup>

The Polish authors sought to distinguish the concept of the protection of local distinctiveness from regionalism, since the latter, in their opinion, was in danger of being ideologized. The notion of regionalism was understood by Goetel, its theoretician, as “realizing the idea of unity in diversity; providing Poland with the values of the mountain lands and mountain people, for the sake of the interest of the Carpathian area and the whole of the State.”<sup>46</sup> Thus, regionalism, had an ambiguous character: it aimed to connect the Hutsuls with the Poles, as well as to unite the Hutsul region with the lowland part of Poland and, at the same time, subordinate the former to the latter. The protection of local distinctiveness, in turn, was usually presented as a form of support for the Hutsul population. However, this concept did not escape ideologization, albeit to a lesser extent than regionalism, as Polish authors associated it with a very specific understanding of the preservation of folk culture and adopted a paternalistic stance towards the Hutsuls. Perhaps both phenomena were best manifested in Fischer’s talk at the Stanisławów conference.

Fischer, like many other Polish authors, assumed that the folk culture of the Hutsuls was “endangered” or even “declining.” This was a necessary assumption to justify the absolute need for its protection, which by definition could never be a completed work because it would have ceased to be necessary. “[There were] understandable efforts to stop this undoubtedly damaging process and to postpone for as long as possible the disappearance of old traditions,”<sup>47</sup> claimed the author. In doing so, he strongly suggested keeping the folk culture completely unchanged or, in his words, “pure” and combating all “deviations” from the traditional forms “as ruthlessly as possible.” He believed such innovations as new tints for Easter eggs, new pottery designs or the intro-

44 SZAFER, O parkach narodowych, p. 72.

45 PAWLIKOWSKI, p. 13; GOETEL, Parki narodowe w Polsce, p. 293.

46 GOETEL, Zagadnienia regionalizmu górskiego w Polsce, p. 132. Capitalization of the word “state” as in the original.

47 [The talk by FISCHER] (as in footnote 42), p. 115.

duction of blue and yellow, the Ukrainian national colors,<sup>48</sup> into embroidery could only disfigure Hutsul arts and crafts.<sup>49</sup> It is striking that in Fischer's view, which was supported by the entire body assembled at the conference, the guardians of "purity" of the Hutsul culture were not supposed to be the Hutsuls themselves. The task was to be carried out by Polish specialists, authorities and institutions. It was Polish specialists in nature conservation and folk culture who were supposed to know best what was "undoubtedly always [...] in optimum harmony with the Carpathian landscape."<sup>50</sup> And it was the Polish state that had to "pay great care to the local distinctiveness of the Hutsul area. [...] We [the Poles] should care for the preservation of the old features of this folk culture and protect what sometimes even the Ruthenian people [*naród ruski*] themselves do not adequately value."<sup>51</sup>

Fischer's argumentation was therefore marked first and foremost by an idea of protection that, provocatively and for heuristic purposes, may be called an anti-civilizing mission in the Hutsul region. Indeed, this effort to halt change and progress was "diligent vigilance [to ensure] that the folk art adhered to the old style and did not become distorted by urban or factory influences."<sup>52</sup> Second, the ethnologist's talk was penetrated by the spirit of Polish paternalism and a sense of superiority; this "care" or "diligent vigilance" on the part of the Polish state, its experts, authorities and institutions regarding Hutsul culture essentially meant interference in the actions or even restriction of the freedom of the indigenous people, motivated by their apparent welfare and the supposed need to protect them.

In addition, Fischer did not refrain from developing the subject of tourism, which, as shown above, was regularly linked to the Eastern Carpathian nature conservation issue and thus also associated with the protection of local distinctiveness. According to the author—and many nature advocates agreed with him—local distinctiveness was an undisputed tourist attraction. This fact was to be used as an economic argument to urge the Hutsuls to cultivate their unchanged traditions, just as the protection of local distinctiveness could be used to convince them of the need to preserve the natural mountain landscape. "The

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48 On the attempts to appropriate the Hutsuls and Hutsul lands for the Ukrainian and Polish nations and their (imagined) state territories, see: PATRICE M. DABROWSKI: The Carpathians: Discovering the Highlands of Poland and Ukraine, Chicago 2021, pp. 67–136; MARTIN ROHDE: Ukrainian "National Science" from a Spatial Perspective: How the Hutsul Lands Were Mapped, in: *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 23 (2022), 4, pp. 773–801; JAGODA WIERZEJSKA: A Domestic Space: The Central and Eastern Carpathians in the Polish Tourist and Local Lore Discourse, 1918–1939, in: *Prace filologiczne: Literaturoznawstwo* 12 (2019), 9, part 1, pp. 33–62. On Polish, Romanian, Czech, and Ukrainian approaches in the interwar period, cf. also Martin Rohde's paper in this issue.

49 [The talk by FISCHER] (as in footnote 42), pp. 117, 119, 120.

50 Ibid., p. 116.

51 Ibid., p. 121.

52 Ibid.

indigenous peoples need to be made aware that if they want to count on a large influx of summer visitors and tourists, they must preserve their old costumes and their ancient customs, because the crowds today are looking for just such ethnographically interesting areas,”<sup>53</sup> Fischer claimed. Therefore, in his perspective, the “pure” Hutsul folk culture turned out to be (also) a mercantile product, an attraction paid for by tourists and a form of theatre for them, given that the author desired “to encourage the local people to recreate—in the form of spectacles—various scenes from folk life.”<sup>54</sup>

The rhetorical shape of the discourse on the protection of local distinctiveness as a part of Eastern Carpathian nature conservation shows that the absolute appreciation of the regional “cultural landscape” was only its starting point. The discourse in question, seamlessly combining this landscape with the natural one, placed the Hutsuls and their culture on the same level as animate and inanimate natural objects. Although the Polish authors openly valued the uniqueness of the highlanders as well as their creations, in essence they equated them with wildlife, presenting them using means analogous to those applied in describing a mountain and its flora and fauna, and proposing to regulate their lives with tools of nature conservation. Moreover, the discourse appears to have had similar ideological aims to regionalism. First, it served to bring the Hutsuls closer to the Poles, thanks to Polish “care” and “support,” and the influx of Polish tourists and the inflow of their money. Second, it served to bring the Poles closer to the Hutsuls, by “awakening in urban society a reverence and fondness for those manifestations of the folk culture which contain great values, not only aesthetic but also moral.”<sup>55</sup> Finally, the discourse was not devoid of a mercantile dimension and was able to reduce the local distinctiveness to an attractive object for sale.

## 5 Polish Support for Hutsul Farming and Preservation of Their Natural Environment

A subject slightly different from the protection of local distinctiveness, but also strongly present in the discourse on Eastern Carpathian nature conservation, was the declared need to support the Hutsuls in their farming and the preservation of their natural surroundings. While the issue of the protection of local distinctiveness bore the hallmarks of an anti-civilizing mission, the matter of the need for support was more progressive. The underlying source of this progressivism was that the Polish creators of the Eastern Carpathian nature conservation discourse distinguished between preserving the Hutsuls’ folk culture or, to use Gąsiorowski’s term, their ethnographic distinctiveness, and protecting the physical and moral condition of the Hutsuls, as well as the economic

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 122.



basis of their existence.<sup>56</sup> Therefore, the Polish authors excluded a series of phenomena of a social and cultural character from the semantic scope of the term of cultural landscape and its preservation. These phenomena included taking care of the Hutsuls' health and preventing its degeneration (especially through syphilis and alcoholism), making sure that they did not inflate prices for tourists but based them on the demand-supply relationship, and improving the Hutsuls' farming conditions in the highlands.

The last objective was of particular importance for the conservation of Gorgany and Chornohora's natural environment. In this respect, the Polish authors paid special attention to the melioration of the highlands, the protection of Hutsul objects of bare ownership (*własność tabularna*),<sup>57</sup> the promotion of Hutsul horse breeding, the increase of cattle breeding, the creation of Hutsul dairy companies, and, in addition, combating the plundering of the Eastern Carpathians' natural resources by the local population, especially forest clearing and poaching. All of these tasks were perceived by the Poles as challenges for the modern management of a certain area and its natural assets. As a whole they were referred to as "rationalization" of the Hutsuls' farming and economy so that they were more efficient and, simultaneously, less burdensome to nature.<sup>58</sup> Thus, in the spirit of modernity and rationalism, the Polish authors allowed the use of new, progressive means to achieve their reported aims—although they considered such aims counterproductive to the protection of local distinctiveness and the Hutsuls' folk culture, which was to remain unchanged.

However, one aspect was common to the protection of local distinctiveness and the improvement of Hutsul farming in line with nature conservation principles. Both projects were to be implemented by Poles—experts, authorities, and institutions—within the framework of the Polish state. Rationalization and protective measures, such as the above-mentioned melioration of the highlands or upgrades in animal breeding, were to be undertaken by "the administrative authorities of both state and local government,"<sup>59</sup> Gąsiorowski said. Similarly, setting up vocational schools for the Hutsuls—offering courses primarily in dairying and rational use of the highlands, aimed at those who did not engage in artistic professions—should have constituted the responsibility of the Polish state and Polish experts in the relevant fields. It was they (the Polish experts) who would duly consider how "to adapt these schools to today's conditions so that they correspond to their practical purpose."<sup>60</sup> Thus, although the discourse on support for Hutsul farming and preservation of their natural environment actualized the concepts of progressivism, modernity, and rationality, it re-

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56 [The talk by GĄSIOROWSKI] (as in footnote 43), p. 126.

57 Bare ownership implies the right that a person has over an asset, such as real estate, being its exclusive owner. However, the right to use it does not belong to this person, only to the person who has its usufruct.

58 Ibid., pp. 130, 147; GOETEL, *Parki narodowe w Polsce*, pp. 292–293.

59 [The talk by GĄSIOROWSKI] (as in footnote 43), p. 141.

60 Ibid., p. 147.

mained buried deep in Polish paternalism towards the ethnic minority, just as did the discourse on protection of local distinctiveness.

Such properties of the discourse were revealed by Ossendowski's travel essay *Huculszczyzna*. The author highly praised the "hard service on the borders (*rubieże*)" of Polish foresters, the "fiercest enemies of poachers, robbers and forest destroyers."<sup>61</sup> He also appreciated the Directorate of the State Forests and its staff for combating the highlands' "acidification" (i.e. the overgrowth of monk's-rhubarb (*Rumex alpinus*) and acid grasses), teaching the shepherds (*watahowie*) more effective methods of sheep and cattle grazing, and introducing a hygiene regime into the production of sheep's milk cheese (*bryndza*).<sup>62</sup> These salutary ventures were made possible because the institution of the State Forests purchased highlands from those who had previously extorted or dishonestly bought them from the Hutsul owners. Ossendowski did not hesitate to introduce an overtly antisemitic thread into his narrative and accused Jews living permanently or temporarily in the Eastern Carpathians of exploiting the Hutsuls, driving them into bankruptcy and seizing their property, especially land. Replicating antisemitic stereotypes and anti-Jewish prejudices that were strongly present in the dominant Polish discourse of the interwar period,<sup>63</sup> he claimed that Jews were greedy, got rich in a dishonest and even predatory way and sought the downfall of Christians, if not politically then economically. He raised the racist issue, increasingly pronounced in the dominant Polish discourse of the 1930s together with eugenicist arguments.<sup>64</sup> Namely, he expressed the opinion that the "Jews were spoiling everything in the Hutsul Region," from art and craft patterns<sup>65</sup> to "blood" because they added their own, "Semitic," "unfortunately non-Aryan" blood to "Christian" blood by entering into intimate relationships with the local population.<sup>66</sup> As in the case of the highlands' "acidification" and ineffective grazing, the cure for these alleged maladies was to be assistance from the Polish authorities and institutions, not only from the State Forests, but also from the Society of Friends of the Hutsul

61 OSSENDOWSKI, *Huculszczyzna*, p. 201.

62 *Ibid.*, pp. 58–59.

63 See, e.g.: OLAF BERGMANN: *Narodowa Demokracja a Żydzi 1918–1929* [National Democracy and the Jews 1918–1929], Poznań 2015; JERZY TOMASZEWSKI: *Żydzi w II Rzeczypospolitej* [Jews in the Second Polish Republic], ed. by ARTUR MARKOWSKI and SZYMON RUDNICKI, Warszawa 2016. The medieval origin of many antisemitic stereotypes and anti-Jewish prejudices present, among other places, in the interwar Polish discourse is indicated by: JOSHUA TRACHTENBERG: *The Devil and the Jews: The Medieval Conception of the Jew and Its Relation to Modern Anti-Semitism*, Philadelphia 1983.

64 On the racist and eugenic elements of the Polish antisemitic discourse, see: ALINA CAŁA: *Żyd—wróg odwieczny? Antysemityzm w Polsce i jego źródła* [The Jew—The Eternal Enemy? Antisemitism in Poland and Its Sources], Warszawa 2012, especially pp. 345–348.

65 OSSENDOWSKI, *Huculszczyzna*, p. 145.

66 *Ibid.*, p. 89.

Region and the Society of the Farmstead Gentry. The former body was a heritage organization set up in 1933, the latter an association running a large-scale project to repolonize the “Ruthenianized” gentry in the region. Active from the mid-1930s, it was officially established in 1938.<sup>67</sup> The activities of these bodies, according to the essay, “yielded good results right from the start, while at the same time inspiring interest and trust among the Hutsuls.”<sup>68</sup>

Ossendowski’s conclusions on Polish support for Hutsul farming and preservation of their natural surroundings were therefore analogous to Gąsiorowski’s findings on the responsibility of “the administrative authorities of both state and local government” for rationalization and protection measures in the region. The difference between the texts was marked only by their style of expression. The latter author used language with a scientific ambition and formulated cautious assumptions rather than exaggerations and speculations. He claimed that the aid for locals would have an “educative effect”: The “Hutsul would become more restrained and precautious about his future, while willing creditors would lose their desire to drag him into the matrix of debt from the start.”<sup>69</sup> The former author used language which was designed to arouse readers’ curiosity and emotional reactions. Therefore, he resorted to hyperboles, appealed to common, simplified imageries and maintained that the assistance of the Poles would raise the level of the Hutsuls’ “still extremely primitive living conditions” and stop the “Jewish invasion” in the mountains.<sup>70</sup>

Ossendowski’s essay was indeed able to arouse the curiosity and emotional reactions of readers, and thus interest them in Poles’ efforts to improve Hutsul farming and economy and adapt them to the needs of nature conservation. Literary works dealing with the topic attracted even more reader attention and involvement, and as a result, not only popularized knowledge of the issue, but also strengthened a certain vision of protecting the nature of the mountains and the mountains themselves. At least a few such works were written in the inter-war period and gained great popularity in the Second Polish Republic.

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67 See propaganda materials pertaining to the project: ROMAN HOROSZKIEWICZ: *Szlachta zaściankowa na ziemiach wschodnich* [The Farmstead Gentry in the Eastern Lands], Warszawa—Pińsk 1936; WŁADYSŁAW PULNAROWICZ: *Rycerstwo polskie Podkarpacia (dawne dzieje i obecne obowiązki szlachty zagrodowej na Podkarpaciu)* [The Polish Knighthood of the Podkarpacie Region (Past History and Present Duties of the Farmstead Gentry in the Podkarpacie Region)], Przemyśl 1937; STANISŁAW JASTRZĘBSKI: *Kim jesteśmy? O szlachcie zagrodowej w Małopolsce Wschodniej* [Who Are We? On the Farmstead Gentry in Eastern Lesser Poland], Przemyśl 1939. For further investigation of the issue, see: WALDEMAR PARUCH: *Mniejszości narodowe w myśli politycznej obozu piłsudczykowski (1935–1939)* [National Minorities in the Political Thought of the Piłsudski Circle (1935–1939)], in: JACEK ZIEMOWIT PIETRAŚ, ANDRZEJ CZARNOCKI (eds.): *Polityka narodowościowa państw Europy Środkowowschodniej*, Lublin 1993, pp. 86–103, here especially pp. 99–100.

68 OSSENDOWSKI, *Huculszczyzna*, p. 59.

69 [The talk by GĄSIOROWSKI] (as in footnote 43), p. 130.

70 OSSENDOWSKI, *Huculszczyzna*, pp. 61, 65.

First among these works were texts by Ossendowski himself. His short story for young people depicted a Polish teenager who helps his friend, a sixteen-year-old Hutsul, to break away from poaching, into which he has been drawn by unspecified perpetrators.<sup>71</sup> In the 1937 novel *Postrach gór* (The Terror of the Mountains), the writer developed a similar theme but in a much more complex form. The main protagonist of the work is a descendant of the farmstead gentry which settled in Żabie (today Ukr. Verkhovyna) in the fifteenth century, “was always able to coexist with the Hutsuls, in good times and bad times, without strife or dispute”<sup>72</sup> and at the same time managed to fully preserve its Polish identity. Jerzy is a “local man”<sup>73</sup> (*swój człowiek*) to the Hutsuls and “an excellent soldier and a conscious citizen of the Polish state.”<sup>74</sup> Thus, he himself demonstrates Ossendowski’s great concern, that the Hutsul and Polish elements should be able to live in perfect harmony. When Jerzy works as a forester in the Eastern Carpathians, he helps two Hutsuls to give up poaching and become gamekeepers. They gratefully prove to be excellent guardians of the “Polish” forest and wildlife. In this work, however, unlike in the aforementioned short story, Ossendowski made it clear who is leading the Hutsuls astray—the Jews and Ukrainians (referred to by the author as “Ruthenians”). The communist Jews use the Hutsuls for their propaganda purposes and the Ukrainians buy up their land and spread a “hostile”—in other words national—ideology among them. By creating such a literary vision, Ossendowski updated another antisemitic stereotype that was popular in the Polish discourse<sup>75</sup> and applied it to the Hutsul region. At the same time, he touched upon a subject very rarely presented in the interwar Polish literary fiction, namely the spread of Ukrainian national influence in the area.

The second literary work dealing with the topic of Poles helping to farm and preserve the natural environment in the Hutsul Region was the aforementioned novel *Wilczur z Prohyby* by the Kozłowskis. As has been said, the work features a team of Polish skiers and a group of Hutsuls who all take part together in a ski march along the Hutsul Route of the Second Brigade of the Polish Legions, commemorating the bravery of the Polish Legionnaires and the Polish-Hutsul cooperation in the winter of 1914/15. The parallel between the military actions of the Legionnaires and the March<sup>76</sup> is strengthened by the theme of cooperation between the Polish skiers and the Hutsuls in the field of nature protection: the sportsmen, together with the local shepherds, set off into

71 F[ERDYNAND] ANTONI OSSENDOWSKI: Jak Maniek kłusownika unieszkodliwił [How Maniek Made a Poacher Harmless], in: *Płomyk* (1935), 8, pp. 205–212.

72 F[ERDYNAND] ANTONI OSSENDOWSKI: *Postrach gór* (Huculszczyzna), 2nd ed., Dziekanów Leśny 2012 [1937], p. 20.

73 *Ibid.*, p. 92.

74 *Ibid.*, p. 122.

75 On the stereotype of the communist Jew see, e.g.: BERGMANN, pp. 92–95, 148–150, 355–371.

76 See: RYTARDOWIE, pp. 44–46.

the Chornohora forest to get rid of a dangerous poacher and a wolfhound that is biting sheep and wild animals to death. Thanks to that mission, the sporting conquest of Chornohora by the Poles begins to combine an offensive dimension with a protective value. The joint conclusion of the Polish and Hutsul protagonists, that “all the wars are over” and “won,”<sup>77</sup> suggests that one’s “own” region and country not only have to be conquered by means of weapons (in the realities of war) or muscle power (in the realities of sporting competitions). They also have to be protected from dangers that threaten their peaceful existence and natural environment.

A third literary work addressing the issues of Polish aid and nature conservation in the Hutsul region was the novel *Duch Czarnohory* (Spirit of Chornohora) by Józef Bieniasz, a Polish writer and journalist known for his engagement in interwar nationalist and environmentalist discourses, published in 1936. This is the story of a small chemical factory which processes mountain pine into essential oil “at the foot of Spyci [Shpytsi]<sup>78</sup> on the Marishevskia [highland—J.W.].”<sup>79</sup> Undoubtedly, the prototype for this factory was the above-mentioned Howerla factory, first destroyed by debris and mudslide in 1927, rebuilt in 1930/31, and finally destroyed by heavy snow in 1931. The author seemed to have a problem unambiguously depicting and judging the actions of the novel’s main character, the owner and director of the factory. Paweł Boroniecki is a highly qualified engineer, a pioneer of industry in Chornohora and someone “with capital.”<sup>80</sup> He is also an idealist, striving for the simultaneous development and preservation of the region so that it can be integrated with the rest of the well-managed Polish state while retaining its natural beauty. Therefore, the protagonist cares for the Hutsuls, gives them well-paid jobs, discourages them from grubbing and poaching, and teaches them how to use the Chornohora forest without destroying it. In the words of the Polish nature conservationists, he encourages the local people to abandon plundering and to replace it by rational farming, as well as thoughtful and planned use of the region’s natural resources. Ultimately, however, he loses the factory, which suffers the same fate as the real Howerla. The author’s intention seems to be to demonstrate that the intangible value of nature is absolute, and that the demands that nature conservation places on technology and the economy can go so far as to dispense with any signs of their activity.<sup>81</sup>

The essays and literary works presenting the theme of Polish support for the Hutsuls as an element of Eastern Carpathian nature conservation showed in many ways that the discourse on the topic—with its progressive, rationalist and modern accents, and at the same time within the frame of Polish paternalism—

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77 Ibid., p. 211.

78 A peak located in the Chornohora range of the Eastern Carpathians.

79 JÓZEF BIENIASZ: *Duch Czarnohory. Powieść* [Chornohora’s Spirit: A Novel], Lwów 1936, p. 7.

80 Ibid., p. 52.

81 See: *ibid.*, p. 310. See also the argument by: JASIEŃSKI, p. 51.

was of interest to a wide range of readers in interwar Poland. The Polish authors found the discourse in question interesting and captivating enough to refer to it in texts aimed at a diverse public, including children, adolescents and lovers of adventure and romance novels. In the other direction, this discourse, presented using an accessible form of expression that did not exceed the reading expectations of Polish literary audiences,<sup>82</sup> aroused their curiosity. What is more, it gave them images and information about the Eastern Carpathians that may have taken a heavily popularized form, but which effectively consolidated knowledge of the mountains and their protection that was authorized by the Polish regional and state centers of power.

## 6 Education Related to Eastern Carpathian Nature Conservation

Yet another issue invariably included in the Eastern Carpathian nature conservation discourse was education. The creators of this discourse in the Second Polish Republic unanimously believed that effective nature conservation was not possible without proper education. Only this could allow the idea of nature conservation to permeate the broad masses of various social strata and contribute to the formation of a new society, for which the protection of the natural environment would not be an imposed necessity but an internalized need. Such a society, as described by Aleksander Kozikowski, a Polish biologist, entomologist, and educator, should “unconditionally” take care to preserve the natural beauty of the Eastern Carpathians, “so rare in Europe today.” Kozikowski, associated with the Lviv Polytechnic and a strong advocate of nature education in schools, referred to it as a “society aware of its intentions.”<sup>83</sup> This society, in the view of other Polish authors, was to consist primarily of Poles. As Kozikowski emphasized, it would be a “disgrace” for the Poles and “for the whole of Poland if we did not manage to preserve this unique natural monument for posterity.”<sup>84</sup> However, the authors pointed out that in addition to educating the Polish forest guards, state police, and the broad Polish public, the Hutsul people should also be made aware of the value of their natural and cultural landscape. Gąsiorowski expressed the issue in the following way. In the field of protection of Eastern Carpathian nature, and above all, in the field of protection of Hutsul distinctiveness, “the native himself [*tubylca*, properly: *tubelec*] should be active as well. He should get to know the beauty of his ethnographic specificity and, having fallen in love with it, protect it as his treasure.”<sup>85</sup> Thus, while nature conservation in its various manifestations was mainly intended to be an educational subject for Poles, it could not be com-

82 See: HANS ROBERT JAUSS: Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory, in: *New Literary History* 2 (1970), 1, pp. 7–37.

83 [The talk by ALEKSANDER KOZIKOWSKI], in: SZAFER, *Skarby przyrody*, p. 38.

84 *Ibid.*, p. 45.

85 [The talk by GAŚSIOROWSKI] (as in footnote 43), pp. 140–141.

pletely indifferent to the Hutsuls, otherwise—some authors argued—it would meet with resistance from them, for example when it came to buying land for reserves and national parks.<sup>86</sup>

The Polish defenders of the Eastern Carpathian natural environment emphasized that effective education in nature conservation had to be the responsibility of the Polish state, as the state had the most appropriate means at its disposal—not only laws, but also institutions, primarily the institution of public school. The most complete and relatively early work (published in 1925) arguing the necessity of introducing nature conservation into school education was by Marian Sokołowski, a botanist, forester, mountaineer, and nature conservation activist, and also a former officer of the Polish Legions. In this work, he considered different ways of teaching conservation both as part of other subjects and as a separate course.<sup>87</sup> Recognizing the importance of his proposals, the Board of Supervisors of the Cracow School District disseminated Sokołowski's brochure together with a circular dated 25 February 1926, instructing the teaching staff to familiarize themselves with the thesis and recommending that “an active love of nature should be fostered” not only in teacher training colleges (*seminaria nauczycielskie*) and secondary schools but also in county schools.<sup>88</sup> Adam Wodiczko, a biologist, botanist, and pioneer of nature protection in Poland associated with the University of Poznań, explored how these concepts could be applied to teaching the Eastern Carpathians' nature conservation. He comprehensively discussed these issues in his book *Skarby przyrody i ich ochrona*.<sup>89</sup> I will return to Wodiczko's findings below.

In addition to public schools, the Polish authors emphasized the role of cultural and even religious institutions in educating the masses on nature conservation. During the conference in Stanisławów, Gąsiorowski put forward the idea of creating a Hutsul museum. As the author argued, such an institution would be of great informational and cognitive value not only to Polish tourists, but also to the indigenous inhabitants of Gorgany and Chornohora because “the Hutsuls would find in it [...] an excellent opportunity to become acquainted with the masterpieces of their own masters and the excitement of imitating them.”<sup>90</sup> In 1934 a project for such a museum was drawn up, and construction

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86 [The talk by SZYMON WIERDAK], in: SZAFER, *Skarby przyrody*, p. 36; [the talk by KOZIKOWSKI] (as in footnote 82), p. 44; [the statement of GOETEL in the discussion], *ibid.*, p. 45.

87 MARJAN SOKOŁOWSKI: O wprowadzeniu ochrony przyrody do nauczania szkolnego [On Introducing Nature Conservation into School Teaching], in: *Ochrona Przyrody* 5 (1925), pp. 3–20.

88 Okólnik Kuratorjum Szkolnego w Krakowie w sprawie wprowadzenia ochrony przyrody do nauczania szkolnego [Circular of the School Board of Supervisors in Cracow on the Introduction of Nature Conservation into School Teaching], in: *Ochrona Przyrody* 6 (1926), p. 113.

89 ADAM WODICZKO: *Ochrona przyrody w szkole* [Nature Conservation at School], in: SZAFER, *Skarby przyrody*, pp. 318–334.

90 [The talk by GĄSIOROWSKI] (as in footnote 43), p. 142.

work began in Żabie a year later. Thanks to the involvement of many circles, including state institutions, scientific associations, the Society of Friends of the Hutsul Region (especially the Executive Committee member Norbert Okołowicz) and, in particular, Żabie's mayor, the Hutsul politician Petro Shekeryk-Donykiv, the completed Hutsul Museum building was ceremonially opened on 18 February 1938.<sup>91</sup> Gąsiorowski also believed that in making the Hutsul people aware of the importance of nature and their folk culture, the role of the Greek Catholic Church could not have been overestimated. Just as public schools used textbooks to instil love of the Eastern Carpathian natural and cultural landscape, the Church was to use "pastoral instructions," i.e. sermons that had to be appropriately related to nature preservation, for the same purposes.<sup>92</sup>

Moreover, the Polish authors drew attention to the role of what they called "propaganda" in spreading the idea of protecting Eastern Carpathian nature and knowledge of its practical implementation. By "propaganda" they meant various undertakings and events of a popularizing, cultural, heritage, tourist, sporting, and mixed character. Pawlikowski listed among them "word and print [*słowo i druk*], lectures, pamphlets, articles in the press, exhibitions and shows, cinema, radio, leaflets and postcards, celebrations such as a 'festival of trees' and, finally, the establishment of associations."<sup>93</sup>

The importance of folk entertainments, festivals, and public holidays for disseminating the concept of Eastern Carpathian nature conservation—to the visitors from outside the region rather than to the indigenous population—was stressed by other conservationists as well, notably Fischer. Their visions were put into practice in the form of the Hutsul Festival organized annually from June 1933. The festivities included presentations of Hutsul customs, arts, and crafts, mountain excursions, horseback rides, fairs with Hutsul products, shooting competitions, illumination of the mountain peaks, and many other attractions. By the second festival in 1934 the celebrations were fairly spectacular, "with the participation of large crowds of Hutsul people, tourists and summer visitors."<sup>94</sup> The popularity of the event among the latter two groups was boosted by discounts of up to 70 percent given to tourists travelling to Worochta (Ukr. Vorokhta). Fischer emphasized the role that the "tenth muse"<sup>95</sup> could play in promoting nature conservation. He proposed the making of an "ethnographic scientific film to increase the presence of tourists" concerned

91 For further information, see: ŁUKASZ QUIRINI-POPLAWSKI: Muzeum Huculskie w Żabie: Historia powstania, funkcjonowanie, współczesne próby reaktywacji [The Hutsul Museum in Żabie: The History of Its Establishment, Functioning, Contemporary Attempts at Its Reactivation], in: *Plaj* 36 (2009), pp. 111–131.

92 [The talk by GĄSIOROWSKI] (as in footnote 43), p. 142.

93 PAWLIKOWSKI, p. 11.

94 W[ITOLD] MIL[EWSKI]: Święto Huculczyzny [The Hutsul Festival], in: *Wierchy* 12 (1934), p. 204.

95 See the first monograph on the art of film in Poland and one of the first in the world: KAROL IRZYKOWSKI: *Dziesiąta muza: Zagadnienia estetyczne kina* [The Tenth Muse: Aesthetic Issues of Cinema], Kraków 1924.



about the state of the natural environment in the Eastern Carpathians.<sup>96</sup> Interestingly, such a film was indeed made. In 1934, the Polish writer, director, and actor, Ireneusz Plater Zyberk, produced *Zew Trombity* (The Call of the Trombita), the “first Polish artistic medium-length movie.”<sup>97</sup> According to a professional journal, “it was a film documentary from the Hutsul Region, illustrating all the beauty and exotic charm of this exceptionally stunning corner of Poland with its landscape, folklore and customs, legends, rituals etc. of the Hutsul people.”<sup>98</sup>

Thus, the work did not meet the criteria of science: in one of the reviews it was called “ethnographic,” but the term was put in quotation marks.<sup>99</sup> Instead, however, it promoted the “primordial” natural landscape and the “original” cultural landscape of Gorgany and Chornohora. Moreover, it did this very effectively. In the mid-1930s, *Zew trombity* was shown before the main movie in numerous sound cinema theaters in the Second Polish Republic and, according to the same review, “was able to rival” the highlight of an artistic program.<sup>100</sup> It is worth adding that this must not have been easy, given that Zyberk’s movie often preceded catchy titles and films. For instance, in the Ton cinema in Łódź it preceded “A powerful erotic drama of an innocent girl, an experienced woman and a real man! *Cienie Paryża* (Shadows of Paris)”<sup>101</sup> and in the Urania cinema, also in Łódź, “A powerful and horrific film to set the heart pounding. The tragic struggles of people surrounded by bands of Arabs [...] *Patrol na pustyni* (Patrol in the Desert).”<sup>102</sup> In both cases, everything—from the graphic form of the modernist posters (highlighting *Cienie Paryża* and *Patrol na pustyni* in the typeface and relegating *Zew trombity*) to the screening time—favored the main films (see fig. 3). Despite this fact, Zyberk’s movie was considered by critics to be fully competitive with them.

96 [The talk by FISCHER] (as in footnote 42), p. 122.

97 *Zew Trombity* [The Call of the Trombita], in: *Świat Filmu* (1935), 4, p. 7. See also: K[AROL] F[ORD]: *Zew Trembity: Film o Huculszczyźnie* [The Call of the Trombita: A Film about the Hutsul Region], in: *Kino 5* (1934), 52, p. 3; WAN[DA] KAL[INOWSKA]: *Zew Trombity* [The Call of the Trombita], in: *Kino 6* (1935), 13, p. 14. See also: STEFANIA ZAHORSKA: *Kronika filmowa: Zew trombity* [Film Chronicle: The Call of the Trombita], in: *Wiadomości Literackie* (1935), 13 (593), p. 9. No copy seems to have survived, and the film is known only from enthusiastic reviews and a few publicity shots.

98 Co piszą wytwórnice i biura wynajmu: Aner-Film [What the Studios and Rental Agencies Are Writing: Aner-Film], in: *Świat Filmu* (1935), 4, p. 17.

99 *Zew trombity: Wesola wdówka* [The Call of the Trombita: The Merry Widow], in: *Wieczór Warszawski* 8 (1935), 69, p. 4.

100 Ibid.

101 Poster from the Sound Cinema-Theater “Ton” in Łódź from the 1930s, in: Biblioteka Narodowa w Warszawie [National Library in Warsaw], Druki ulotne [Department of Ephemeral Prints] (BN), ref. no DŻS XIXA 10a1.

102 Poster from the Sound Cinema-Theater “Urania” in Łódź from the 1930s, in: Krajowe Repozytorium Obiektów Nauki i Kultury, <https://kronika.gov.pl/obiekt/16252798> (2024-01-12).



Fig. 3: A 1930s poster from the Sound Cinema Theater “Ton” in Łódź, announcing: “Today and the days to come. A powerful erotic drama of an innocent girl, an experienced woman and a real man! *Shadows of Paris, The Call of the Trombita*.” National Library in Warsaw, public domain

The link between nature conservation in the Eastern Carpathians and various forms of education on the topic is even more striking if we consider what the content of the education in question was proposed, i.e. what was to be conveyed to the audience and for what reason.

Above all, the Polish authors combined the protection of nature with an affective attachment to the “native country.” Interestingly, they understood the “native country” not only in broad, but also fluid terms, as for example Gąsiorowski, who considered it a “given region, neighborhood or locality in small areas” but also, on the large scale, the entire Polish state.<sup>103</sup> Pawlikowski argued that “fusion with nature takes on even more concrete features in the form of fusion with one’s own homeland [*ziemia rodzinna*]. The love of the fatherland [*ojczyzna*—the noblest [feeling], because [it is] selfless, [made] of social bonds—necessarily includes the love of the native land [*ziemia ojczysta*].”<sup>104</sup> Wodiczko formulated these complex relationships even more bluntly. He claimed that due to the “skillful” preservation of nature, the national culture had developed, as well as “love” of one’s own land [*własna ziemia*] and native country [*kraj rodzinny*].<sup>105</sup> Then his thought continues as follows:

103 [The talk by GĄSIOROWSKI] (as in footnote 43), p. 126.

104 PAWLIKOWSKI, p. 15.

105 WODICZKO, p. 322.

“Through love and protection of our native nature [*przyroda ojczysta*]<sup>106</sup>—to love of the Fatherland [*Ojczyzna*]. The idea of protecting nature must permeate the widest layers of society if it is to achieve its aims—for the good of the whole Nation. We have seen the paths that lead to the formation of the right attitude of society towards nature, towards the land on which our nation has lived and on which its thousand-year history has developed. Primeval nature presents many values for a cultured man, there are various reasons for its protection, but for the Polish teacher the educational and patriotic aspect is particularly important. There is no love of the fatherland without love and protection of our native nature. By teaching people to love and respect nature we propagate love of the fatherland.”<sup>106</sup>

The rhetoric of the above quotations, in which there are fairly free transitions between different terms describing the “native country,” indicates that the authors saw the relationships between these terms as causal. From their perspective, a respectful and protective attitude towards nature entailed an emotional affection for a certain region—a “private homeland,” as the Polish sociologist, Stanisław Ossowski, suggested it be named—and this affection, in turn, resulted in an attachment to the whole country, understood as a state, Fatherland or “ideological homeland.”<sup>107</sup> Thus, the goal of education in nature conservation was not only to win over the broadest strata of society to the idea of conservation. It was also to use the sensitization to nature for what Wodiczko called the “propagation of native values,”<sup>108</sup> and what could be called a patriotic upbringing, especially as the term “patriotism” appeared in his article. In the case of the Eastern Carpathians, winning over the masses and ensuring a patriotic upbringing by teaching nature conservation were to involve both the Poles and the Hutsuls. The “minds and hearts” of both groups—this is Wodiczko’s metaphor—had to be “bound” to the protection of nature in order to deepen their ties to the land:<sup>109</sup> the Eastern Carpathians and Poland as a whole; the ties of the Poles mainly to the Carpathians, and the ties of the Hutsuls mainly to Poland.

Typical justifications for the Eastern Carpathian nature conservation teaching, as understood in the manner analyzed above, included statements that these mountain ranges were “ours,” “Polish,” that they constituted a “national asset” and were the “property of the whole nation.” Such words were explicitly stated

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106 Ibid., p. 334.

107 See: STANISŁAW OSSOWSKI: Analiza socjologiczna pojęcia ojczyzna [Sociological Analysis of the Concept of Homeland], in: *Myśl Współczesna: Czasopismo Naukowe* 2 (1946), pp. 154–175.

108 WODICZKO, p. 319.

109 See: *ibid.*



Fig. 4: Postcard published by the Ministry of Communications in the 1930s, depicting the tourist poster “Polska // na Huculszczyźnie” by Władysław Jaroński. From the author’s collection

in the articles and talks by Smoleński,<sup>110</sup> Szafer,<sup>111</sup> Goetel,<sup>112</sup> Wierdak,<sup>113</sup> Wacław Majewski<sup>114</sup> (a Polish doctor of medicine, mountaineer, sports and tourist activist), and many others. A very important part of the Eastern Carpathian nature conservation discourse was its emphasis on the “ourness” or “Polishness” of Gorgany and Chornohora and the highlighting of the nation, which from the Polish authors’ perspective was the Polish nation, not society, which had a multinational character in interwar Poland. These strategies enabled smooth transitions between different terms defining “native country” and a seamless extension of nature conservation teaching to patriotic upbringing. They also revealed the proper meaning of the regionalist elements that resounded in this concept of teaching and upbringing—a meaning related to the alignment of the Eastern Carpathians with the interests of the Second Polish Republic. According to the concept in question, *Huculszczyzna* constituted a unique natural and cultural region in need of protection, but invariably under Polish leadership and authority. *Huculszczyzna*, as Goetel put it, was “on Polish soil,”<sup>115</sup> in Poland. “Poland” was “in Huculszczyzna,”<sup>116</sup> as was proclaimed by the slogan on a well-known tourist poster by Władysław Jaroński (Fig. 4), a Polish painter dealing mainly with Hutsul, Podhale, and Tatra themes.

This ideologization of education regarding Eastern Carpathian nature protection explains why—with the exception of university teaching—it was suggested that it be taught not separately, but as part of various lessons on Poland: “in lectures on knowledge about Poland [*wiedza o Polsce*], Polish nature, geography, history and language.”<sup>117</sup> Humanities courses were considered to be particularly helpful in this respect, since “nature conservation as a cultural trend often goes beyond the scope of natural sciences themselves,”<sup>118</sup> as Wodiczko wrote. Such a combination of educational content related to both Polish history and present-day life and the protection of the Eastern Carpathians’ natural surroundings was met with a lively response from pupils, not only Polish but also Hutsul ones. The Polish authors of the nature conservation discourse, especially the literary authors, were very optimistic in this regard. In his novel *Postrach gór*, Ossendowski created a picture of a Polish public school in the Hutsul village of Mygla. The institution located “right by the forest,” is new, fresh, and

110 SMOLEŃSKI, *Ochrona krajobrazu*, p. 48.

111 SZAFER, *O parkach narodowych*, p. 79.

112 GOETEL, *Parki narodowe w Polsce*, p. 287; [The talk by GOETEL] (as in footnote 23), p. 27.

113 [The talk by WIERDAK] (as in footnote 85), p. 37.

114 [The talk by WACŁAW MAJEWSKI], in: SZAFER, *Skarby przyrody*, p. 52.

115 [The talk by GOETEL] (as in footnote 23), p. 27.

116 *Polska // na Huculszczyźnie* [...], a tourist poster in the series *Polska* (in Polish, French, English, and German) with a winter scene in front of a Greek Catholic church, published by the Ministry of Communications, Warszawa, 1930s, in: BN, ref. no DŹS XVIII A 2.

117 WODICZKO, p. 323.

118 *Ibid.*, p. 327.

bright, and shines with “big windows.”<sup>119</sup> The newness is personified by the main protagonist’s wife, a Polish teacher, who obligatorily wears a white dress, like an angel welcoming into her pedagogical kingdom the Hutsul adepts of the Polish language and culture. Under her tutelage, children and teenagers develop a sensitivity to the Eastern Carpathian nature and learn about the past, when “a battalion of Hutsul volunteers fought bravely, together with the entire Iron Carpathian Brigade,”<sup>120</sup> against Russians. In this way, the young highlanders, Hutsul and Polish, establish ties with the land. Even if this literary vision was idealistic, it was not too far from the prospects that the Polish authors saw for appropriately patriotically charged education on nature conservation in Gorgany and Chornohora.

## 7 Conclusions

As was mentioned at the beginning of the article, the Polish nature conservation movement had its undeniable achievements in the Eastern Carpathians during the interwar period. Throughout the epoch, there was an ongoing discussion on the significance and protection of animate and inanimate nature, as well as the “highlanders’ customs” (*góralczyzna*)<sup>121</sup> in Gorgany and Chornohora. The term “discussion” reflects an abundance of voices present in the public sphere of the Second Polish Republic, in various forms—from academic articles to literary works—which all together constituted the Eastern Carpathians’ nature conservation discourse and assigned a new prominent position to its central subject. The discourse in question had multiple aims. It established an official body of knowledge about the region of its interest and sought to give nature protection scientific status. Simultaneously, it had an interventionist character, seeking to spread conservation ideas among the masses and engender preservationist attitudes. As a result, within the Eastern Carpathians’ nature conservation discourse basic concepts were defined, conservation methods and tools were identified, their practical application was determined, and the methodology of teaching nature protection was discussed. However, despite this significant development, the discourse fell into certain inconsistencies and rhetorical traps.

Two paragraphs above, I quoted Wodiczko’s remark that “nature conservation as a cultural trend often goes beyond the scope of the natural sciences themselves.” The author’s objections to nature preservation reflected thinking from before the anti-positivist turn, i.e. from before the 1880s, when the fields of knowledge of topics and methods that were considered to fit the criteria of exact sciences were valued, and the scientific validity of fields considered to fall

119 OSSENDOWSKI, *Postrach gór*, p. 259.

120 *Ibid.*, p. 216.

121 [The talk by GAŚSIOROWSKI] (as in footnote 43), p. 149.

outside these criteria was undermined.<sup>122</sup> By the early 1930s, this view had undergone a profound revision. However, Wodiczko's doubts are not without merit, as they draw the interpreter's attention to an important issue. Namely, they indicate that the analyzed discourse, leaning towards tourist, social, cultural and pedagogical issues, could be and, in fact, was subjected to a certain ideologization (which does not mean that it lost its value, including scientific value).

Emphasizing the mutual influence of nature protection and tourism in the Eastern Carpathians introduced into the nature conservation discourse issues related to the influx of financial resources into the Hutsul region, the wider opening of the region to Polish tourists and the adaption of it to their expectations. By treating the protection of local distinctiveness as an integral part of the Eastern Carpathians' nature protection, the conservation discourse took on meanings that evoked associations with an anti-civilizing mission and Polish paternalism towards the ethnic minority. Paternalistic meanings also emerged in this discourse along with the topic of supporting the Hutsuls in farming and preserving their natural surroundings. This theme, however, introduced progressive, rationalist and modern accents into the statements on nature conservation, as opposed to the theme of the protection of local distinctiveness. Finally, the extension of nature conservation to education in this area and the linking of this education to patriotic upbringing resulted in a smooth transition of the Eastern Carpathians' nature conservation discourse into the promotion of affective attitude towards the "native country," i.e. both the "private"—Hutsul—"homeland," as well as the Polish fatherland.

The Polish creators of the analyzed discourse often refused to admit that their statements had ideological features. They were reluctant to "shift the center of gravity [of their texts] to issues of an economic and political character,"<sup>123</sup> as regionalists did in their opinion. However, the entanglement of the Eastern Carpathian nature conservation discourse with touristic, cultural, social and pedagogical matters could have no other consequence than the introduction of "issues of an economic and political character" into this discourse. That entanglement transformed the problems of preservation of rock formations, forests and highlands and the fight against clearing and poaching into issues that were not ideologically indifferent. It created a field in which the topic of nature protection smoothly transitioned into the thread of rapprochement of the Eastern Carpathians with the lowland parts of Poland and the Hutsuls (as loyal and grateful co-citizens) with the Poles (as enthusiasts of the region). In short, the entanglement in question contributed to the appropriation of Gorgany and Chornohora for the Polish nation and the Polish state. In the Eastern Carpa-

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122 See, e.g.: BOGDAN SUCHODOLSKI: *Przebudowa podstaw nauk humanistycznych* [Reconstructing the Foundations of the Humanities], Lwów 1928. For further investigation of the anti-positivist turn on the Polish ground, see, e.g.: DANUTA ULICKA: *Przełom antypozytywistyczny* [The Anti-Positivist Turn], in: DANUTA ULICKA (ed.): *Literatura, teoria, metodologia*, Warszawa 2001, pp. 39–60.

123 PAWLIKOWSKI, p. 13.

thians' nature conservation discourse, shaped in such a way, knowledge about the mountains' protection became inextricably intertwined with manifestations of the Polish supervision and power over the Hutsul Region.

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