

University College London
School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies

**Is there a credible case for
Rusyn National Self-Determination in Ukraine?**

A critical analysis of a self-declared ethnic minority's attempt
to challenge the Ukrainian ethnonation-building project

Dissertation submitted for the MA Degree by

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Abstract

At the start of the twenty-first century the issue of national self-determination remains highly topical. In 2008 alone, three of the most prominent news stories have focused on questions revolving around the self-determining status of Kosovars, Tibetans and South Ossetians. Without being subjected to analysis, however, nationalist claims cannot be assumed to represent widespread ethnonational sentiment and so not all appeals to national self-determination are equal.

One self-declared stateless people in Eastern Central Europe which receives little mainstream attention is the Carpatho-Rusyn community. However, amongst self-determination movements, the Carpatho-Rusyn project is controversial because it represents an unusual attempt by regional political and academic elites to establish an ethnonational identity which conflicts with the identity of an already-existing national state: Ukraine.

The essay begins by reviewing Carpatho-Rusyn nation-building activity from 1989-2008 in an attempt to establish whether the Carpatho-Rusyn nation-building movement in Ukraine is driven primarily by ethnonational sentiment or by territorial ambition. The essay then examines why Ukrainophiles might regard Rusynophilism outdated and invalid and why Rusyn ethnonational sentiment might have persisted in the region nevertheless. Thirdly, the essay examines the origins and century-long development of Rusynophile and Ukrainophile orientations in the Carpathian region.

The essay draws the conclusion that, where, conventionally, an individual or community “belongs” to only one ethnonationality, Rusyns will continue to remain *de facto* simultaneous subjects of two ethnonational identity projects and proposes that the East Slavic community-continuum across the Carpathians can best be categorised as a dual identity population continuum, . This renders Rusyns in Ukrainian Transcarpathia a semi-peripheral ethnic group, at once a peripheral ethnic minority and part of the titular population of the Ukrainian state.

Finally the essay examines if there can be any autonomous arrangements or even recognition for a community which is internally divided over whether it constitutes a peripheral ethnic minority or not. The essay considers what form of recognition and what forms of self-determination might be appropriate for the semi-peripheral Carpatho-Rusyns in Ukraine's *Zakarpatska oblast'*.

Is there a credible case for Rusyn National Self-Determination in Ukraine?

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| | |
|--|------|
| Introduction | p.5 |
| The Carpatho-Rusyn Question in Ukraine | p.5 |
| Four types of Nation-Building Project | p.6 |
| | |
| PART I : Primarily an Ethnic... or a Territorial Question? | p.13 |
| 1.1 The political backdrop: Carpatho-Rusyn activity 1989-2008 | p.13 |
| Period of Organisation (1989-1992) | p.14 |
| Period of Mobilisation (1993-1999) | p.17 |
| Period of Political Engagement (1999-2007) | p.18 |
| Period of Political Assertiveness (2007-Present) | p.21 |
| | |
| 1.2 Carpatho-Rusyn political activity in <i>Zakarpattya</i> and surrounding states: an analysis | p.22 |
| | |
| PART II : The Carpatho-Rusyn Question | p.25 |
| 2.1 Why the idea of a “Fourth East Slavic Nationality” appears implausible | p.26 |
| Issue 1: Historically, “Rusyn” is the appellation of a faith-community, not an ethnonation | p.27 |
| Issue 2: Many former Carpathian East Slavic bids for National Self-Determination were Ukrainophile | p.28 |
| Issue 3: Rusynophile sentiment appears weaker within <i>Zakarpatska oblast'</i> than elsewhere | p.31 |
| Issue 4: The Ukrainophile orientation persists across the Carpathians | p.33 |
| Issue 5: The Carpathian East Slavic community-continuum is ethnographically diverse | p.34 |
| Issue 6: Few academics support the contention that Carpatho-Rusyn is an ethnonational identity | p.35 |

| | |
|--|------|
| 2.2 Why the idea of a Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonation persists | p.36 |
| Issue 1: Carpathian East Slavs cannot share in Ukraine's Golden Age Myths | p.37 |
| Issue 2: The Carpatho-Rusyn national idea has remained resonant | p.40 |
| Issue 3: The Carpatho-Rusyn diaspora succeeded in winning recognition from the Atlantic Powers | p.40 |
| Issue 4: Carpatho-Rusyns have secured recognition across Central Europe | p.42 |
| Issue 5: Carpatho-Rusyns now have their own codified literary languages | p.42 |
| | |
| 2.3 Finding the roots of the Rusynophile Orientation | p.43 |
| The origins of the Carpatho-Rusyn National Idea | p.44 |
| The survival of the Carpatho-Rusyn National Idea | p.49 |
| | |
| 2.4 A third perspective: dual ethnonational identity | p.52 |
| | |
| 2.5 Summary of Analysis of the Carpatho-Rusyn Question | p.58 |
| | |
| PART III : The Question of National Self-Determination | p.59 |
| 3.1 Reviewing the case for Ukraine's recognition of a Rusyn ethnic minority | p.61 |
| 3.2 Reviewing the case for Carpatho-Rusyn territorial autonomy in Ukraine | p.64 |
| 3.3 Considering less conventional implementations of autonomy | p.67 |
| | |
| Conclusions | p.72 |
| | |
| Bibliography | p.75 |

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Throughout the twentieth century, every country that began its rule in Transcarpathia felt obliged to recognize the Rusyn factor and to propose granting autonomy to the region based on the general principle of national self-determination for the region's most numerous indigenous people, the Rusyns. [...] the region exists as a distinct territory because it is inhabited by Rusyns who have a right to some form of self-rule. - Paul Robert Magocsi, 1998¹

Introduction

The Carpatho-Rusyn Question in Ukraine

The principle of National Self-Determination² contends that communities with national identities may rightfully determine their own affairs without being wholly subordinate to an external administration.

But when does an ethnographically idiosyncratic regional community qualify as a nation? Despite extensive advocacy activity in the last twenty years in both the Carpathian homeland and in North America, the East Slavs of the Carpathian mountains (stretching across Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine, Hungary and Romania) have failed to comprehensively establish to an external audience - or even agree overwhelmingly amongst themselves - that they constitute a Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonation, distinct from the Ukrainian ethnonation³.

In the last two decades, Rusyn communities in Ukraine's neighbouring states have codified separate

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- 1 Magocsi, Paul Robert, "What Can Europe Learn From Transcarpathia?" (1998) (pp.298-305) in Magocsi, PR, *Of the Making of Nationalities There is No End, Volume II*, New York, 1999, (hereafter, Magocsi, 1998), pp.303-304
 - 2 "The self-determination of peoples" is a guiding political *principle* and not a legal right. Welhengama quotes Heyking (1928): "A right necessarily implies the possibility of claiming it. The notion of right is a conception of law, not of politics." See Welhengama, Gnananapala, *Minorities Claims: From Autonomy to Secession – International Law and State Practice*, Aldershot & Burlington, VT, 2000, (hereafter, Welhengama, G, 2000), p. xxv. Welhengama further questions when the UN formula "self-determination of peoples" can refer to ethnic minorities. He writes: "the UN's practice strongly indicates that *peoples* or *all peoples* were used to identify a totality of peoples organised as a political unit in a State. Ethnic, national or other minority groups are not intended [...] There is no credible evidence to infer from the UN documents that a *minority* is synonymous with *peoples*. *Peoples* are the totality of peoples living in State." (Welhengama, G, 2000, pp.79-80) Nevertheless, Welhengama later draws from Thornberry, arguing that different considerations apply when gross discrimination is committed against an ethnic minority: "[...] it can be argued that East Pakistan Bangladeshis and Kosovo Albanians can claim [...] peoples' right to self-determination. Oppressed groups, in such a case can legitimately operate as *peoples*, but not as *minorities*." (Welhengama, G, 2000, p.89)
 - 3 I have used the terms ethnonation/ethnonational throughout this essay in order to avoid confusion with "nation" in the sense of "state-led political community". Walker Connor considers: "The most fundamental error involved in scholarly

Rusyn languages⁴, won formal state recognition and, in some cases, secured political self-representation⁵. But, in Ukraine, successive administrations have persistently rejected the idea that the Rusyns in the Carpathians form a fully distinct ethnic group, describing the community instead as a Ukrainian sub-ethnos⁶.

Absent a significant change in that perspective, there will be no political self-determination for the Carpatho-Rusyns in Ukraine's *Zakarpatska oblast'*. But, until the status of the Carpatho-Rusyns can be clarified, we may not reasonably conclude that there should be.

Four types of Nation-Building Project

Gellner summarises nationalism as the political philosophy behind nation-building, which envisages self-determination as the right of nations: 'Nationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent.'⁷

approaches to nationalism has been a tendency to equate nationalism with a feeling of loyalty to the state rather than with loyalty to the nation." See: Connor, Walker, "A Nation Is a Nation, Is a State, Is an Ethnic Group, Is a..." (1978) (pp.90-117) in Connor, W, *Ethnonationalism – The Quest for Understanding*, Princeton, NJ, 1994, p.91

- 4 On January 27, 1995, the codification of the Rusyn language in Slovakia was officially announced before government, state and academic officials in Bratislava. See Magocsi, Paul Robert, "The Rusyn Language Revisited" in Magocsi, PR (ed.), *A New Slavic Language is Born: The Rusyn Literary Language of Slovakia*, New York, 1996 (pp.19-47). A Lemko-Rusyn literary standard was codified in Poland in 1999 - see Rusinko, Elaine, *Straddling Borders – Literature and Identity in Subcarpathian Rus'*, Toronto, 2003, (hereafter, Rusinko, 2003), p.8
- 5 Rusinko notes: "Today Rusyns are recognized as an official minority in Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and Yugoslavia" (Rusinko, 2003, p.3). Brian Pozun reports that in November 2000, the Romanian Chamber of Deputies (the Lower House of the Romanian Parliament) also granted one of the 19 seats allotted to national minorities to the *Uniunea Culturala a Rutenilor din România* (the Carpatho-Rusyn Cultural Union of Romania). (See: Pozun, Brian, 'Rusyn Review – Rusyns in Central and Eastern Europe', *Central Europe Review*, Vol. III, No. 16, 7 May, 2001, (hereafter, Pozun, 2001i), <<http://www.ce-review.org/01/16/pozun16.html>> [accessed: 22 August, 2008])
- 6 "The conclusion of the Ukraine's State Committee on the issues of nationalities and migration officially defines the 'Carpathian Rusyns' in the Transcarpathian Region of Ukraine as a subethnic group of the Ukrainian ethnos, and their language as a local dialect of Ukrainian." See: Mitryayeva, Svitlana & Kish, Eva, "The Carpathian Euroregion: Minority Problems" (pp.42-46), *Role of the Carpathian Euroregion in Confronting its Minority Agenda*, Prešov & Uzhhorod, 2001, p.43, <<http://www.policy.hu/flora/carpathianmin.pdf>>, [accessed: August 28, 2008]. Elsewhere, Pål Kolstø cites a conversation with officials of the Ukrainian Ministry of Migration and National Minorities in 1995, who insist that Rusyns are "Ukrainians, plain and simple." (See Kolstø, P, "Territorial Autonomy as a Minority Rights Regime in Post-Communist Societies" (pp.200-219) in Kymlicka, W & Opalski, M (eds.) *Can Liberal Pluralism be Exported – Western Political Theory and Ethnic Relations in Eastern Europe*, Oxford, 2001, p. 209
- 7 Gellner, Ernest, *Nations and Nationalism (Second Edition)*, Malden MA & Oxford, 2006 (1983), (hereafter, Gellner, 1983), p.1

Since “the political unit” is almost always understood as a territorial-administrative unit, elites may pursue Gellner's congruency in two ways. Community leaders may define a “national” population's cultural-linguistic boundaries and then invoke the principle of national self-determination to argue for territorial-administrative sovereignty⁸. Alternatively, territorially-based elites may promote a distinctive national identity within existing territorial-administrative boundaries, (potentially partitioning a wider, cross-border ethnic continuum into two or more ethnonations, or merging two or more potential ethnonations into a single ethnonation).

Accepting that the territorial and ethnographic boundaries can each contribute to defining the other, we can identify four competing types of nation-building project. Ethno-cultural-linguistic-oriented (ECL-oriented) projects seek to invoke ethnic identity to argue for political boundaries which will then institutionally reinforce that ethnic identity.

Type-Ei (ECL-oriented, inclusivist) Irredentist nationalists in either of two ethnographically similar states will argue that unification of both polities is justified because the ethnographic characteristics differentiating the states' titular populations are negligible⁹.

Type-Ee (ECL-oriented, exclusivist) Self-declared ethnic minorities argue that their communities are ethnographically distinct from the titular population and that this constitutes grounds for some degree

8 See Calhoun: “Nationalism [...] remains the preeminent rhetoric for attempts to demarcate political communities, and claim rights of self-determination and legitimate rule by reference to 'the people' of a country.” Calhoun, Craig, “Nationalism and Ethnicity” (pp.51-75) in Calhoun, C, *Nations Matter – Culture, History and the Cosmopolitan Dream*, Oxford & New York, 2007, (hereafter, Calhoun, 2007), p.75

9 The irredentist forms of Greek, Irish, Romanian and Belarusian nationalisms which see Greek Cypriots, Northern Irish, Moldovans and Russians as ethnonational exclaves which need to be reunited with their own populations are examples of **Type-Ei** nation-building projects.

of self-determination¹⁰.

Polity-oriented projects¹¹ seek to use existing political boundaries to define the ethno-cultural-linguistic limits of the nation. (Not uncommonly, the territorial state may pursue strategies to assimilate the majority of its inhabitants into the titular ethnonation¹².)

Type-Pi (Polity-oriented, inclusivist) Polity-oriented ethnonation-builders in states with ethnolinguistically diverse populations will argue that the titular-nation incorporates the entire population¹³. The nation-building project will seek to homogenise the population within the polity boundaries culturally and linguistically, and accuse regional populations agitating for autonomy as campaigning for unjustified exceptionalism.

Type-Pe (Polity-oriented, exclusivist) Ethnonation-builders in an existing polity, the population of which is ethnographically similar to the population of a neighbouring polity will argue against unification, maintaining that their population has unique, differentiating characteristics¹⁴.

10 **Type-Ee** Catalans, Basques, Bretons and Corsicans argue that, even as civic citizens of the Spanish and French states, they are not constituencies of the Spanish and French ethnonations as Andalucians or Aquitanians are.

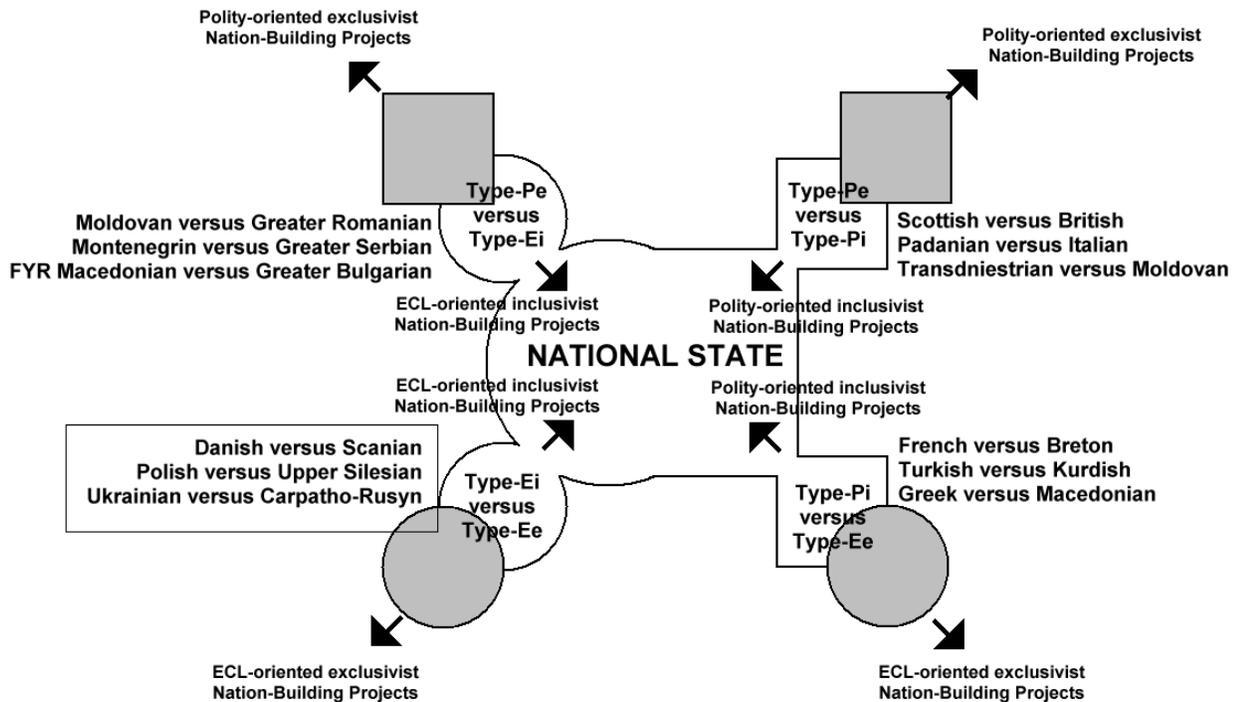
11 I use the word “polity” rather than “state” to cover exclusivist nation-building projects authored by sub-states such as Wales or Catalonia as well as inclusivist nation building projects conducted by states such as Sweden or Germany.

12 In 1992, Breuilly wrote: “German intellectuals [...] constantly agonise over an alleged problem of 'national identity' in Germany [...] large numbers of [...] ethnic minorities do not possess citizenship rights in the state” See: Breuilly, John, “Conclusion: nationalism and German reunification” (pp.224-238) in Breuilly, J (ed.), *The State of Germany – The National Idea in the Making, Unmaking and Remaking of a Modern Nation State*, London & New York, 1992, pp.235-236. Notably, on January 1, 2000, Germany discarded the principle of *jus sanguinis* in favour of *jus soli*, enabling “the Germans” to be redefined as the civic political community of the German state.

13 Thus, the **Type-Pi** Italian ethnonation-building project considers Neapolitans, Florentines, Venetians, Tuscans etc. all constituent populations of the Italian ethnonation. “D’Azeglio, one of the leading intellectuals in post-unification Italy, characterized the difficulty of infusing the sense of identity developed by the educated classes into popular culture as follows: ‘Italy has been created, now it is Italians who are to be made.’” See: Ruzzo, Carlo, “Language and Nationalism in Italy: Language as a Weak Marker of Identity” (pp.168-182) in Barbour, S & Carmichael, C (eds.), *Language and Nationalism in Europe*, Oxford, 2000, p.173

14 The emergence of Moldovans, distinct from Romanians; Montenegrins, distinct from Serbs; Macedonians distinct from Bulgarians; and Austrians distinct from Germans are the outcomes of **Type-Pe** nation-building projects.

Figure 1: Four Types of Nation-Building Contest



A cursory examination of shifting state borders over the last two centuries indicates that all four types of nation-building project - all driven by rival groups of elites seeking to attain and maintain power - are in constant competition - even despite “an unprecedented attempt to freeze the political map”¹⁵ after the Second World War. Significantly we see that – contrary to the primordialist historian's contention - ethnonational identities often emerge after, rather than before, polity formation.¹⁶

In the present era, we are most often accustomed to seeing **Type-Ee** nation-building projects

¹⁵ Mayall, James, *Nationalism and International Society*, Cambridge, New York & Melbourne, 1990, p. 35

¹⁶ Arguably, the FYR Macedonian, Montenegrin, Moldovan, and Ukrainian ethnonations (amongst others) all substantially emerged subsequent to the creation of sub-states within Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. Had the map been drawn differently, it is fair to assume that other ethnonational projects would have prevailed.

petitioning for autonomy or independence from **Type-Pi** nation-building projects¹⁷. By contrast, the Carpatho-Rusyn question in the *Zakarpatska oblast'* appears to represent a nation-building contest between two rival **Type-E** projects¹⁸. Notably, however, in order to legitimate their project and discredit the opposition's, Ukrainian ethnonation builders attempt to portray the Carpatho-Rusyns as territorially-motivated **Type-Pe** ethno-secessionists, while Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonation builders contend that the Ukrainians are state-oriented **Type-Pi** ethnocidal imperialists.

Arguably, unlike most minority questions which focus on how to justly accommodate already-established ethnic groups within state-building projects¹⁹, the Carpatho-Rusyn Question is more fundamentally concerned with *ethnonational identity boundaries*: in fact, it is as much about Ukrainian ethnonation-building as it is about Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonation-building²⁰.

17 For example, the **Type-Ee** Flemish and Kurdish projects contest the **Type-Pi** Belgian and Turkish projects.

18 This is unusual, but not unique. Arguably, the contest between Scanian and Danish ethnonational identities also represents a contemporary contest between two **Type-E** projects. Contests between rival polity-seeking **Type-E** projects were far more commonplace during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In a discussion of alternative national constructions, John-Paul Himka writes: "One has only to recall Illyrism and Yugoslavism among the South Slavs, Czechoslovakism, and the contest between the all-German and Austrian ideas to realize that the phenomenon was relatively widespread." See: Himka, John-Paul, "The Construction of Nationality in Galician Rus': Icarian Flights in Almost all Directions" in Suny, RG & Kennedy, MD (eds.) *Intellectuals and Articulation of the Nation*, Michigan, 1999, (pp.109-164), (hereafter, Himka, 1999), p. 154

19 Kymlicka proposes a model which "defends the general principle that ethnocultural minorities can legitimately demand certain group-specific rights for the accommodation of their distinct identities, but argues that the precise nature of these rights depends on the nature of the minority group." See: Kymlicka, Will & Opalski, Magda, "Introduction" (pp.1-10) in Kymlicka, W & Opalski, M (eds.) *Can Liberal Pluralism be Exported – Western Political Theory and Ethnic Relations in Eastern Europe*, Oxford, 2001, p.6

20 Consequently, for the Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonation building project to succeed, Rusynophile historians must present a historical narrative of the Ukrainian people which does not end in the inevitable incorporation of the Rusyns into the Ukrainian ethnonation. Subtelny's history contends Carpathian East Slavs had emerged as Ukrainians by the 1930s: "In surveying the generally depressing condition of Ukrainians during the interwar period, it is heartening to focus on one, albeit tiny, fragment of this nation – the Ukrainians of Transcarpathia – whose fortunes improved markedly during that time. Isolated from their compatriots by the Carpathian Mountains, the Carpatho-Ukrainians (or Rusyns as they still called themselves) were among the most politically, socioeconomically, and culturally underdeveloped of all Ukrainians." See: Subtelny, Orest, *Ukraine – A History*, Toronto, 2000, (hereafter, Subtelny, 2000), p.448

Magocsi's *A History of Ukraine* discusses the same population, but suggests that the same population was forming a non-Ukrainian national identity: "[...] the Czechoslovak administration [...] by the 1930s clearly favored the Rusynophile orientation, that is the idea of a distinct and, it hoped, pro-Czechoslovak Subcarpathian Rusyn nationality. [...] During the interwar years, the Transcarpathian Ukrainians, or Subcarpathian Rusyns as they were known, made remarkable achievements, especially in political and cultural life, under the administration of the democratic first Czechoslovak

This essay sets out to answer two broad questions:

- 1) To what degree have the East Slavic peoples of the Carpathian mountains constructed a distinct ethnonational identity for themselves?

- 2) To what degree might communities in Ukraine's *Zakarpatska oblast'* subscribing to such an identity merit an autonomous space in which to determine their own political affairs?

In **Part I**, this essay will examine one contention of the anti-Rusynophile school²¹ that “Carpatho-Rusynism” in *Zakarpattya* is driven primarily by territorial rather than identity agenda.

In **Part II**, the essay will identify why the rival Rusynophile²² and Ukrainophile national identity projects have both failed to achieve primacy among the East Slavonic speaking communities of the Carpathians and propose an alternative schema which allows for the co-existence of the two conflicting

republic.” See: Magocsi, Paul Robert, *A History of Ukraine*, Toronto, 1996, p. 608.

Other Ukraine scholars maintain a neutral position: “Ukrainian independence may be encouraging [Transcarpathian] locals to commit more wholeheartedly to [the Ukrainian ethnonational] idea that required a degree of force to win support in 1945 or a new Slavic nation may be forming before our eyes. It is probably too soon to tell.” See: Wilson, Andrew, *The Ukrainians – Unexpected Nation*, New Haven & London, 2002, (hereafter, Wilson, 2002i) p.114

21 Ukrainophile academics (who regard Rusyns as Ukrainians) whose views are examined in this essay include Natalya Belitser, Researcher at the Pylyp Orlyk Institute for Democracy, Kyiv, Ukraine; Dr. Mykola Mušynka, ethnographer and head of Research Center for Ukrainian Studies at the Pavel Šafarik University in Prešov, Slovakia; Dr. Oleksa Myšanyč, literary historian and member of the Shevchenko Institute of Ukrainian Literature, Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, Kyiv, Ukraine; Professor May Panchuk, Associate Director, Institute of Ethnic and Political Studies, Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences, Kyiv, Ukraine; and Professor Orest Subtelny, Department of History and Political Science, York University, Toronto, Canada.

22 Rusynophile writers and academics whose views are examined in this essay include Professor Paul Robert Magocsi, Chair of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Toronto, Canada; Professor Elaine Rusinko, Associate Professor of Russian at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, USA; Professor Ivan Pop, former director of the Institute of Carpathian Studies, Uzhhorod State University, Ukraine; Dr. Olena Duc'-Fajfer, educator in Lemko-Rusyn Studies at the Advanced School of Education, Krakow, Poland; Volodymyr Fedynyšynec', writer and poet; Dr. Vasyl' Jabur, associate professor of Russian and comparative linguistics and director of the Institute of Rusyn Language and Culture in Prešov, Slovakia; Dr. Antal Ljavinecz, Secretary of the Hodinka National Society of Rusyn Intelligentsia, Budapest, Hungary; M. Makara, Rusyn Scholarly and Enlightenment Society, Uzhhorod, Ukraine; M. Sharga, Transcarpathian Regional Association “Znannia”, Uzhhorod, Ukraine; Petro Trochanowskyj, editor of the Lemko-Rusyn magazine, *Besida*; Brian Pozun, contributor to the Central European Review and Dmitry Sidor, Sub-Carpathian Rusyn Assembly Chairman.

perspectives.

In **Part III**, the essay will build on the conclusions from the first two parts of the essay to examine the case for and against the introduction of Carpatho-Rusyn national self-determination in Ukraine, identifying what forms of state recognition and self-rule might pragmatically be accorded to Rusyns.

Ultimately, this essay aims to investigate the degree to which a Carpatho-Rusyn Ethnonation-Building Project and its associated demands for self-determination can succeed, when it threatens to disrupt not just the territorial integrity of a Ukrainian State-Building Project, but the ideological integrity of the Ukrainian Ethnonation-Building Project upon which the State-Building project rests.

This investigation is important, because, with such high stakes, political devolution cannot be undertaken lightly²³. As May, Modood and Squires assert:

23 D'Anieri, Kravchuk & Kuzio observe that in Ukraine, “the process of nation-building is tightly bound up with that of state building.” See: D'Anieri, Paul, Kravchuk, Robert, Kuzio, Taras, *Politics and Society in Ukraine*, Boulder, CO & Oxford, 1999, p.47. But in Ukraine, alongside the state-building process, there are, arguably, *two* nation-building projects in progress: a multiethnic civic-nation-building project and an ongoing ethnonation-building project.

With regard to the first, the Ukraine Census of 2001 recorded that the Ukrainian state population includes 18 ethnonationalities numbering 30,000 persons or more. (See: *All-Ukrainian Population Census 2001: National Composition of Population* <<http://www.ukrcensus.gov.ua/eng/results/general/nationality/>> [accessed: August 29, 2008]) Birgersson notes: “Point 1 of Article 2 of the *Ukrainian Law on Citizenship* stipulates that all persons living in Ukraine at the time this law was passed (excluding foreigners who are citizens of other countries) became Ukrainian citizens unless they purposely chose to become citizens of a state other than Ukraine. This is in stark contrast to the policies of other [Soviet] Successor States where the government expressly declares nationality to be the basis for the state.” See Birgersson, Susanne Michele, *After the Break-up of a Multi-ethnic Empire: Russia, Successor States and Eurasian Security*, London & Westport CT, 2002, (hereafter, Birgersson, 2002), p.111.

At the same time, a second project attempts to clarify the boundaries of the titular ethnonation within the Ukrainian state: “When it comes to identity, language can have a strong symbolic value as a marker of group distinctiveness. The Ukrainian language seems to have taken on a role as a symbol of Ukrainian identity for some of the students interviewed for this study, even though they are not actually Ukrainian speakers. [...] For some of them being Ukrainian ultimately means being a Ukrainian-speaker. For others again, talking about Ukrainian and identity reveals the different instances of 'mixed identities' that can be found in this part of the Russian-Ukrainian borderland.” See: Søvik, Margrethe. “Who Am I? Perceptions of Language and Identity among Students in Kharkiv” (pp.59-84) in Rindzeviciute, Egle (ed.), *Contemporary Change in Ukraine*, Huddinge, 2006, p.81

Fully rounded engagement with ethnicity and minority rights requires an emphasis on the dynamic, cultural dimensions of identity [...] But it also requires a focus on the state, and normative reflection on the consequences of minority rights' claims.²⁴

PART I : Primarily an Ethnic... or a Territorial Question?

1.1 The political backdrop: Carpatho-Rusyn activity 1989-2008

The Carpatho-Rusyn Question in Ukraine's *Zakarpatska oblast'* is more than an obscure academic debate over ethnography. The Rusynophile movement has repeatedly engaged in political activity in Ukraine's *Zakarpatska oblast'*, provoking responses from the Ukrainian state and investigation by the *European Centre for Minority Issues*²⁵.

Before analysing the ethnonational contest in detail, we must determine if there is any substance behind some anti-Rusynophile accusations that the Rusyn movement's appeals for ethnic justice are merely a cover for regionalist politics²⁶ – and that the priority is the partial or complete territorial-administrative secession of Transcarpathia by any means²⁷. Do such accusations constitute perceptive political

24 May, Stephen, Modood, Tariq & Squires, Judith, "Ethnicity, nationalism, and minority rights: charting the disciplinary debates" in May, S, Modood, T & Squires, J (eds.) *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Minority Rights*, Cambridge, 2004, (p.19)

25 The Flensburg-based *European Centre for Minority Issues* (ECMI) was founded in 1996 by the governments of Denmark, Germany and Schleswig-Holstein. It is governed by a Board of nine members: three from Denmark, three from Germany, and one representative each from the OSCE, the Council of Europe and the European Union. (Source: <<http://www.ecmi.de/rubrik/3/in+english/>>)

26 Calhoun questions if this may, in fact, always be the case, asking: "is 'nation' at best a rhetorical mode of making political claims, and at worst a way for certain elites to manipulate mass sentiments in pursuit of power?" - Calhoun, 2007, p.54

27 Ukrainophile Oleksa Myšanyč states (p.12) "it is necessary to distinguish between popular Rusynism on its ethnographic level and political Rusynism, which is a kind of national parasite with its own agenda." See: Myšanyč, Oleksa V, "From Subcarpathian Rusyns to Transcarpathian Ukrainians" (pp.7-52), trans. Larissa Stavroff & PR Magocsi, in Magocsi, PR (ed.), *The Persistence of Regional Cultures – Rusyns and Ukrainians in their Carpathian Homeland and Abroad*, New York, 1993, (hereafter, Myšanyč, 1993), p.12. In 1995, Professor May Panchuk summarised the accusations against political Rusynists: "[...] above all they are [...] against Ukrainian independence. They want to hold hostage to a political game a part of the Ukrainian people, which in the face of all sorts of prohibitions and demands for abnegation in the first half of this century became conscious of themselves as Ukrainians. See: Panchuk, May, "Political Rusynism in Ukraine", trans. James Mace, *Political Thought*, 1995, 2-3 (6) pp. 232-238 (hereafter, Panchuk, 1995), <<http://litopys.org.ua/rizne/panchuke.htm>> [accessed: August 25, 2008] The aim here is to determine whether the politicised Rusyns are primarily engaged in **Type-P** nation-building, using a territory to define the membership of their ethnonation (which inevitably implies an underlying secessionist tendency) or if are they are **Type-E** nation-builders, seeking to define an ethnonational identity regardless of presently existing territorial boundaries (even if, in some cases, they see secession as the only way to guarantee freedom of identity for their subject community).

analysis or scare-mongering by Ukrainian unitarists?

We can break down the last two decades of Rusyn activity into four periods.

Period of Organisation (1989-1992)

After the collapse of Soviet-sponsored regimes in Central Europe, Rusyn associations, newly founded across six Central and Eastern European States²⁸, organised conventions to debate issues confronting the cross-border Carpatho-Rusyn community²⁹. Discussions focused predominantly on cultural and educational issues but incorporated, nevertheless, a political edge. In March 1991, the first Rusyn World Congress in Medzilaborce in Slovakia adopted a program to consolidate forces of the Rusyn movement and to contact the government administrations of seven states (the USA, Canada, Russia, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Ukraine) to request support for the nation-building project³⁰.

Elements of the Rusyn movement aimed to separate *Zakarpatska oblast'* partially or wholly from the orbit of Kyiv. In September 1990 the Ukraine based *Society of Carpatho-Rusyns* issued a declaration “On the Return to the Transcarpathian Oblast' of the Status of Autonomous Republic”, rejecting Transcarpathia's 1946 unification with the Ukrainian SSR³¹ and, in 1991, addressed the Prague

28 These included the Lemko Association (Poland, April 1989), the Society of Carpatho-Rusyns (*Zakarpatska oblast'* in Soviet Ukraine, February 1990), Rusyn Renaissance Society, (Prešov Region of Czechoslovakia, March 1990), Society of Friends of Subcarpathian Rus' (Prague, Czechoslovakia, October 1990), Rusyn Matka Society (Vojvodina, Yugoslavia, December 1990) and some time later, the Organisation of Rusyns in Hungary (Budapest, May 1992). See: 'Carpatho-Rusyns: Chronology', *Rusyn International Media Center*, <http://www.rusynmedia.org/Documents/General/c-r_eng8.html> [accessed: 24 August, 2008].

29 In March 1991, the first World Congress of Rusyns was convened in Medzilaborce, Czechoslovakia, shortly after a scholarly seminar on the question of Rusyn identity was held in Uzhhorod, just across the border in Soviet Ukraine. A personal account of both events is given in Fedyšynec', Volodymyr, “Be a Rusyn so that Rusyns will Survive” in Fedyšynec', V, *Our Peaceful Rusyn Way – Two Essays*, Prešov, 1992 (hereafter, Fedyšynec', 1992)

30 Fedyšynec', 1992, p.91

31 Solchanyk, Roman, “The Politics of State-Building: Centre-Periphery Relations in Post-Soviet Ukraine”, *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol.46, No.1, 1994, (hereafter, Solchanyk, 1994), p.62

administration, calling for the reincorporation of the *Zakarpatska oblast'* into Czechoslovakia³².

It was not the only actor in pursuit of territorial-administrative separation. In February 1991, after several years of preparation, the regional Soviet elite in *Zakarpatska oblast'* submitted a proposal to Kyiv to secure autonomous economic status for the Transcarpathian region³³.

On December 1, 1991, local Transcarpathian political elites conducted another attempt to distance the region from Kyiv - this time with popular support. As 90.3% of Ukraine's population voted in favour of an independent Ukrainian state³⁴, a simultaneous referendum was organised locally, proposing Transcarpathia be granted status as a 'special, self-governing administrative territory' within the new independent Ukraine³⁵. While the referendum secured a 78% yes vote, the Kyiv administration never acted on the results of this referendum. Prolonged inaction became a future grievance amongst would-be territorial autonomists³⁶.

32 See: Belitser, Natalya, *Political and Ethno-Cultural Aspects of the Rusyns' problem: A Ukrainian Perspective*, p.8 <<http://dev.eurac.edu:8085/mugs2/do/blob.pdf?type=pdf&serial=1036425198529>>, (hereafter, Belitser, 2001) [accessed: 26 August, 2008]

33 "By the 1980s, the Transcarpathian political elite was but a provincial offshoot of the (strongly Russified) Soviet Ukrainian elite [...] However, nomenklatura ambitions emerged in 1987-90, coinciding with economic collapse and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The regional elite put forward proposals for 'economic autonomy' to exploit the potential of the region's location in a 'Zone of Common Entrepreneurship'. This, they hoped, would attract foreign investment [...] This early adumbration of the idea of Transcarpathia's mission as Ukraine's 'gateway to Europe' was presented to the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet in early 1991, but sank without a trace." See: Batt, Judy, "Transcarpathia: Peripheral Region at the 'Center of Europe'" (pp.155-177) in Batt, J & Wolczuk, K, (eds.), *Region, State and Identity in Central and Eastern Europe*, London & Portland OR, 2002 (hereafter, Batt, 2002), p.158

34 Wilson, 2002i, p.161

35 Sasse states: "[the Rusyn movement...] had been involved in pushing the regional council into holding the region referendum" but gives no evidence for this assertion." Sasse, Gwendolyn, "The 'New' Ukraine: A State of Regions" (pp.69-100) in Sasse, G & Hughes, J (eds.) *Ethnicity and Territory in the Former Soviet Union: Regions in Conflict*, London & Portland OR, 2002, (hereafter, Sasse, 2002), p.83

36 See: Trier, Tom, *Inter-ethnic Relations in Transcarpathian Ukraine*, ECMI Report No. 4, September 1999, (hereafter, Trier, 1999), p.27 <http://www.ecmi.de/download/report_4.pdf> [accessed 22 August, 2008]. Solchanyk translates the entire question as: "Do you want Zakarpattya to have the status of a special self-governing administrative territory as a subject and part of an independent Ukraine, which would be fixed in the constitution of Ukraine, and that it not be part of any other administrative-territorial formation?" (Solchanyk, 1994, pp.62-63). Taras Kuzio argues subsequent grievances have been overplayed since the question did not hold out the offer of autonomy. See Kuzio, Taras, "The Rusyn Question in Ukraine: Sorting out fact from Fiction", *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism*, XXXII (2005), pp.1-14, (hereafter, Kuzio, 2005), p.2. However, Sasse cites Bohdan Nahaylo's (1999) assertion that it was *only* Kravchuk's direct intervention which "led the regional soviet to tone down the referendum question and avoid the word

In the next twelve months, as Kravchuk's Ukraine consolidated into a unitary, centralised state, it seemed increasingly likely that any autonomy-seeking project in Transcarpathia - whatever its motivating agenda – would be ignored by the powerful adherents of the centralist Kyiv-led state-building project. A *Subcarpathian Republican Party* formed in March 1992, calling for “the transformation of Zakarpattia into an independent and neutral state”³⁷ but achieved little³⁸.

Given the failed attempts to secure regional autonomy³⁹ it seems plausible that, from 1993 onwards, elements in Transcarpathia formerly agnostic to the Rusyn question might have increasingly envisaged appeals to ethnocultural justice as a surer path to greater regional self-determination.

Regardless of what was happening with the Rusyn movements in Slovakia and Poland, it became unclear how far calls for Rusyn self-determination in Ukraine's Transcarpathia region were primarily guided by a **Type-Ee** concern for preserving the cultural identity of all self-declared Rusyns or represented the calculated cover of a **Type-Pe** project aimed at securing territorial autonomy⁴⁰.

'autonomy'." See: Sasse, 2002, p.83

37 Solchanyk, 1994, p.63

38 Belitser writes: “In March 1992, the Pidkarpatska Republican Party was formed with the stated aim of: 'Establishing the independent, neutral Republic of Pidkarpatska Rus with Switzerland as the example... To gain full political and economic independence...' Its head, V. Zayats, emphasized his party's orientation towards Pan-Slavic union, and close cooperation with the pro-Russian and Great Russian forces in the CIS countries. He also hoped to receive support from the international human rights movement, as well as foreign governments.” See: Belitser, 2001, p.8

39 In 1994, Solchanyk reports: “The local leadership, although sensitive to the demands of the Ruthenian position, views its self-governing status primarily in economic terms and has complained bitterly that Kiev has done little to implement the idea of a free economic zone in the region, despite Kravchuk's assurances.” (Solchanyk, 1994, p.63)

40 Belitser considers: '[...] the main issue at stake has not been the ethno-cultural identity of Rusyns as a separate sector of the Transcarpathian population, but, rather, the so-called “Political Ruthenianism” perceived as a potential threat to the territorial integrity of Ukraine and its sovereignty following Ukrainian independence [...generating ...] perceptions of Rusyn identity as a barely disguised separatist threat actively supported by the local authorities, most of whom belonged to the former Soviet nomenclature.[...] This [...explains...] why even [...] Ukrainians who can be broadly defined as “liberal-democratic and pro-European” do not display the same sympathy and moral support towards the Rusyn cause that they usually display towards other nationalities and minorities in Ukraine.' See: Belitser, 2001, p.2

Period of Mobilisation (1993-1999)

In January 1993, the Carpatho-Rusyn movement inaugurated the *Institute of Rusyn Language and Culture* in the city of Prešov. Rusyn societies continued organising biannual World Congresses⁴¹.

Significant cultural milestones included the codification of Rusyn literary languages in Slovakia⁴² and Poland in 1995 and 1999.

Meanwhile, in May 1993 a *Provisional Government for an Autonomous Republic of Subcarpathian Rus'* emerged, parading an openly separatist agenda of either “gaining independence or uniting with Slovakia”⁴³. The Provisional Government, headed by 'Prime Minister' Ivan Turyanitsa⁴⁴ demanded the repudiation of the 1945 Soviet treaty which had left Transcarpathia under the jurisdiction of the Ukrainian SSR. In 1994, the Provisional Government appealed to the Presidents of the USA, Hungary and the Russian Federation, specifically petitioning the latter to admit the self-proclaimed *Republic of Pidcarpatska Rus'* as an independent CIS member-state⁴⁵.

As the cultural achievements of the Rusyn movement abroad and the Provisional Government's political assertiveness at home emboldened Rusyn ethnocation-builders in the *Zakarpatska oblast'*, the

41 To date, Rusyn World Congresses have convened in Medzilaborce, Czechoslovakia (March 1991), Krynica Zdroj, Poland (May, 1993), Ruski Krstur, Yugoslavia (May 1995), Budapest, Hungary (May 1997), Uzhhorod, Ukraine (June 1999), Prague, Czech Republic (October, 2001), Prešov, Slovakia (June 2003), Krynica Zdroj, Poland (June 2005), Sighet, Romania (June 2007). Rusyn Language Congresses were held in Bardejovské Kúpele, Slovakia in November 1992, in Prešov, Slovakia in April 1999 and in Krakow, Poland in September, 2007. The First World Forum on Rusyn Youth took place in Prešov, Slovakia (June 2003); subsequent forums have been held in Krynica Zdroj, Poland (June 2005) and Sighet, Romania (June 2007).

42 See Footnote 4.

43 Solchanyk, 1994, p.63 (Quoting from Radio Ukraine, May 25, 1993 and *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, May 22, 1993)

44 N.B. Not to be confused with Ivan Ivanovich Turyanitsa, a tobacco worker from Mukachevo, who led the Transcarpathian Communist Party in the nineteen-forties. For details on the pro-Soviet activities of the earlier Turyanitsa, see: Madi, Istvan, “Carpatho-Ukraine” (pp. 128-142) in Forsberg, Tuomas (ed.), *Contested Territory – Border Disputes at the Edge of the Former Soviet Empire*, Aldershot & Brookfield VT, 1995, (hereafter, Madi, 1995), pp.130-131; Nemeč, F & Moudry, V, *The Soviet Seizure of Subcarpathian Ruthenia*, Toronto, 1955 (hereafter, Nemeč & Moudry, 1955); and Khrushchev, Nikita Sergeevich, Khrushchev, Sergei (ed.), *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev: Commissar (1918-1945), Volume I*, trans. George Shriver, University Park, PA, 2004, pp.610-614

45 Belitser, 2001, p.8

Ukrainian state moved to strike back. The document *Proposed Measures for Resolving the Problem of Ukrainian-Rusyns*, issued by the Kyiv administration on October 7, 1996 included ten measures, each to be carried out by different government departments, with the specific objective of eradicating the Carpatho-Rusyn nation-building project within a matter of years⁴⁶.

Between 1993 and 1999, the Rusyn nation-builders' growing boldness across the Carpathian region becomes evident. In Slovakia and Poland, where institutionalised opposition from a rival Ukrainian identity project was low, Rusyn activity focused primarily on codifying languages and promoting culture. But in *Zakarpattya*, inescapable confrontation with the rival Ukrainian ethnonational-identity project in an impoverished but defiantly unitary Ukrainian state radicalised the local Rusyn leadership, pushing it towards a regionalist campaign for territorial secession. Ultimately, this cast substantial doubt over whether the Transcarpathian Rusyn movement's primary concern was for ethnocultural justice and resulted in widespread accusations of "Political Rusynism"⁴⁷.

Period of Political Engagement (1999-2007)

On January 3, 2000, Turyanitsa disbanded the *Provisional Government* expressing "the hope that Ukraine will finally recognize the Ruthenians as a nation"⁴⁸. Evidently the leadership had concluded its political activity was detrimental to the Rusyn cause. From 1999 onwards, Ukraine's Carpatho-Rusyns pursued more moderate political dialogue with the Kyiv administration.

46 An English language translation of this document can be found at <<http://www.lemko.org/rusyn/kurasen.html>>. The measures included instructions to the Transcarpathian Regional Council to prevent local referenda in which Transcarpathian locals might identify themselves as Rusyn; to the Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences and Ministry of Education to widely disseminate research demonstrating that ethnically, linguistically, culturally and historically, Rusyns comprised an integral part of the Ukrainian ethnos; and to the Ministry of Information and State Committee for Television and Broadcasting to disseminate information, stressing that Zakarpattya is primordialy Ukrainian, and that the locals constitute an integral part of the Ukrainian nation.

47 Panchuk, 1995

48 Maksymiuk, Jan, "Has 'Political Rusynism' Ended?", *RFE/RL Poland, Belarus, and Ukraine Report*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 11 January 2000, (hereafter, Maksymiuk, 2000), <<http://www.minelres.lv/minelres/archive/01122000-20:48:51-28630.html>>, [accessed: August 27, 2008]

On June 27, 1999, at a congress in Uzhhorod, Carpatho-Rusyn representatives declared Ukraine's Rusyn population to be more than 700,000 and called for Rusyn-language schools, a Rusyn-language department at Uzhhorod University, and for the inclusion of Rusyn as an ethnic category in the 2001 census⁴⁹. These demands, less radical than the earlier territorial-separatist agenda, focused on securing self-determination for Carpatho-Rusyn communities within the Ukrainian state. Across the border, the Romanian parliament accorded Romania's Rusyn community political representation in 2000⁵⁰.

Despite Kyiv's continuing refusal to recognise a Rusyn ethnic minority, 10,069 people in the *Zakarpatska oblast'* declared themselves Rusyn in Ukraine's December 2001 census⁵¹. In 2002, the *Zakarpatska Oblasna Rada*⁵² called again for the Ukrainian administration to grant Rusyns official ethnic minority status⁵³.

While political progress was slow in Ukraine, cultural initiatives were successfully launched. In 2003, in Svaljava, Sunday classes commenced, teaching Rusyn language and culture⁵⁴.

49 From a reprinted news item: "Language issues: Where does one observe language to be a problem in the country?", *US English Foundation*, <<http://www.usefoundation.org/foundation/research/olp/viewResearch.asp?CID=23&TID=3>>, [accessed: August 27, 2008]

50 See Footnote 5

51 See People's Council of Transcarpathian Rusyns (NRRZ) Deputy Head Fedir Shandor's comments in Maksymiuk, Jan, *Ukraine: Transcarpathian Rusyns Want Official Recognition*, Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty, September 22, 2006, (hereafter, Maksymiuk, 2006), <<http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1071560.html>>, [accessed: August 27, 2008]

52 The democratically elected Transcarpathian Regional Council

53 Maksymiuk, 2006

54 Pozun writes: "Rusyn is not taught in Ukrainian schools. In the absence of regular schooling, efforts to teach the Rusyn language are small and scattered, though there are some successes. In the town of Svaljava, for instance, a Sunday-school program teaching Rusyn language and culture swelled from nine classes in the 2003-2004 academic year to 16 classes (with more than 400 students) the next year. A brainchild of Vasylij Sarkanych, head of the local branch of the Organization of Subcarpathian Rusyns, it has relied on the diaspora and the gratitude of Stephan Moldovan, a Transcarpathian Jew who survived the Holocaust thanks to local Rusyns." See: Pozun, Brian, *A Minority in Waiting*, *Transitions Online*, 2005, (hereafter, Pozun, 2005) <<http://www.tol.cz/look/TOL/article.tpl?IdLanguage=1&IdPublication=4&NrIssue=147&NrSection=3&NrArticle=15398>>, [accessed: August 29, 2008]

By contrast with Ukraine, Gajdoš and Konečný report that in Slovakia, "the non-compulsory subject Rusin language and literature was integrated into the curriculum of twelve schools [...] in September 1997 [...] though [...] this endeavour brought only meager results, with only 50 pupils studying the Rusin language in the 1998-99 school year." See: Gajdoš,

In Ukraine's November 2004 election Carpatho-Rusyn civic organisations in *Zakarpatska oblast'* actively declaimed Yanukovich's victory and, hoping for change, supported Viktor Yushchenko's coalition during the "Orange Revolution"⁵⁵. The new administration continued to disregard the Rusyn movement⁵⁶.

In early 2006, Nataliya Vitrenko's *Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine* united with Ivan Symonenko's Rus'-Ukrainian Union party and gave its support to the Rusyn movement⁵⁷. On June 7th, 2006, a Kyiv-Washington TV-conference was held, bringing the issue of the Transcarpathian Rusyns' still-unrecognised minority status to an international audience⁵⁸. In September 2006, the *Oblasna Rada* called a third time for the *Verkhovna Rada* to grant Rusyns ethnic minority status.

While in earlier periods Rusyn elites had used nation-building institutions to promote a sense of cultural (and in *Zakarpattya*, radical) identity within their subject community, during 1999-2006 they directly challenged the Ukrainian identity project on several popular platforms: identification as "Rusyn" on the census, establishment of private classes, party political involvement, repeated calls on the *Verkhovna Rada* and campaigning through international media. The willingness of Rusyn elites to

Marián & Konečný, Stanislav, "Ethnic Minorities in Slovakia" (pp.13-25), *Role of the Carpathian Euroregion in Confronting its Minority Agenda*, Prešov & Uzhhorod, 2001, (hereafter, Gajdoš & Konečný, 2001), p.23, <<http://www.policy.hu/flora/carpathianmin.pdf>>, [accessed: August 28, 2008]

55 "Statements regarding Ukraine's Presidential Election" - Assembly of Rusyn Intelligentsia, *The Ukrainian Weekly*, December 5, 2004, No. 49, Vol.72, <<http://www.ukrweekly.com/old/archive/2004/490450.shtml>>, [accessed: August 27, 2008]

56 Pozun writes: "After Yushchenko's victory, Rusyn leaders wasted no time before aiming their lobbying effort at the new authorities. They were soon disappointed. Yulia Tymoshenko, the co-leader of the revolution and subsequently prime minister, sent a handwritten reply to their letter, but its contents merely restated Kyiv's old view that Rusyns are Ukrainians and that they could expect no help from the authorities." See: Pozun, 2005.

57 "Ukrainian Orthodox (UOC-MP) Priest Supports Pro-Rusyn Politicians", *Religious Information Service of Ukraine*, <<http://www.risu.org.ua/eng/news/article;15225/>>, [accessed: August 27, 2008] (Original Article in Ukrainian: <<http://www.ua-reporter.com/novosti/20910/>>)

58 "Head of Trans-Carpathian Rusyns Soym: Yushchenko will not come into history as democrat without Rusyns recognition", *Regnum News Agency*, May 22, 2006, <<http://www.regnum.ru/english/643888.html>>, [accessed: August 28, 2008]

provoke confrontation with their Ukrainian counterparts was to accelerate further in 2007.

Period of Political Assertiveness (2007-Present)

On March 7th, 2007, despite ongoing lack of official recognition of any Carpatho-Rusyn nationality by the *Verkhovna Rada* in Kyiv, ninety-five percent of *Zakarpatska Oblasna Rada* members voted in favour of acknowledging Carpatho-Rusyns as a people distinct from Ukrainians⁵⁹. Kyiv failed to follow the *Oblasna Rada's* example, provoking Carpatho-Rusyn activists to protest openly.

In June 2008, Magocsi attacked the Kyiv administration in an open letter, rebuking the *Verkhovna Rada's* for its refusal to recognise a Carpatho-Rusyn nationality and announcing that "frustration on the part of some local Rusyn organizations in Transcarpathia" have led them to renew "demands not only for autonomy, but even for state sovereignty"⁶⁰. In the next paragraph, though, he underlined: "We support the territorial integrity of Ukraine."⁶¹

One month later, Dmitry Sidor, the leader of the *Diet of Subcarpathian Rusyns* declared he would ignore any summons issued by the Security Service of Ukraine after Valentin Nalyvaychenko⁶² announced that criminal charges of separatism would be brought against Rusyn movement leaders⁶³.

59 "Rusyns Recognized as Indigenous Nationality of the Transcarpathian Oblast of Ukraine", *Rusyn International Media Center Press Release*, May 31, 2007, <<http://www.rusynmedia.org/News/2007/rimc310507.html>>, [accessed: August 27, 2008]

60 Magocsi, Paul Robert, *Ukraine's Procrastination provokes Extremism*, June 2008, (hereafter, Magocsi, 2008), pp.2-3, <<http://www.rusynmedia.org/Links/C-RRC/C-RRC%20Ukraine's%20Procrastination%203-Jun-08.pdf>>, [accessed: August 27, 2008]

61 Magocsi, 2008, p.3

62 Valentin Nalyvaychenko is the acting Chairman of Ukraine's Security Service.

63 Reported in "Leaders of Subcarpathian Rusyns will ignore Summons to Security Service of Ukraine", *Eurasian Security Services Daily Review*, July 3, 2008, <<http://www.axisglobe.com/article.asp?article=1591>>, [accessed: August 27, 2008]

1.2 Carpatho-Rusyn political activity in *Zakarpattya* and surrounding states: an analysis

How far does this twenty year catalogue of political activity represent, as the *Zakarpattya* Rusynophiles claim, concerted resistance to ethnic assimilation by the leaders of an ethnationally conscious population? And how far can it be understood, as the anti-Rusynophiles claim, as a regionalist campaign of disempowered elites, reviving an “ideology long obsolete”⁶⁴ in order to win territorial-administrative power?

In the absence of data revealing exactly what proportion of Transcarpathia's population feels Rusyn today⁶⁵, we cannot ascertain precisely the degree to which Rusyn activity there represents a populist re-initiation of **Type-Ee** Rusyn nation-building after four decades underground⁶⁶, or whether the campaign is predominantly a *new* **Type-Pe** territorial project, which seeks to revive a half-forgotten ethnonational idea from the first half of the twentieth century for political and economic advantage⁶⁷.

64 Myšanyč, 1993, p.11

65 The nearest approximate data is the 10,069 people who proactively identified themselves as Rusyn in the questionnaire attached to the 2001 census – but Rusyn movement leaders claim that Rusyns in *Zakarpattya* number more than 700,000.

66 Certainly, in inter-war Czechoslovakia, there was some popular support for the contention that the East Slavs of Subcarpathian Rus' (now *Zakarpatska oblast'*) constituted an independent ethnonation (Nemec & Moudry, 1955, p.42) though it was challenged hard by rival **Type-Ei** irredentist Ukrainophile and Russophile projects. Smith argues that by 1939, the Rusynophile orientation was in third place behind the Ukrainophile and Russophile orientations. See: Smith, Raymond A, “Indigenous and Diaspora Elites and the Return of Carpatho-Ruthenian Nationalism, 1989-1992” (pp.141-160), *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, XXI (2), 1997, (hereafter, Smith, RA, 1997), p.142

Importantly, when the territory was occupied by the Hungarians in March 1939 and reincorporated into Hungary as the province of *Kárpátalja*, Hungary suppressed the rival **Type-Ei** projects and promoted a Rusynophile **Type-Pe** project. Vincent Shandor, former Czechoslovak government official and committed Ukrainophile, reports: “In order to carry out its denationalization policy more effectively with regard to the Ukrainian population, the Hungarian Government released a decree, No 6200/1939 ME, under which the Ukrainians were to be henceforth referred to as *Magyar-Orosz* or 'Magyar-Russians,' thus creating a new nationality for the Ruthenians living in Hungary. [...] After the installation of the civilian administration, the local *Magyar-Orosz* [...] appeared on the scene. [...] They fastidiously conducted a Hungarian assimilation policy by creating a distinct, separate 'Hungaro-Russian' nationality and language negating anything that carried the people's national name [ie. Ukrainian – AL] or was in some way or other related with Ukrainianism.” See: Shandor, Vincent, *Carpatho-Ukraine in the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge MA, 1997, (hereafter, Shandor, 1997), pp.235 & 241.

67 Smith considers: “Since there was relatively little in the way of passionate Carpatho-Ruthenian nationalism in the homeland before World War II, it becomes hard to argue that the post-Communist nationalist organizations were simply picking up a clear-cut, hallowed tradition that had been brutally suppressed by the Communists for almost half a century. [...] a review of the literature suggests that the contemporary nationalist organizations represent a new phenomena that may have been fashioned out of the raw material of feelings of Carpatho-Ruthenian distinctiveness, but that were not necessarily continuous with earlier Carpatho-Rusyn nationalist movements. If this interpretation is correct, then events in Carpatho-Ruthenia following Ukrainian independence must have been caused not by the resurgence of primordial

Despite insinuations by some Rusyn leaders that their project (even with a territorial element) is driven by mass ethnonational sentiment, there is no discounting that nation-building projects can be hijacked by polity-focused regional elites who envisage ethnicity-oriented appeals as their most promising vehicle for securing land, resources, borders and political power. It would be reasonable to conclude that both schools exist in Transcarpathia and, to some extent, overlap⁶⁸.

Given the attempts to unite with (Czecho)Slovakia; the *Provisional Government's* bid to have the CIS recognise the *oblast'* as an independent member; repeated calls for regional autonomy on the basis of the December 1991 referendum and the most recent calls for 'state sovereignty', Rusyn activity in Ukraine has consistently appeared to be focused as much on removing the *Zakarpatska oblast'* from the orbit of Kyiv, as on securing pluralist recognition for Carpatho-Rusyns. Inevitably, to some, the campaign resembles a bid for straightforward territorial secession.

But, while the anti-Rusynophiles focus on the **Type-Pe** regional separatists, who promote an old ethnonational narrative to further their territorial-administrative agenda⁶⁹, there are clearly also many **Type-Ee** activists, who believe that their people are ethnonationally distinct from Ukrainians and seek to celebrate their distinct identity without ulterior motive. They have repeatedly insisted that their

sentiments of ethnicity but rather by the instrumental application of nationalist sentiment to achieve specific political goals. Attention [...] should be focused not on the collective unconscious of the masses but on the rational calculation of the elites. Such a perspective falls within the purview of theories of ethnopolitics, by which is meant the manipulation of ethnicity by entrepreneurial elites pursuing power, prestige, and/or wealth. ” - Smith, RA, 1997, pp.142-143

68 Smith argues that Carpatho-Ruthenian nationalism afforded all parties – whatever their motivation for mobilisation - a vehicle to oppose at once entrenched Soviet elites, titular ethnonationalist aspirations and state-oriented centralisation. - Smith, RA, 1997, p.143. It is not hard to imagine distinct interest-groups allying for common advantage.

69 Belitser alleges the Rusyn project is: “a barely disguised separatist threat actively supported by the local authorities, most of whom belonged to the former Soviet nomenclature. The close links of some leaders of the 'Rusyn nation' with such notorious Russian political figures as Vladimir Zhyrinovsky and their overt pro-Russian orientation have made impossible any reconciliation between them and Ukrainian 'national-democrats'” - Belitser, 2001, p.2

movement is not secessionist⁷⁰.

Examining the Rusyn ethnonation-building project across the wider region, we can say that the radical political activity in Ukraine has been substantially overshadowed by a focus on civic political activity and cultural-linguistic advances. So we should consider taking at face value the repeated assertions of many Rusyns that theirs is fundamentally a project about personal/community identity⁷¹, which does not conceal a radical, separatist, state-building programme (which might seek to redraw borders first and only subsequently engage in nation-building).

We may tentatively conclude that the attempts to separate *Zakarpatska oblast'* from Ukraine, while real, were peripheral to the political goals of the wider Rusyn movement and that territorial separatism is a fringe element of the movement in Ukraine, rather than the sustaining force⁷². It is possible such

70 Makara and Sharga write: “We are convinced that the Rusyn nationality will become an integral component of the multi-ethnic Ukrainian nation, and in that way will contribute to the improvement and development of the Ukrainian state as a whole.” See: Makara, M & Sharga, M, *Arguments for Recognizing the Nationality of the Indigenous Subcarpathian Rusyn People in Ukraine*, trans. E Rusinko & PR Magocsi, (hereafter, Makara & Sharga), p.13, <<http://www.rusynmedia.org/Documents/ZakObl/Arguments.pdf>>, [accessed: August 28, 2008]; “Rusyns do not wish for any Rusyn separatism! [...] Long live Ukraine” - Dmitry Sidor, March 7, 2007, <http://www.rusynacademy.sk/english/en_politik.html>, [accessed: August 27, 2008]; “We support the territorial integrity of Ukraine” - Magocsi, 2008, p.3

71 Vasil Jabur: “Ich bin Rusine. Rusine ohne Bindestrich, ohne Querstrich und ohne Apposition” [“I’m Rusyn. Rusyn without hyphen, without slash and without apposition.”] - Jabur, Vasil, “Das Rusinische in der Slowakei (zu Stand und Entwicklungsperspektiven nach der Kodifikation)” (pp.117-132) in Panzer, Baldur (ed.), *Die Sprachliche Situation in der Slavia zehn Jahre nach der Wende – Beiträge zum Internationale Symposium des Slavischen Instituts der Universität Heidelberg vom 29. September bis 2. Oktober 1999*, Frankfurt am Main, 2000; Dr. Antal Ljavinecz: “We are a small nation, but we are older brothers to the other East Slavs” - interview with the author in Budapest on June 18, 2008; Dr. Michele Parvensky: “This article is [...] about a nationality of which I am fiercely proud — the Carpatho-Rusyns, or Ruthenians.” - Parvensky, Michele, *A People Without a Country – the Carpatho-Rusyns*, <<http://rdsa.tripod.com/people/without.html>>, [accessed: August 27, 2008]; Petro Trochanowskyj: “I would also ask listeners to forgive my sentimentality, which is hard to avoid for a member of a vanishing people” - Trochanowskyj, Petro, “Commentaries” (pp. 179-190) in Magocsi, PR (ed.), *The Persistence of Regional Cultures – Rusyns and Ukrainians in their Carpathian Homeland and Abroad*, New York, 1993, (hereafter, Trochanowskyj, P, 1993), p.179; “the Rusyn representative appealed to the Ukrainian authorities to stop regarding the Rusyns as Ukrainians, which, in his opinion, is a gross violation of the Rusyns' basic human rights.” - Trier, 1999, p.21

72 That is to say, Rusynism is not primarily characterised by **Type-P** nation-building unlike Padanism in Italy or the *Pridnestrovie* movement in Moldova. RFE/RL reporter Jan Maksymiuk holds the view that Turyanitsa's position may not have been representative of the majority Carpatho-Rusyn position in *Zakarpatska oblast'*: “There are strong grounds to suppose that the government's recent self-dissolution, as announced by ITAR-TASS, has not been mourned by any significant part of the Rusyn population (in fact it is more likely that it went unnoticed by most Rusyns).” See: Maksymiuk, 2000. Dr. Elaine Rusinko agrees: “[...] as I understand it, Rusyns are really more concerned about cultural autonomy than political. At least that is true for the mainstream Rusyn movement.” - email interview with the author on

anomalous behaviour was provoked mostly by the fear that Kyiv would never recognise Rusyns as an ethnic minority.

We will proceed from the position that – despite the various secessionist attempts - the contemporary Rusyn movement in *Zakarpatska oblast'* is predominantly a **Type-Ee** rather than **Type-Pe** nation-building project, motivated by sentiment that Rusyns represent a distinct ethnonation, rather than seeking to create a Transcarpathian Republic.

Assessing the contemporary Rusyn movement's motivating agenda in *Zakarpattya* and beyond is only the beginning. Far harder – and arguably more needed – is a credible analysis of the Rusyn identity question.

PART II : The Carpatho-Rusyn Question

There can be no discussion of Rusyn National Self-Determination in *Zakarpatska oblast'* before assessing why an ethnonational identity contest persists across the Carpathians. Contrary to the popular Western press' essentialist portrayal of a stateless Rusyn ethnonation⁷³, many, who Carpatho-Rusyn nation-builders regard as co-nationals, simply regard themselves as Ukrainians⁷⁴. Have such Carpathian

August 25, 2008.

73 The popular Western press tends towards a sympathetic position portraying Carpatho-Rusyns as an already-established stateless national entity, rather than a community-continuum with a controversial identity. See: “Warhol's parents were Rusyns, also known as Ruthenians, members of a Slavic tribe that settled in this part of Slovakia after the 6th century [...] The Rusyns — who speak a distinct language and are renowned for their exquisite wooden churches, often built without nails — have been stubbornly resisting assimilation and natural disasters for centuries. Some 1.2 million Rusyns are currently estimated to be living in Central and Eastern Europe. Under Czechoslovakia's communist regime in the early 1950s, they were declared to be Ukrainians and their Greek Catholic church was abolished. In Ukraine, where an estimated 740,000 Rusyns live, the government has yet to recognize them as a separate ethnicity.” - Geary, James & Stojaspal, Jan, *The Rusyns, Slovakia*, Time Europe Magazine, August 29, 2005, <<http://www.time.com/time/europe/html/050829/rusyn.html>>, [accessed: August 28, 2008]. This simplistic starting-point overlooks the fact that many Rusyns do not regard themselves as separate from Ukrainians or as speaking a “distinct language”.

74 In 1986, prior to his becoming aware that Rusyn identity had survived behind the Iron Curtain, Magocsi wrote: “It is true that the original spoken dialects of the Rusyn villages in the Carpathians are classified by linguists as Ukrainian dialects, and that the identity of the populace in those villages today is largely Ukrainian.” See: Magocsi, Paul Robert, “Rusyns,

East Slavs internalised the national identity promoted by the institutions of their ethno-colonial oppressors⁷⁵? Or is the Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonation-building project simply incomprehensible to some of its target constituencies?

2.1 Why the idea of a “Fourth East Slavic Nationality”⁷⁶ appears implausible

Carpatho-Rusyn nation-builders portray the Rusyn struggle for self-determination against Ukrainian ethno-hegemony as analogous to the struggles of other repressed, stateless minority nations⁷⁷. But

Who are They? Why, Rusyns, Of Course” (pp. 3-10) in Magocsi, PR (ed.), *Of the Making of Nationalities There is no End, Volume II*, New York, 1999, (hereafter, Magocsi, 1986), p.9. It is unclear how much changed after the Soviet Union collapsed.

Belitser cites a University of Cambridge survey in 1994 entitled “Ethnic and Sectarian Conflict in the Central European Region” which recorded that of 495 respondents across five regions of *Zakarpatska oblast'*, 6% identified as Rusyns, 3% as Rusyn-Ukrainians and 51% as Ukrainians. (A further 20% of respondents gave their nationality as Hungarian, 11% as Russian and 6% as Slovak). - Belitser, 2001, p.10.

Elsewhere, Kuzio reports an unofficial census conducted by the Diet of Subcarpathian Rusyns alongside the official 2001 census which “found only 6004 eastern Slavs in Trans-Carpathia who declared themselves to be Rusyns out of a total population of 1,258,300, 80.5% of whom declared themselves to be Ukrainian.” - Kuzio, 2005, p.8.

Kuzio adds: “A survey conducted by the KIIS [Kyiv International Institute of Sociology] in October 2004 inquired 'What is your nationality?' The survey found that 79.7 percent declared themselves to be 'Ukrainian,' a figure higher than the 77.8 recorded in the 2001 Ukrainian census. [...] The KIIS survey did not record a single respondent who claimed Rusyn nationality.” - Kuzio, 2005, p.1

75 This was one argument advanced by Magocsi, where he writes: “some [Carpatho-Rusyns] (generally described as assimilationists) opt to identify with the dominant nationality of the state in which they live” (Discussion with the author by email on August 27, 2008). This explains why in Slovakia, as Mušynka explains: “The preponderant majority of Rusyn-Ukrainians identifies with the Slovak nationality”. See: Mušynka, Mykola, “The Postwar Development of the Regional Culture of the Rusyn-Ukrainians of Czechoslovakia” (pp.53-82), trans. Larissa Stavroff, in Magocsi, PR (ed.), *The Persistence of Regional Cultures – Rusyns and Ukrainians in their Carpathian Homeland and Abroad*, New York, 1993, (hereafter, Mušynka, 1993), p.53. Of particular interest to post-colonial theorists though must be the fact that the Eastern Lemkos in Poland and some descendants of Uhro-Rusyns in Slovakia, Hungary and Romania identify with the dominant nationality of a *neighbouring* state.

76 Magocsi uses this formula in numerous studies, sometimes inserting it in an unexpected context. In a recent work written for popular consumption, he describes the national orientation of the Carpathian Region East Slavs at the start of World War I: “In Transcarpathia [...] there were no Old Ruthenians or Ukrainophiles [...] for those Transcarpathians who retained an East Slavic identity, most favored a pro-Russian (Russophile) national orientation, although there were also some who felt they comprised a fourth East Slavic nationality called Rusyn or Subcarpathian Rusyns.” See: Magocsi, Paul Robert, *Ukraine – An Illustrated History*, Toronto, 2007, p.193. The argument by some scholars that the only Belarusian national identity which has ever achieved something approaching *mass resonance* has its origins in the Soviet era (Birgerson, 2002, p.99), suggests that in 1914, even the existence of a third East Slavic nationality is debatable.

77 A Slovak Rusyn website article reports that during a meeting with foreign diplomats in Washington DC on March 24, 2006, Professor Paul Robert Magocsi “compared Carpatho-Rusyns to Catalans, Frisians, and several other stateless peoples in Europe. [...] Mr. Brender provided the Rusyn-American delegation with a list of European institutions to whom they should express their concerns about Ukraine’s on-going refusal to recognize Carpatho-Rusyns as a distinct nationality.” See: “World Congress Chairman again in the US Capital”, Academy of Rusyn Culture in the Slovak Republic, <http://www.rusynacademy.sk/english/en_kongres3.html#WORLD_CONGRESS_CHAIRMAN_AGAIN_IN

analysis of the Carpathian East Slavic community-continuum renders the analogy unconvincing.

Issue 1: Historically, “Rusyn” is the appellation of a faith-community, not an ethnonation

There is no ethnonym which includes all the historical antecedents of the subject communities of Carpatho-Rusyn nation-builders but excludes all others. Quite simply, because *Rusyn*⁷⁸ (while possibly originating from an early Scandinavian ethnonym⁷⁹) was the general self-appellation of *all* Byzantine-Rite Eastern Slavs in the Austrian Empire⁸⁰. The historical descriptor Ruthenian (ie. *Rusyn*) refers to the forebears of present-day Galicians and Bukovinians as well as Carpathian East Slavs.⁸¹ It makes no

THE_US_CAPITAL>, [accessed: August 28, 2008]

78 Historically translated as *Ruthen* in Latin, *Ruthenen* in German and *Ruthenian* in English. The same term is *Rusnak* in modern Slovak, *Ruten* in modern Hungarian, and translates as *Rusin* in modern German and *Rusyn* in modern English.

79 Alexander Bonkáló summarises the Varangian myth: “The origin of the words Russian, Rusyn, Ruthenian is northern Germanic, or Scandinavian. [...] The Rus' (in Finnish: Ruotsi), that Scandinavian seafaring folk which settled the shores of the Dnieper under the leadership of Riuryk (d. 879), had originally lived on the eastern shores of Sweden, which today is Uppland, Södermanland, and the island of Gotland. [...] The Scandinavians who founded the Rus' homeland were small in number, and after one or two decades they merged with the Slavic majority [...] After the Rus' of Germanic origin completely merged with East Slavs [...] the principality of Kiev, received the name Rus' (Kievskaja Rus') and its inhabitants, notwithstanding their origin, were called *rusyn/rus'kii* [...] A treaty signed in 912 with the [Byzantine] Greeks by Oleg (reigned ca. 882-912) ruling prince of Kiev, identified at that time the population of the the principality of Kiev as Rusyns. Until the twelfth century, only the principality of Kiev bore the Rus' name; however, this identification gradually was taken over by other East Slav principalities during the twelfth century. Many examples can be found of the phenomenon whereby peoples and nations carry the name of other peoples. The French got their name from the Germanic Franks; the Prussians from the Lithuanian Prus; the Bulgars, from an extinct Turkic tribe called the Bulgars; while the region of Lombardy recalls the Longobards.” See: Bonkáló, Alexander, *The Rusyns*, trans. Ervin Bonkáló, New York, 1990, (hereafter, Bonkáló, 1940), pp.57-58

80 Magocsi explains: “Until the twentieth century, the people who described themselves as Rusyns did so because they were expressing allegiance to the Eastern Christian (Greek Catholic or Orthodox) Rus' Church. Thus for several centuries the term Rusyn had primarily a religious, not national, connotation. This being the case, it was also possible for ethnic Slovaks or Magyars of the Greek Catholic faith to call themselves Rusyns.” - Magocsi, Paul Robert, *The Shaping of a National Identity – Subcarpathian Rus', 1848-1948*, Cambridge MA & London, 1978, p.277. This suggests that pre-national Carpathian East Slavs identified themselves only in opposition to the Catholics to the south and west. Separately, Himka notes that *Ruthenian* can also refer to “peoples of the Eastern Christian churches” in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1569-1795). (Himka, 1999, p.150)

81 Consequently in historical accounts, the term *Rusyn* has a far wider scope than it does in the present. Dyrud starts by establishing “the Rusyns were Greek Catholic”. See: Dyrud, Keith P., *The Quest for the Rusyn Soul – The Politics of Religion and Culture in Eastern Europe and in America, 1890 – World War I*, Cranbury, NJ & London, 1992, (hereafter, Dyrud, 1992), p.21 but later uses the term in a way which suggests he is discussing the predecessors of *all* present-day Ukrainians (both Greek Catholic Ruthenians and Orthodox *malorosy!*): “Holovats'kyi was recognizing the common relationship between the Rusyns on both sides of the Austrian-Russian border.” - Dyrud, 1992, pp.22-23. Rusinko writes: “In 1654 [...] Kievan intellectuals supported, and indeed promoted, the displacement of power from Kiev to Moscow, [...] justifying it as [...] the renewal of the unity of the Rus' lands [...]. But the reunion of Rus' was not total. Left out were the Carpatho-Rusyns of Galicia, who were under Polish control” See: Rusinko, 2003: p.53. If the term 'Carpatho-Rusyns of Galicia' includes all Galician Ruthenians, the term “Carpatho-Rusyns” is here referring to *future standard-bearers* of the Ukrainian ethnonational project.

ethnographic distinction between those Carpatho-Rusyn nationalists would today regard as Ukrainian and those they regard as their own⁸². Prior to the arrival of nineteenth century nation-building movements, an East Slavic community in the Austrian Empire, where it expressed an identity at all, did so on the basis that the community adhered to Byzantine Rite Christianity. Thus, it was *rusyn*. Even as late as the nineteen-thirties, it is questionable how many of the Subcarpathian locals who regarded themselves *Rusyn* meant the term in an ethnonational rather than a pre-national sense⁸³.

Issue 2: Many former Carpathian East Slavic bids for National Self-Determination were Ukrainophile

Between November 1918 and October 1944, a number of state-level and sub-state-level polities with East Slavic titular populations were established in the Carpathian Region, either locally or by Hungary, Czechoslovakia or the Soviet Union (see **Table 1**). More than half of the administrations of these

82 The absence of a collective name doesn't conclusively establish that Carpathian-Ruthenians were near-identical in ethnographic character (if not political identity) to other Ruthenians further north. Those who wish to argue the Carpathian Ruthenians were already ethnically distinct from the Galician Ruthenians might, for example, draw an analogy to the Romanov Empire's generic reference to Muslim communities as *Tatars* (eg. Volga Tatars, Crimean Tatars) or indeed the generic European reference to all non-Christian communities from Istanbul eastwards as *Asians*. Both of these are pan-ethnic labels which give no indication of underlying ethnic diversity. (Though, we should also note that - unlike Rusyns - the Crimean Tatars and Asians did not use these labels as self-descriptors.) However, the lack of a discrete self-descriptor certainly suggests that – when they were conscious of a world beyond their community - the Carpathian East Slavs were never strongly conscious that they differed fundamentally from Galicians or Bukovinians.

83 During his assignment to Carpatho-Ukraine in 1938-39, British journalist Michael Winch records numerous conversations in which Transcarpathian locals insist they are “Rusyn” and not Ukrainian. Winch, Michael, *Republic for a Day – An Eyewitness Account of the Carpatho-Ukraine Incident*, London, 1939, pp. 88, 131, 132, 141-142, 184. Such insistences cannot automatically be interpreted as a conviction of ethnonational identity. See: Magocsi, Paul Robert, “The Nationality Problem in Subcarpathian Rus', 1938-1939: A Reappraisal” (1974), (pp.220-234) in Magocsi, PR (ed.), *Of the Making of Nationalities There is No End, Volume I*, New York, 1999, p.232. Moudry considers: “As for the Ruthenians themselves, one circumstance has to be kept always in mind. Neither in 1920 nor, say, in 1935, were they quite and unanimously certain what kind of nationality they actually were. [...] The simple peasant who did not worry too much about such things, considered himself a Rusin or Ruthenian and let it go at that.” See: Nemeč & Moudry, 1955, pp. 41-42

In the twentieth century, *Rusyn* could have become a national ethnonym, had the Galicians and Bukovinians not abandoned the term in favour of *Ukrainian*. Assuming, counterfactually, that the Dnieper Ukrainians had adopted the name *Rusyny*, instead of the Ruthenians declaring themselves *Ukrainci*, would there be any debate today whether those East Slavs in the *Zakarpatska oblast'* who still declare themselves *Rusyns* represent an unrecognised minority nation? Subtelny asked the same question in 1984. See: Subtelny, Orest, “Commentary” (pp.19-23) in Magocsi, PR (ed.) *Of the Making of Nationalities There is No End, Volume II*, New York, 1999, p.21. In 1986, Magocsi opined that “the discussion about name differences” is “frequent [...] passionate, though ultimately boring” - see: Magocsi, 1986, p.7. It is not boring. Arguably, it is precisely the lack of a distinct ethnonym which has led the Lowland Scots or the Malays of Borneo to regard themselves as part of the same ethnonation as the Highland Scots and the Peninsular Malays.

polities sought unification with the Ukrainian population to the north and east. Of the four republics declared by Carpathian East Slavs without outside help⁸⁴, three aspired to join with 'Ukraine'⁸⁵ – and the fourth initially sought political unification with Russia⁸⁶. Furthermore, arguments that Subcarpathian Ruthenia's incorporation into interwar Czechoslovakia reveals Rusynophile sentiment amongst then Rusyn leaders are widely contested⁸⁷.

The history of Carpathian East Slavic bids for self-determination suggests that regional elites did not regard their people as a distinct ethnonation. While the nineteenth-century Subcarpathian intelligentsia

84 The Komancha Republic (1918-1919), Lemko-Rusyn Republic (1918-1920), Hutsul Republic (1919), Carpatho-Ukraine (March 15, 1939)

85 Either with the West Ukrainian Peoples Republic (ZUNR) in the aftermath of World War I, with Galicia and Bukovina on the eve of World War II (on the assumption that these territories would enlist assistance from the Third Reich to liberate themselves from Polish control), or with Soviet Ukraine, following the end of World War II.

86 The *Rus'ka Narodna Respubl'ka Lemkiv* (Rusyn People's Republic of the Lemkos) founded in December 1918 in Florynka in the western Lemko Region. For a short history of the Republic, see Magocsi, Paul Robert, "The Lemko Rusyn Republic (1918-1920) and Political Thought in Western Rus'-Ukraine" (pp.303-315) in Magocsi, PR (ed.), *Of the Making of Nationalities There is No End, Volume I*, New York, 1999

87 Magocsi considers "The Czechoslovak solution to the problem of Subcarpathian Rus' reflected not only the requirement of Entente diplomacy, but also the demands of local Rusyn leaders." See: Magocsi, Paul Robert, "The Rusyn Decision to Unite with Czechoslovakia" (1975) (pp.124-146) in Magocsi, PR (ed.), *Of the Making of Nationalities There is No End, Volume I*, New York, 1999, p.146

Ukrainophile Shandor disagrees: "The Ukrainian populist orientation sprang forth from the nature of the population of the country itself which, though still using the old name of 'Rusyny' (Ruthenians), felt organically related to and part of the great Ukrainian nation, a sentiment it had expressed spontaneously in the decisions of the national radas (councils) throughout the years of 1918 and 1919. It would be to the point to note that on December 4, 1919 the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in Prague recognized this fact." See: Shandor, 1997, p.44.

The Encyclopedia of Ukraine records: "On 8 December 1918 the Ruthenian People's Council met in Svaliava and voted to join Transcarpathia with Ukraine." See the entry on "Svaliava" in *Internet Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, <<http://www.encyclopediaofukraine.com/pages/S/V/Svaliava.htm>>, [accessed: August 30, 2008]

Makara & Sharga counter that, while on January 21, 1919, "Four hundred twenty delegates at a national council held in Khust adopted a resolution calling for unification with Greater Ukraine," the resolution stipulated that "the new state take into consideration the particular status of the Uhro-Rusyns," commenting: "This stipulation is officially ignored by the present government of Ukraine and pseudo-historians who write on its behalf." See: Makara & Sharga, p.8

In summary, it appears that local Rusyn leaders largely favoured unification with Ukrainians – even if they demanded some concessions to ensure that Subcarpathia retained local representation.

Table 1: Self-Determining / Autonomous Polities in the Carpathian Region with East Slavic titular populations

| Polity | Dates | Territory | Status | Orientation |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Komancha Republic | November 1918 – January 23, 1919 | District around Komancza, in the east of Lemko Territory in present-day southeast Poland. | Independent Republic | Ukrainophile |
| Lemko Rusyn Republic | December 1918 – March 1920 | District around Florynka in the west of Lemko territory in present-day southeast Poland. | Independent Republic | Russophile/ Rusynophile |
| <i>Rus'ka Kraïna</i> | December 23, 1918 - May 8, 1919 | The counties of Ung, Bereg, Máramaros and Ugocsa in northern Hungary (present-day <i>Zakarpatska oblast'</i> in Ukraine). | Autonomous territory within Hungary under Károlyi government. Continued in the Hungarian People's Republic led by Béla Kún. | Pro-Hungarian. Rusynophile. |
| Körös Country Hutsul Republic | January 8, 1919 – June 11, 1919 | District around Jasyňa in the east of present-day <i>Zakarpatska oblast'</i> . | Independent Republic led by Stepan Klochurak. | Ukrainophile |
| <i>Podkarpatská Rus'</i> Subcarpathian Ruthenia | September 10, 1919 – October 11, 1938 | Present-day <i>Zakarpatska oblast'</i> in Ukraine. | Nominally autonomous territory within inter-war Czechoslovakia | Ukrainophile / Russophile / Rusynophile |
| <i>Podkarpatská Rus'</i> (Now referred to by the Third Reich as “Carpatho-Ukraine”) | October 11, 1938- March 14, 1939 | Present-day <i>Zakarpatska oblast'</i> in Ukraine, excluding Uzhhorod and Mukachevo. | Autonomous territory within the Third Reich administered Czechoslovak Federation | Ukrainophile |
| Carpatho-Ukraine | March 15, 1939 | Present-day <i>Zakarpatska oblast'</i> in Ukraine. | Independent Republic. | Ukrainophile |
| <i>Kárpátalja</i> Subcarpathia | March 1939 - October 1944 | Present-day <i>Zakarpatska oblast'</i> in Ukraine. | Autonomous territory within Hungary. | Pro-Hungarian. Rusynophile. |
| Transcarpathian Ukrainian Republic | November 26, 1944 – January 22, 1946 | Present-day <i>Zakarpatska oblast'</i> in Ukraine. | Autonomous territory within the Soviet Union | Pro-Soviet. Ukrainophile |

never centrally participated in the Ukrainian nation-building project⁸⁸ and ultimately dismissed the Galician form of Ukrainian nationalism⁸⁹, regional elites after 1917 consistently gravitated towards Ukrainophilism. More often than not the goal of Subcarpathian Rusyn self-determination appears to have been union with Ukraine.

Issue 3: Rusynophile sentiment appears weaker within *Zakarpatska oblast'* than elsewhere

Magocsi has compared the Rusyns to Catalans⁹⁰ who, like Carpatho-Rusyns, are geographically scattered across several states⁹¹. But there is a marked difference. During Franco's four decade long ethnocidal campaign⁹², regional organisations in northeast Spain worked to keep Catalan ethnonational sentiment alive⁹³. While Soviet totalitarianism repressed civil society more determinedly than Francoist

88 Even though there *were* attempts to unite the Rusyns of Galicia and Subcarpathia during the 19th century. Dyrud writes: “there have been several times in the last 200 years when the Rusyns themselves thought they had a common heritage and made some effort to work together to establish a single Rusyn culture. One of those instances occurred after the death of Andrei Bachyns'kyi, the Greek Catholic Bishop of Prešov (in Subcarpathia). The Greek Catholic Metropolitanate of Galicia was reestablished in Peremyshl about the time Bachyns'kyi died in 1809. Bachyns'kyi and others had recognized the common heritage of the Greek Catholic Rusyns and had worked tirelessly to join Galician and Subcarpathian Rusyns into a single metropolia. It would have been reasonable to place the Subcarpathian diocese under the metropolia of Peremyshl. However, Hungarian exclusivity prevented such ecclesiastical foundation for ethnic unity.” - Dyrud, 1992, p.14. Elsewhere, Himka writes of the nineteenth century Galician Ukrainophile nation-builder Mykhailo Drahomanov (citing Rudnytsky, 1987): “Drahomanov at the very end of his life in 1895 rued that he had always wanted to do something about Transcarpathian Ukraine, to integrate it 'into our national democratic and progressive movement,' but had not. He begged his followers to succeed where he had failed [...] They did not.” (Himka, 1999, p.163).

89 Rusinko writes of the 'Rusyn National Awakeners': “Dukhnovych, in agreement with Rusyn statesman Adolf Dobrians'kyi, did at one time advocate a union with Rusyns in Galicia to form an autonomous province within the Austrian empire and under the broad pan-Slav umbrella. But when opinions on language, literature, and politics in Galicia diverged from the Russophile convictions shared by the Subcarpathian Rusyns, Dukhnovych and the Rusyns south of the Carpathians became estranged from the Galician populist Ukrainophiles. Ultimately, it was not the topography of the Carpathians, but the differing views on linguistic, cultural, and political issues that divided the Rusyns.” - Rusinko, 2003, pp.204-205

90 See Footnote 77

91 Catalans inhabit the following regions: *Catalunya* and the Balearic islands in Spain, the southern part of *Languedoc-Rousillon* in France and the north-west corner of Sardinia, in Italy.

92 Carmichael writes: “Franco tried [...] to 'kill a nation' by curbing the public use of the Catalan language – but apparently with little historical success.” See: Carmichael, Cathie, “Conclusions: Language and National Identity in Europe” (pp.280-289), Barbour, S & Carmichael, C (eds.), *Language and Nationalism in Europe*, Oxford, 2000, p.284

93 Greer writes: “The quintessentially authoritarian Franco regime [...] was particularly concerned about preventing any assertion of Catalan social or political activity. The main resources available [for ethnonational mobilisation], apart from those built by painstaking and dangerous clandestine collective action, were strong Catalan regional organisations such as business and professional organizations that were intact, often thriving, and distinct from their Madrid-based peers. [...] Modern Catalan politics was born as regional organizational elites and aspiring politicians of the late 1970s set to work constructing governments and political power bases.” See: Greer, Scott L, *Nationalism and Self-Government – The Politics of Autonomy in Scotland and Catalonia*, New York, 2007, p.95

National-Catholicism, it is noteworthy that Rusynophile political initiatives which commenced in Soviet Ukraine in 1990 after three years of *perestroika* reforms found little already-existing popular support for the Rusyn movement to build on⁹⁴, even though Rusynophiles allege Rusyns to be most numerous in the core homeland territory of *Zakarpattya*.

It is unreasonable to expect minority ethnonational sentiment to flourish under the onslaught of assimilationist programmes⁹⁵. But, far from being annihilated, identities may become entrenched under oppressive conditions. Fullbrook writes:

The definition of a 'them/us' distinction, preferably buttressed by the reality or threat of existential battle, is a classic ploy of rulers seeking to construct a national identity.⁹⁶

Yet Rusyn populations outside Ukraine⁹⁷ appear more Rusynophile than the population in *Zakarpattya*, even though, long after post-Soviet independence, the “existential battle” is most intense in Ukraine. The tempting explanation is that Carpathian East Slavs, who might identify as Rusyns in states where they are not members of the titular ethnonational population, may, in Ukraine, regard themselves as Ukrainian ethnonationals, without much coercion.

94 Kuzio writes: “Rusyn political parties have failed to mobilize the population in any parliamentary election.” - Kuzio, 2005, p.11. Elsewhere, the Chicago Tribune reported in May 2001: “in Uzhorod [...] few locals were aware of the existence of the provisional government; none seemed ready to take up arms for the Rusyn cause.” See: Hundley, Tom, “Little-known Group Won't Be Fenced In”, *Chicago Tribune*, May 20, 2001, <<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/decani/message/51902>>, [accessed: August 26, 2008]

95 From an economic and political perspective, it is entirely plausible that Rusyns in *Zakarpatska oblast'* have been more generally more concerned with economic survival than with reproducing a non-titular ethnonational identity (see Makara & Sharga, pp.11-12, for Transcarpathia 's population density, level of unemployment, and other socio-economic issues). By contrast, Rusynophiles in Slovakia and elsewhere may have moved to reproduce their distinct ethnic identity to diminish any association with the Ukrainian state.

96 Fullbrook, Mary, “Myth-Making and National Identity: the Case of the GDR” (pp.72-87) in Hosking, G & Schöpflin, G (eds.), *Myths and Nationhood*, London, 1997, (hereafter, Fullbrook, 1997), p.79

97 Kuzio notes “Since 1989 [...] the strongest of [Rusyn] movements has been in Slovakia” - Kuzio, 2005, p.12. Argumentation below will hypothesise why this might be entirely expected.

Issue 4: The Ukrainophile orientation persists across the Carpathians

Carpathian East Slavs do not only identify as Ukrainians in *Zakarpattya* but also in neighbouring states. Mušynka's contention that “Rusyn/Rusnaks of the Prešov Region form the westernmost group of the Ukrainian people”⁹⁸ somewhat reflected sentiment on the ground in Slovakia in the early 1990s⁹⁹ and is still maintained by the *Association of Rusyn-Ukrainians* in the Slovak Republic today. While Western Lemko communities in Poland are predominantly Rusynophile, Eastern Lemkos regard themselves as Ukrainian¹⁰⁰. Where Rusyn communities can be found in Hungary, Romania and the Balkans, Ukrainians can also be found¹⁰¹. Gajdoš and Konečný note that Carpathian East Slavs who do identify as Rusyn tend to reside in traditional, rural environments, whereas those in urban environments lean towards a Ukrainian identity¹⁰².

The coincident diasporas of Rusyns and Ukrainians and the rural-layperson/urban-intellectual divide may support to some degree the post-colonialist contention that Carpathian East Slavs who identify as Ukrainians do so because they have internalised the identity of the dominant other. Alternatively, it

98 Mušynka, 1993, p.53

99 In his analysis of the Rusyn dialect spoken in Eastern Slovakia, Alexander Teutsch cites data from the 1991 census in which only 68% of Slovak citizens identifying themselves as Ukrainians stated their mother-tongue was Ukrainian. The implication is that as many as one third of the Slovak population identifying as Ukrainian ethnionationals at that time looked upon Rusyn as their mother-tongue. See: Teutsch, Alexander, *Das Rusinische der Ostslowakei im Kontext seiner Nachbarsprachen*, Frankfurt am Main, 2001, p.5

100 Moreover, Duc'-Fajfer and Hann reveal that Ukrainophile Lemkos are as committed to involvement with the annual Lemko summer festival as those identifying as Rusyns. Duc'-Fajfer (1993) writes: “The *Lemkivska Vatra* [...] has had great success in popularizing Lemko culture and [...] after seven years of existence has become the main Lemko event, a forum for the idea of a reborn Lemko Region. The eighth Vatra, the fate of which is being decided by [...] pro-Ukrainian activists, will no doubt be greatly different from previous ones.” See: Duc'-Fajfer, Olena, “The Lemkos in Poland” (pp.83-103) in Magocsi, PR (ed.), *The Persistence of Regional Cultures – Rusyns and Ukrainians in their Carpathian Homeland and Abroad*, New York, 1993, (hereafter, Duc'-Fajfer, 1993), pp.97-98. Hann (1995) writes: “the major annual festival, the *Watra*, is now held on two separate occasions: once in the mountain homeland, where it attracts large number of Ukrainian performers and spectators, and once in Western Poland where it is organized on a smaller scale by those unsympathetic to the Ukrainophile orientation, who wish to emphasize the autonomy of Lemko culture” - Hann, Chris, “Intellectuals, Ethnic Groups and Nations: Two Late Twentieth Century Cases” (pp.106-128) in Periwal, Sukumar (ed.), *Notions of Nationalism*, Prague, 1995, (hereafter, Hann, 1995), p.115

101 Notably, in Croatia, the Zagreb administration regards Rusyns and Ukrainians as a single ethnic group. - Pozun, 2001i

102 Gajdoš and Konečný observe that, in Slovakia, “Persons of Rusin orientation live mostly in small villages or towns [...] Persons of Ukrainian Orientation, on the other hand, are mostly city-dwellers with a higher level of education.” Gajdoš & Konečný, 2001, p.22. Elsewhere Ukrainophile Mušynka contends: “[...] when asked: 'What is your nationality?,' a Rusyn would reply without hesitation, *rus'kyj*, in the manner of his grandfather and great-grandfather before him. National identity and religion, for him [...] were closely interrelated.” - Mušynka, 1993, p.55

may simply suggest that many who employ the self-descriptor *rusyn* do not, even in the twenty-first century, mean it in an ethnonational sense but rather in a traditional, pre-national sense.

Issue 5: The Carpathian East Slavic community-continuum is ethnographically diverse

Magocsi notes that, traditionally, Carpathian East Slavs identified themselves according to dialect or whether they were highlanders or lowlanders, emphasising that they all, nevertheless, identified themselves as *Rusyn*¹⁰³. But *Rusyn* was, historically, only a term of religious affiliation. If Byzantine-Rite East Slavs in Transcarpathia and Galicia are separate ethnonations because they possess distinct dialects and histories, does the same rule apply to *Hutsuli* in eastern Transcarpathia and *Lemky* in Poland¹⁰⁴? Are Rusyns perhaps more plausibly portrayed as a continuum of micro-ethnonations, rather than a single ethnonation?¹⁰⁵ Why should the dialectical or ethnographical differences between any of these micro-ethnonations¹⁰⁶ be considered less defining than the differences distinguishing them from

103“In addition to saying that he or she was a Rusyn, an inhabitant of Subcarpathian Rus' might also have referred to himself or herself as a Lemko, a Bojko, or a Hucul (in accord with the generally prevailing east-west dialectical differentiations), or as a Dolynjanyn (lowland dweller), Vechovyneć (highland dweller), or Rusnak (adherent of Greek Catholicism). Since the term Rusyn was most generally accepted by the inhabitants, it will be used in this discussion.” See: Magocsi, Paul Robert, “An Historiographical Guide to Subcarpathian Rus'” (1973) (pp.323-408) in Magocsi, PR (ed.), *Of the Making of Nationalities There is No End, Volume II*, New York, 1999, (hereafter, Magocsi, 1973), p.325 Today East Slavs in Poland prefer the ethnonym *Lemko* – Duc'-Fajfer summarises the history of how the term came to replace Rusnak. (Duc'-Fajfer, 1993, p.84)

104Both groups have grounds for evolving their own particularist ethno-historiography. Alternatively, Bonkáló (1940) advances a Magyarone theory which proposes that it is the Subcarpathian *Verkhovyntsi* (Highlanders) and *Dolyshniany* (Lowlanders) who have fundamentally different ethnographic origins: “The greater number of Rusyns came from Galicia to occupy dominial lands, that is, lands owned by lords. If by examining clothing and observing dialects we can determine exactly from which part of Galicia the Highlanders came, we do not find corresponding tribes in Galicia for the Rusyns who dwell in the lowland southern regions [...] We must look for the ancestral home of the *Lowlanders/Dolyshniany* in [northern] Volhynia's Polissia region and in Podolia. [...] Most likely, these Rusyns came via Moldova and Transylvania to Subcarpathia [...] The *Dolyshniany* settled about 600-700 years ago in Subcarpathian Rus'. Because of their continual contact with Magyars, they became in many respects Magyar.” (Bonkáló, 1940, pp.60-62)

105Kuzio notes: “until the twentieth century, Lemkos and Boikos also called themselves 'Rusnaks'. Hutsuls, who inhabit the Carpathian mountains between Ukraine and Romania, always called themselves 'Hutsuls'.” - Kuzio, 2005, pp.7-8. Nevertheless, Petro Trochanowskyj considers two alternatives alone: either all Carpathian East Slavs are ethnonationally Ukrainians or they are ethnonationally Rusyns. - Interview with the author in Krynica on March 18, 2008

106Himka notes: “Over most of Ukraine there are a few dialects spread over fairly large expanses of territory. For example, in the area covered by the Steppe dialect one could fit several Galicias. But in the Carpathian region alone there are more dialects than in the rest of Ukraine combined.” Himka, 1999, pp.149-150. This dialectological reality explains why Rusyn linguistic institutions have settled on a strategy of codifying the local Rusyn languages in Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine individually, before progressing to create a pan-Rusyn language.

Galician Ukrainians taken to indicate ethnonational distinctiveness?¹⁰⁷

Issue 6: Few academics support the contention that Carpatho-Rusyn is an ethnonational identity

It is inescapable that the only academics who support the existence of a Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonation are scholars who have Subcarpathian Ruthenian familial roots. Considering the scholar-communities studying most other stateless nations, this appears highly unusual, though it is, perhaps an inevitability with **Type-Ee** / **Type-Ei** nation-building contests.

Nevertheless, a situation in which a small circle of academics evidence their case by referring to assertions already made by themselves and their colleagues¹⁰⁸ makes the entire project seem questionable. Not least when that case is deconstructed by Ukrainophile scholars (Subtelny, Panchuk), scholars of Ukrainian background who are nominally neutral (Kuzio, Himka), scholars of no orientation, (RA Smith, Hann) and even scholars who themselves have Subcarpathian Ruthenian familial roots (Mušynka, Myšanyč).

In summary: academics with Carpathian East Slavic roots are divided over whether Rusyns constitute a distinct ethnonation. Amongst academics without such roots, the support for the contention is almost entirely absent.

107Subtelny questions if any significant differences do, in fact, exist: “[W]hat, in objective terms, are the nation-defining features of this 'national group'? Today their homeland is part of Ukraine and its inhabitants are Ukrainians. What little survives of 'old country' customs among them is practically identical to that of Ukrainians. Even the term 'Rusyn' to which many of them cling so tenaciously is the same as that used by west Ukrainians prior to the twentieth century...” See: Subtelny, Orest, “East Slavs: Made in the USA”, *Carpatho-Rusyn American*, Summer 1986, pp.4-5

108Raymond Smith reports: “[B]y the mid-1980s, the paucity of new information on both Carpatho-Ruthenia and the diaspora had reduced academics to citing their own research as evidence of intellectual ferment; Magosci for one would often point to the work of the Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center – of which he was founder, president, and author of some half of its official publications. Likewise, Magosci has cited the fact that the U.S. Census Bureau and the *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* recognize Ruthenians as a separate nationality, even though he personally was largely responsible for both of these developments.” - Smith, RA, 1997, p.151. This trend continues. The back cover of Rusinko's 'Straddling Borders' features an endorsement from Magosci who writes that the book will be of 'special importance to a wide variety of readers interested in the literatures and cultures of former and present stateless peoples worldwide.' - Rusinko, 2003, back cover. Meanwhile, on the inside of the book, Rusinko writes: “Since 1989, however, a Rusyn renaissance has been underway. [...] This remarkable rebirth has prompted scholars to call Rusyns a 'new Slavic nationality’” - Rusinko, 2003, pp.3-4. One of the scholars who does so most frequently is Magosci.

2.2 Why the idea of a Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonation persists

Given the persuasive ethnographic, linguistic and historical arguments to consider Carpathian East Slavs as a regional subgroup – or a series of regional subgroups - within the Ukrainian ethnonation, how can the – occasionally, barely credible - **Type-Ei** Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonational identity project persist?

We can establish that certain Carpathian East Slavic communities (in North America, Slovakia etc.), insulated against direct exposure to Ukrainian ethnonation-building, elaborated their own mythos and historiography which resonated for them more strongly¹⁰⁹ than the corresponding elements of the Ukrainian identity-project. Given that the most important consideration for those who find a community identity resonant is only that other in-group members accept them, we can argue that demonstrating observably distinctive characteristics from other ethnonations is not a concern for participants in a self-declared ethnonational community until they need to enlist the support of an external party. So, once community members participate in a conscious identity and accept each other as co-participants, the ethnonational idea *is* a reality, regardless of external party perceptions.

But significantly, when powerful external parties then act to further their own self-interest in ways which recognise that faith-sustained group identity, they enable the group's identity-architects to argue with greater force that theirs is not a parochial, collective delusion but an externally substantiated reality.

¹⁰⁹Schöpflin argues: “For a myth to be effective in organizing and mobilizing opinion, it must [...] resonate. A myth that fails to elicit a response is either alien to the community, or inappropriate at the time when it is used, or, conceivably, evokes a response only in a small number of those addressed. [...] It seems clear that there are clear and unavoidable limits to invention and imagination and these are set by resonance. [...] myth cannot be constructed purely out of false material; it has to have some relationship with the memory of the collectivity that has fashioned it. There has to be some factor, some event, some incident in the collective memory to which the myth makes an appeal; it is only at that point that the reinterpretation can vary radically from a closer, historical assessment.” See: Schöpflin, George, “The Functions of Myth and a Taxonomy of Myths” (pp.19-35) in Hosking, G & Schöpflin, G (eds.), *Myths and Nationhood*, London, 1997, (hereafter, Schöpflin, 1997), pp. 25-26

From the Rusynophile perspective, resonant alternative narratives, sustained recognition between in-group members and institutional recognition by external parties all undermine the Ukrainophiles' insistence that Rusyns constitute an inseparable part of the Ukrainian Nation.

Issue 1: Carpathian East Slavs cannot share in Ukraine's Golden Age Myths

Theorists analysing how elites consciously construct national narratives emphasise that the myths nation-builders propagate amongst their subject populations - "ethnic cores, homelands, heroes and golden ages"¹¹⁰ - must resonate. Conceivably, the most consistently resonant myth for Rusynophiles is Schöpflin's *myth of unjust treatment* in which

history is a malign actor that has singled out the community for special, negative treatment, for disfavour. The group has suffered, but that is its fate. Here the motif of helplessness tends to be strong.¹¹¹

But Smith argues that, in mobilising the nation, the most essential myth is the "Golden Age"¹¹². While Ukrainian nation-builders invoke as many as three Golden Ages¹¹³, their resonance in the Carpathians is weak. Kyivan Rus' influence over the Carpathian region has never been established¹¹⁴. Ukrainophile

110 Calhoun, 2007, p.68

111 Schöpflin, 1997, p.30. Rusinko confirms Rusyn national awakener Aleksander Dukhnovych's appeal to this category of myth: "Dukhnovych's idealistic poetry had depicted the Rusyn peasant as a victim of fate, who could not be blamed for his position, nor expected to do anything about it." - Rusinko, 2003, p.192. Nor is the myth overplayed. Makara and Sharga note: "In 1899, the economist Ede Egán, an Irishman by descent employed in Hungary's Ministry of Agriculture, studied the economic situation of the Subcarpathian Rusyns and concluded: "It is dreadful to look at this dying people. It is already possible to predict the day when the last Rusyn will leave the region." - Makara & Sharga, p.12. The authors contend the region continues to endure oppressive, externally imposed economic policies today.

112 "In order to create a convincing representation of the 'nation', a worthy and distinctive past must be rediscovered and appropriated. Only then can the nation aspire to a glorious destiny for which its citizens may be expected to make some sacrifices." Smith, Anthony D, "The 'Golden Age' and National Renewal" (pp.36-59) in Hosking, G & Schöpflin, G (eds.), *Myths and Nationhood*, London, 1997, (hereafter, Smith, AD, 1997), p.36

113 The Age of the Kyivan Rus' Princes; the Age of Danylo of Halych; and the Age of the Cossacks.

114 There is much dispute though. Duc'-Fajfer notes: "Ukrainian researchers claim that the wedge of Rusyn settlement in the western Carpathians is a remnant of the period of Kievan Rus', whose territory extended much further west and north than Polish historiography accepts." (Duc'-Fajfer, 1993) South of the Carpathians, while it is generally accepted that the Magyar Arpad dynasty dominated the Carpathian Basin from 896AD, "There is no scholarly consensus as to when Rusyns settled in the Subcarpathian region or when and from whom they received Christianity [...] Ukrainian scholars insist [...] Subcarpathian Rus' [... was...] a part of Kievan Rus'" (Rusinko, 2003, pp.22-25). Other historians contend that "Subcarpathian Rus' was never part of Kievan Rus'" (Magocsi, 2007, p.292)

scholars accept it was not part of the realm of Danylo of Halych¹¹⁵. Like Galicia, it had no political connection to the Cossack Hetmanate (1648-1775) founded by Bohdan Khmelnytskyi.

The failure of Ukrainian nation-builders to include narratives in the national mythos which might resonate for Carpathian communities leaves the latter with no sense of heroic Ukrainian origins. Smith argues:

So pressing, however, is the need for an ethnic 'golden age' in the construction of nations that states and populations that lack their own epochs of former glory may well annex the golden ages of other related communities or lands¹¹⁶

For Rusynophiles, their “annexed Golden Age” comes in the form of portraying Subcarpathia as one of the lands visited by the “Apostles to the Slavs”, Constantine and Methodius, in their mission to bring Christianity and the written word to Great Moravia¹¹⁷. This compelling myth has the dual advantage of emphasising Subcarpathia's location in Central Europe and giving the territory a longer Christian tradition than Supercarpathian Ukraine¹¹⁸. Consequently, in an environment where Western-ness and Christian-ness are prized, Rusynophiles can feel they are “more established Christians” and more westward-oriented than Ukrainians.

With meagre material available from before the sixteenth century¹¹⁹ Rusynophiles have few other

115“For almost a century after Danylo's death, Galicia and Volhynia experienced few apparent changes. The pattern set by Danylo and Vasylo – that of a dynamic, forceful prince in Galicia and a more retiring ruler in Volhynia was followed to a certain extent by their respective sons, Lev (1264-1301) and Volodymyr (1270-89). The ambitious and restless Lev was constantly involved in political conflicts. After the Arpad dynasty was extinguished in Hungary, he obtained Transcarpathian Rus', thus laying the foundation for future Ukrainian claims to the western slopes of the Carpathians.” - Subtelny, 2000, p.63

116Smith, AD, 1997, pp.52-53

117A statue of the apostles in the centre of Mukachevo acknowledges this regionally-specific myth.

118Rusinko writes: “Rusyn historians date the acceptance of Christianity in Subcarpathian Rus' to approximately 867, a full century before the baptism of Kievan Rus' by Prince Vladimir in 988.” - Rusinko, 2003, p.25

119Rusinko writes: “[...] no written monuments, translated or original, survive from ninth-, tenth-, or eleventh-century Subcarpathia. Centuries of wars, catastrophes, and religious struggles in the region meant the rampant destruction of ancient monuments, architectural no less than literary. The few surviving texts contain hints that many more had once existed. The 'Subcarpathian document' [...] of 1404, a secular document attesting to a grant of land to the Hrushevo monastery, was written on a piece of parchment that was later used as the cover of a Latin manuscript book. One can only speculate how many Slavic cultural monuments were destroyed in this manner, literally overwritten by the

dramatic myths¹²⁰ and some resort to superlatively primordialist claims¹²¹

The thousand year Ukrainian narrative has failed to mobilise Rusynophiles, given their exclusion from all three Ukrainian Golden Age myths. Being driven to create their own compellingly resonant mythos has reinforced the Rusynophiles' sense they are distinct from Ukrainians.

dominant culture.” See: Rusinko, 2003, (pp.37-38)

120Two legends which are cited are Prince Laborets' leading Subcarpathian Rusyns into battle against Magyar invaders in the ninth century (Rusinko, 2003, p.23) and the arrival in the region in the late fourteenth century of Prince Fedor Koriatovych, an Orthodox Rus' Prince from Podillia who was granted by Hungarian King Zsigmond an estate in northeastern Hungary, *Marchia Ruthenorum*, which he ruled as an autonomous Rusyn province and, in the process, founded Rusyn spiritual, ecclesiastical and secular culture. (Rusinko, 2003, pp.23-24).

121Nation-builders may invoke deep primordialism as a strategy for rejecting official historiography and establishing a distinct heritage for their people. Suny notes: “when people talk about identity their language excludes a sense of historical construction or provisionality and instead almost always accepts the present identity as fixed, singular, bounded [...] and marked by historical longevity, if not rooted in nature.” See: Suny, Ronald, “Constructing Primordialism: Old Histories for New Nations”, p.6, <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~crn/crn_papers/Suny3.pdf>, [accessed: August 24, 2008]. Anderson asks: “If nationalism [... is...] the expression of a radically changed form of consciousness, should not awareness of that break, and the necessary forgetting of the older consciousness, create its own narrative?”. See: Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities*, Revised Edition, 2006, p.xiv

Thus, Makara and Sharga write: “Scholarly research has established that there were Slavic settlements on the southern slopes of the Carpathian mountains as early as the sixth to eighth centuries [...] the Rusyns are the indigenous population of present-day Transcarpathia. The Rusyns (known in Europe as Ruthenians) occupied a vast area from the High Tatras in the west to the Chornohor range in the east, and from the Lemko Region in the north to the central Danubian Basin in the south. [...] On the basis of a profound analysis of Greek, Roman, and Byzantine sources, as well as the works of medieval western European historians, Luchkai convincingly proved that the present-day Rusyns are the indigenous inhabitants of the lands located between the Danube and Tisza Rivers and the Carpathian Mountains. They are a primordial and indigenous Slavic people with their own name and history, related to the other Slavic peoples of central and eastern Europe. [...] the consolidation of the Rusyn people in the center of Europe took place parallel to the formation of East Slavic and other peoples.” See: Makara & Sharga, pp.1-2

Elsewhere - while Wilson observes that some Belarusian and Ukrainian nationalists have claimed that “their languages are [...] older than Russian.” - see: Wilson, Andrew, “Myths of National History in Belarus and Ukraine” (pp. 182-197) in Hosking, Geoffrey & Schöpflin, George (Eds.), *Myths and Nationhood*, London, 1997, (hereafter, Wilson, 1997), pp.193 - some Carpatho-Rusyn nationalists go as far as asserting that their two thousand year old language *is* the surviving remnant of the original proto-East Slavonic and that the language of the Rusyns was only adopted later by the 'younger' East Slavic nations. (This view was expressed by Dr. Antal Ljavinecz, Secretary of the *Hodinka National Society of Rusyn Intelligentsia* in Budapest during an interview with the author in Budapest on June 18, 2008.)

Magocsi, who has a more sophisticated understanding of national identity, does not argue from a primordialist position. Instead, he writes: “[...] nationality is a state of mind, an ideology learned through the family or through extra-familial association, most often through formal education, during which individuals are made aware of the fact that they may be similar to other individuals because they may share with them certain common characteristics, such as language, traditions and territory, perhaps even religion. [...] The crucial factor [...] is not the presence or absence of observable common characteristics, but rather the presence of an awareness, a desire, an active will to be a member of a nationality.” (Magocsi, 1986, p.4)

Issue 2: The Carpatho-Rusyn national idea has remained resonant

The Carpatho-Rusyn national idea has resonated in various forms for more than a century, even in the near-total absence of a specifically Rusynophile state or substate¹²². If we accept that the “revival” of Rusynism in 1989 was not a wholly new project¹²³, it follows that the same idea has continued inspiring movements throughout a long history of eradication attempts by Magyarone, Slovak, Polish, Soviet and Ukrainian identity projects.

While Ukrainophilism has emerged victorious whenever Rusynophile and Ukrainophile projects have competed head-to-head, the **Type-Ee** Carpatho-Rusyn idea has consistently resisted total subsumption into the **Type-Ei** Ukrainian idea. Few other **Type-Ee** nation-building projects have survived into the twenty-first century after challenges from institutionally more powerful **Type-Ei** projects. Arguably, the idea is founded on a more compellingly resonant framework than comparable ethnonational ideas (Belarusian, Moldovan) which can (potentially) look to state institutions for support.

Issue 3: The Carpatho-Rusyn diaspora succeeded in winning recognition from the Atlantic Powers

The starkest difference between the Subcarpathian and Galician East Slavs following the First World War is their respective success and failure in influencing the Great Powers. While, north of the Carpathians, the Atlantic powers permitted Poland to reincorporate Eastern Galicia and its “Ruthenian”

¹²²The exceptions are the brief Hungarian autonomous substate of *Rus'ka Kraïna* of 1918-1919 and the Hungarian substate of *Kárpátalja* during the Second World War. Even autonomous *Podkarpatska Rus'* can only be regarded as having a specifically Rusynophile administration for two weeks in 1938 following the Third Reich's designation of Bohemia as a protectorate. Magocsi notes: “Post-Munich Czechoslovakia was [...] structurally transformed, so that Subcarpathian Rus' as well as Slovakia, which throughout the inter-war years had demanded the implementation of full autonomy, were finally granted their wishes. On October 11, 1938, autonomous Subcarpathian Rus' received its first governmental cabinet made up of local leaders primarily of Rusynophile and Russophile national orientation. Within two weeks, however the Czechoslovak government appointed a new cabinet dominated by local Ukrainophiles under the leadership of the Greek Catholic priest and educator, Avhustyn Voloshyn.” - Magocsi, 2007, pp.265-266

¹²³Raymond Smith argues: “If it cannot be demonstrated that there was a Carpatho-Ruthenian 'shadow nation' lying in wait for the end of Communist rule, it also cannot simply be asserted that the sudden appearance of nationalist organizations was solely an elemental and inevitable response to the end of Communist rule. Rather, a review of the literature suggests that the contemporary nationalist organizations represent new phenomena that may have been fashioned out of the raw material of feelings of Carpatho-Ruthenian ethnic distinctiveness, but that were not necessarily continuous with earlier Carpatho-Ruthenian nationalist movements.” - Smith, RA, 1997, pp.142-143

subjects¹²⁴ following victory over the West Ukrainian Peoples Republic (ZUNR), Subcarpathian Ruthenian émigrés in North America successfully convinced the Great Powers to separate the *Rus'ka Kraïna* from Béla Kún's Bolshevik Hungarian Republic and join it to the new Czechoslovak federation¹²⁵.

Arguably, the pro-Polish, anti-Bolshevik Atlantic Powers acted entirely according to self-interest¹²⁶. For Rusynophiles however - regardless of positions adopted by their Magyarone, Russophile and Ukrainophile colleagues - the fact that the Atlantic Powers allowed the ZUNR to fail while supporting the creation of *Podkarpatska Rus'* can only have reinforced their contention that they represented an entity distinct from the Hungarian, Russian and Ukrainian ethnations.

The engagement of powerful states in state-building has significantly propelled other ethnonational identity projects¹²⁷. Although *Podkarpatska Rus'* did not survive and was never a specifically Rusynophile substate, its inauguration constitutes a powerful element in twentieth century Rusynophile historiography¹²⁸.

124Polish propagandists World War I were dismissive of the term “Ukrainian” and the link it implied between the Galicians and the *malorosy*. They continued referring to Galician East Slavs as Ruthenians. A pamphlet published in 1919 in Paris appealed to the Atlantic Powers, arguing that East Galicia and its East Slavic inhabitants should remain the territory and subjects of the new *Rzeczpospolita*. See: Lutoslawski, W & Romer, E, *The Ruthenian Question in Galicia*, Paris, 1919

125Batt notes: “The Hungarian and Ukrainian options collapsed with Bolshevik takeovers in both countries. Meanwhile, representatives of émigré Rusyns in the USA (numbering some 300,000), failed to secure international support for an independent state [...] and then negotiated with Thomas Masaryk to join the new Czechoslovak Republic as an 'independent state' within a federation. The Paris Peace Conference, recognizing the Rusyns as 'racially and linguistically a distinct nationality' in need of a 'national home', but sceptical of their capacities to constitute an independent state, accepted this proposal” - Batt, 2002, p.162

126Hurst Hannum considers: “Self-determination was considered only for “nations” which were within the territory of the defeated empires; it was never thought to apply to overseas colonies [...] It should be underscored that self-determination in 1919 had little to do with the demands of the peoples concerned, unless those demands were consistent with the geopolitical and strategic interests of the Great Powers.” - Hannum, Hurst, *Autonomy, Sovereignty and Self-Determination – The Accommodation of Conflicting Rights*, Philadelphia, MA, 1996, p.28

127The FYR Macedonian, Moldovan and Montenegrin ethnonational identity projects are clear examples.

128Magocsi observes: “[P]ersons of Carpatho-Rusyn orientation living in the Transcarpathian oblast [...] believe that they are the 'indigenous' (*korinni*) inhabitants living in their 'own' very specific territory, which had its own political status (autonomy / embryonic statehood) in the first half of the twentieth century.” - email interview with the author on August 27, 2008.

Issue 4: Carpatho-Rusyns have secured recognition across Central Europe

In 1974, Yugoslavia created a new autonomous province of Vojvodina, recognising Bačka Rusyns¹²⁹ as one of the province's five titular nationalities. By contrast, Soviet policy ensured Warsaw Pact states categorised Carpathian East Slavs as Ukrainians until 1989. In the 1990s however, the administrations in Prague, Bratislava, Budapest, Warsaw and Bucharest joined Belgrade in recognising Rusyns as a national minority distinct from Ukrainians¹³⁰. In six states today, the existence of non-Ukrainian Rusyns is a *de jure* reality. Furthermore, Rusyn communities have secured limited autonomy in Hungary¹³¹ and parliamentary representation in Romania¹³². In March 2007, the *Zakarpatska oblasna rada* also recognised the Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonationality - but without support from the *Verkhovna Rada*, the council's declaration has failed to translate into far-reaching practical policy.

Seeing widespread support for their movement across Central Europe¹³³, Transcarpathian Rusynophiles unsurprisingly feel that ethnic injustice is being committed in *Zakarpattya*, where Rusyns enjoy no self-determination, little representation and only nominal recognition.

Issue 5: Carpatho-Rusyns now have their own codified literary languages

While Carpathian East Slavs have always spoken regionally idiosyncratic vernaculars¹³⁴, Rusynophiles

129An early Carpathian Greek Catholic diaspora which emigrated south and settled in the Vojvodina during the reign of Maria Theresa in the eighteenth century. West Slavonic dialectical elements in the Bačka Rusyn language suggest that the population largely emigrated from the westernmost parts of Carpatho-Rusyn territory.

130 See: Magocsi, Paul Robert, "Rusyn History", *World Academy of Rusyn Culture*, 2003, (hereafter, Magocsi, 2003), <<http://www.rusyn.org/rusyns-history.html>>, [accessed: August 26, 2008]

131 Pozun, Brian, "The Rusyns of Hungary - End of the Millennial Struggle", *Central Europe Review*, Vol. III, No. 16, 7 May, 2001, (hereafter, Pozun, 2001ii), <<http://www.ce-review.org/01/16/pozun16.html>>, [accessed August 28, 2008]

132 Pozun, 2001i

133 "The cultural and organizational activities that have taken place since the Revolution of 1989 have in varying degrees been assisted by the governments of all the countries in which Rusyns live, except Ukraine." - Magocsi, 2003

134 Makara and Sharga note: "[...] related words, which do not exist in other East Slavic languages or which have different connotations. Rusyn: *njanko* / Ukrainian: *bat'ko* [father]; *mamka* / *matusia* [mother]; *dido*, *didyk* / *didus* [grandfather]; *babka* / *babusia* [grandmother]; *stryi*, *uiko* / *diadia* [uncle]; *stryina*, *uina* / *diadyna* [aunt]; *stryichanyk*, *stryichanka*, *titchanyk*, *titchanka* / *dvoiuiridni brat*, *dvoiuiridna sestra* [cousin]; words denoting articles of clothing: *topank y* / *cherevyky* [shoes], *nohavysi* / *shtany* [trousers], *mashlyk* / *kravatka* [necktie], *kalap*, *kleban*, *kresania* / *kapeliukh* [hat]; verbs: *hliadaty* / *shukaty* [to seek]; *pozyraty* / *dyvytysia* [to look at]; *vydity* / *bachyty* [to see]; *banovaty* / *tuzhyty* [to

in Slovakia and Poland can now lay claim to “the Holy Grail” of nation-building: a literary language¹³⁵. The development of codified languages suggests that, even if for most of the twentieth century the Rusyn ethnonational idea was regarded by non-Rusynophiles as an obscure ideology, the Rusynophile movement finally has the vehicle to compete with the Ukrainian ethnonation-building project on an equal basis¹³⁶. With the codification of literary languages, tools now exist to create deeper distinctions between non-Ukrainian and Ukrainian Carpathian East Slavic ethnonational identities. The Rusynophile conviction that Carpatho-Rusyns have a distinct destiny may yet be realised.

2.3 Finding the roots of the Rusynophile Orientation

The arguments above only reveal why the Carpatho-Rusyn nation-building project appears incredible to a Ukrainophile and credible to a Rusynophile today. But further analysis is needed to explain why the **Type-Ee** Rusyn identity exists at all and whether it may be regarded as an East Slavic ethnonational identity analogous to Ukrainian. If, as nationalism theorists contend, popularly-embraced national ideas are products of industrial modernity which successfully propagate only with institutional support, we need to establish the environment in which the Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonational idea originated, the institutions from where it secured support and how its challenge to the Ukrainian nation-builders project survived to re-emerge in 1989.

yearn]; *metaty / kydaty* [to throw], among others.” - Makara & Sharga, p.4

135Calhoun reflects that for numerous nineteenth and twentieth century nationalist movements: “nationalism meant producing a new, modern literature in the vernacular language. One dimension of this was the attempt to forge a unity between the language of literature and intellectuals and that of ordinary people – since groups previously separated by language were now to be reunited by a national language. [...] The shared language is not the 'test' of nationhood, but the means of imagining – and thereby creating – the nation.” (Calhoun, 2007, p.66)

136The transformation of 'dialect' into 'language' cannot be underestimated in its power to redefine the 'subethnic group' as a 'distinct ethnonation'. Schöpflin writes: “if a community has its own language, it must be a nation; and as a nation, it has the right to constitute its own state and become a subject of history. Needless to say, all the above is not much more than a legitimating formula, albeit one with extensive resonance and recognition in the [CEE] region. [...] Once a group has called its language into being and that move has generated a degree of resonance, the community can be said to have come into existence. Other political, cultural and economic claims and assumptions follow on from there. [...] A high cultural language is vital both instrumentally and as legitimation. It ensures recognition for its speakers, thereby notionally placing the language community beyond assimilation.” - Schöpflin, 2000, pp.121-123

The starting point of the following analysis is the contention of modernist nationalism theorists such as Gellner, Hobsbawm and Anderson that conditions for a mass sense of ethnonational belonging only start to emerge during industrialisation, as commercial and political pressures collaborate to homogenise culture and communication¹³⁷. In such an environment, especially where the transition from agrarian to industrial society is slow, it is apparent that rival projects seeking to shape the identity of that sense of ethnonational belonging may emerge and compete. Other scholars contend that the single major factor determining the success of each identity project is the degree to which it enjoys state institutional support:

The state coordinates identities by serving as a unique focal point, but it reinforces the natural psychological tendency by rewarding supporters, suppressing proponents of alternative nation-state projects, and propagating the official project through public education, public ceremonies, and the many other tools a state uses to celebrate itself. [...] This provides the focal point for the coordination of imaginations and the political resources to privilege one project above others by hiring linguists, historians, and polemicists to embellish and propagate this project. [...] The heroes in the forging of nationalism are often not the romantic poets but politicians, humble bureaucrats, and the authors of dreadfully dull textbooks, who help shape each generation's knowledge of the world.¹³⁸.

The origins of the Carpatho-Rusyn National Idea

Rusyns of all orientations today invoke the writings of the “national awakener” Aleksander

Dukhnovych to support their positions¹³⁹. The present-day Rusynophile school, above all, seeks to

137Gellner writes: “nationalism is not the awakening and assertion of [...] mythical, supposedly natural and given units. It is, on the contrary, the crystallization of new units, suitable for the conditions now prevailing, though admittedly using as their raw material the cultural, historical and other inheritances from the pre-nationalist world. [...] new units constructed on the principles corresponding to the new division of labour” - Gellner, 1983, pp.47-48

138Roeder, Philip G, *Where Nation States Come From – Institutional Change in the Age of Nationalism*, Princeton, NJ, 2007, (hereafter, Roeder, 2007), pp. 26-27

Elsewhere Roeder notes: “Dankwart Rustow notes that seldom [...] did national unity precede the creation of state authority [...] Rupert Emerson argues that typically it was the state that was the 'nation-maker' rather than nations creating states” - Roeder, 2007, p. 24

Fullbrook agrees: “The role of myths may be highly important as far as certain political elites with the will to form a nation are concerned. But it is essentially politics which determines whether a 'nation-state' will be formed, and what precise shape it will take. [...] Once the self-proclaimed nation-state itself is securely established, a variety of institutions, practices and symbols will help propagate a particular version of its identity, with varying degrees of resonance among different groups in the population. And the success of the state – or at least its establishment against serious challenge – will help secure the success of its myths.” - Fullbrook, 1997, p.87

139Magocsi writes: “the most popular national figure, Aleksander Dukhnovych, could be viewed as any one or all of the

recast Dukhnovych as the founding advocate of an independent Rusyn ethnation.

But his declaration that “The Carpathians do not divide us,” amongst others, reveals that Dukhnovych, like his Rusyn nation-awakening contemporaries (including Aleksander Pavlovich¹⁴⁰ and Adolf Dobriansky¹⁴¹) was not Rusynophile in the contemporary sense. He was Russophile¹⁴² (actually *Rus'ophile*) who understood Subcarpathians to be one constituency of an *obshcherusskie* (common-Russian) pan-East-Slavic Rus' nation. The consciousness Dukhnovych sought to instil in the Rus' church-goers on Hungarian soil was pan-East-Slavic. Dukhnovych's oft-invoked line: “*Ja Rusyn byl', jesm i budu*” conveyed “I was, am and will remain *an East Slav*.” It emphasised to the peasant Rus' churchgoers that they were not Magyars.

To isolated, impoverished peasant communities living in northern Hungary in the nineteenth century,

following: a symbol of a common Russian (*obshcherusskii*) unity, a close ally of Galician Ukrainians, or a true representative of the Rusyns [...] Subsequently Dukhnovych's famous line 'I was, am and will be a Rusyn' was hailed by all three national orientations, because the poet's Rusyn could be considered a Russian, a Ukrainian, or a symbolic representative of an independent nationality.” - Magocsi, 1978, p.128.

Ukrainophile Myšanyč, for instance, seizes on words from an 1860 poem by Dukhnovych to entitle his 1993 anti-Rusynophile collection of essays: “*Karpaty nas ne Rozluchat'*” [“The Carpathians do not divide us”]. Rusinko counters: “This poem is often cited, with disregard for chronological exactitude, as evidence for Dukhnovych's identification with Galician 'Ukrainians' and support for what was to become the Ukrainian national movement. [...] However, it is clear that Dukhnovych sees the unity of Rusyns on both sides of the Carpathians within a greater Rus' that comprises all [East] Slavic peoples. [...] Magocsi points out that Dukhnovych never used the term Ukrainian for himself or for his people” - Rusinko, 2003, pp.204 & 482

140Rusinko writes: “Aleksander Pavlovych (1819-1900) was a contemporary of Dukhnovych and a collaborator in the Presov Literary Society [...] A prolific poet, Pavlovych is second only to Dukhnovych himself in the Rusyn national pantheon [...] In 1850 Pavlovych was in Prešov, where he came under Dukhnovych's influence and expressed a Slavophile consciousness, invoking in his poetry the images of Mother Slava, Holy Rus', and Slav unity. His concept of Rus', like Dukhnovych's, was inclusive of all [East] Slavic peoples.” - Rusinko, 2003, pp.186-188

141Yekelchik considers: “In Hungarian-ruled Transcarpathia, the charismatic mining engineer Adolf Dobriansky emerged as a leader of the Ruthenian intelligentsia. [...] Combined with the local intelligentsia's previous fascination with Russian culture, the passage of the mighty Russian army through tiny Transcarpathia solidified their belief that the Ruthenians living beyond the Carpathian Mountains were nothing but a branch of the larger Russian nation. Dobriansky became an informal leader of these 'Russophiles'.” See: Yekelchik, Serhy, *Ukraine – Birth of a Modern Nation*, Oxford, 2007, (hereafter, Yekelchik, 2007), p.48

142Magocsi reveals Dukhnovych's Russophile sentiment: “One thing really gave me joy in life and that was in 1849 when I first saw the glorious Russian army... I can't describe the feeling of gladness at seeing the first Cossack on the streets of Presov. I danced and cried with delight... it was truly the first, perhaps the last, joy of my life.” - Magocsi, 1978, p.45

any connection to Ruthenians in Lemberg, Little Russians of Kiev and Great Russians of St. Petersburg would - had they even heard of the cities - hardly have been apparent¹⁴³. Russophile ideas, emphasising that they belonged to a single, internally diverse East Slavic continuum, would not have been taught by most intelligentsia within their community - the majority of Subcarpathian Ruthenian intelligentsia identified with the Magyar ruling class¹⁴⁴.

If Duchnovych and his contemporary national awakers were Russophiles, from where did the local particularism arise which formed the seed of today's concept of a "fourth East Slavic nationality"? The answer emerges when we consider the strategic considerations of Hungarian state institutions.

North of the Carpathians, while Polish governors in nineteenth century Galicia were hostile to both Ukrainophilism and Russophilism (both rejections of Polish identity), the Austrian imperial authorities came to see the Ukrainophile movement first as a counterweight to regional Polish dominance and eventually even colluded with Ukrainophiles to prevent the growth of Russophilism¹⁴⁵. Austria might

143This is clearly evidenced by the reaction of Carpathian locals to the arrival of Tsarist troops in the region following the Hungarian uprising. Magocsi writes: "The main Russian army of Prince Paskevich crossed into Hungary in June 1849 via Carpathian mountain passes that led through Subcarpathian Rusyn territory. One eyewitness later recalled how the Rusyns joyfully met the invading forces. 'Our peasants continually carried baggage, while smiling children brought to the [army] camp apples, plums, nuts etc...' The Rusyns, whose only external contact had been with a Magyar world, were awestruck by the fact that 'they freely conversed with the Moskaly (Russians) and without difficulty understood their language.'" - Magocsi, 1978, p.45

144Magocsi writes: "It should be stressed that the activity of the Dobrianskii circle was not at all a widespread phenomenon. Rather it was limited to a small group of activists centred in Prešov, who were in fact disavowed by the larger and more influential pro-Magyar Rusyn clerical circles in Uzhhorod. [...] the Hungarian government, so sensitive to the slightest Pan-Slavic inclinations, did not yet know of the political machinations of Dobrianskii and his group. [...] Dukhnovych was particularly concerned with raising the educational level of his people. [...] His 1847 elementary primer (*Knyzhytisia*) was the first text written solely in local speech. [...] After 1849, the Rusyn language was also introduced by Dukhnovych at the Prešov gymnasium and two years later it was taught at the Košice Academy. As a counterbalance to these modest advances, however, there continued the traditional pro-Hungarian policies of the Greek Catholic hierarchy." - Magocsi, 1978, pp.45,47,52

145Discussing Galician 'Rusyns', Dyrud notes: "By 1890 [...] Austria recognized the strategic importance of the Rusyns to the future interests of their respective empires. The Austrian government was interested in the solution to the Rusyn question because a pro-Russian solution would gravely threaten the integrity of Austrian Imperial territory. As a result, the Austrian government supported the Ukrainian movement as the most effective way to reverse the Russification trend among the Rusyns. [...] In Galicia the Austrian government made sporadic efforts to improve the lot of the Rusyns in relation to the Poles who controlled the government in Galicia. The Austrians also lent encouragement to the developing Ukrainian movement in Galicia. The Ukrainian movement was in competition with the Russian cultural effort and was thus a useful tool in Austria's opposition to 'Russian cultural imperialism.'" - Dyrud, 1992, p.17

conceivably have challenged the Russophile movement on its territory by sponsoring the broadly pro-Austrian *Old Ruthenian* movement in Eastern Galicia¹⁴⁶. But the Ukrainian idea had greater populist appeal and so Vienna strategically supported the Ukrainophiles.

The aim of authorities in Hungary was, similarly, to discourage their Ruthenian subjects from identifying as common-Russians. While pro-Magyar sympathies were strong within the Subcarpathian Rusyn intelligentsia¹⁴⁷, Budapest would still have needed a counterbalancing identity project to undermine the pan-East-Slavic Russophile movement initiated by the national awakeners which could look to Russia for support. But in Subcarpathia, Ukrainophilism enjoyed little popularity¹⁴⁸ and did not constitute an identity which might viably counter the influence of *obshcherusskij*-Russophilism¹⁴⁹.

Himka writes: "It took some time, but the Austrian state eventually came to realize that the Ukrainian movement could serve as an ally in the struggle with Russia and its supporters among the Ruthenians [...] Austria made the conscious choice to favor the Ukrainians over the all-Russians; this was unambiguous by 1908. [From 1914] Austria supported the Ukrainian movement [...] with a view to partitioning the Russian empire" - Himka, 1999, pp.136-137

146Himka explains that in Austrian Eastern Galicia, a third ethnopolitical project, the Old Ruthenian school, competed for the loyalties of local Ruthenians alongside the Ukrainophile and Russophile schools. However, with little institutional support, the Old Ruthenian school evolved differently from the *Uhro-Rusyn* school in Subcarpathia: "After the [1848] revolution, highly placed clerics within that national leadership formed a loose grouping known as the Old Ruthenian or St. George Party. [...] they were vague about the ultimate national allegiance of the Galician Ruthenians [...] But they did reject both the Russophile and Ukrainophile constructions, the latter more decisively [...] As a distinct tendency, they lasted into the 1870s, but were eventually absorbed into the Russophile and Ukrainophile camps." (Himka, 1999, p. 146)

147"As the political position of Hungary began to improve during the 1860s, it seemed to some Rusyn patriots that the majority of their leaders exhibited an increasing desire to assimilate with Magyar culture. [...] in the several decades before the First World War the majority of educated Rusyns became Magyarized. [...] The circle of Rusyn professionals in Budapest revealed even more than their brethren in the homeland a desire to become Magyar. [...] Their ideological goals were straightforward: to disassociate themselves and their people from the idea of a Rusyn nationality and to define themselves instead as Magyars of the Greek Catholic faith. [...] The outbreak of the First World War in August 1914 [...] intensified the poverty and continuing assimilation of the Subcarpathian Rusyns. [...] the trend towards Magyarization continued" - Magocsi, 1978, pp. 68-69,72

148Given that the nineteenth century Subcarpathian Russophiles regarded East Slavs as one population, it is not surprising that they regarded the Galician Ukrainophiles' regionalist rejection of *obshcherusskij* identity as flawed.

149In fact, during the First World War, when the Ukrainophile project did finally begin to make inroads into Subcarpathia, Budapest adopted the same policy of supporting Ukrainophilism just as Austria had in the nineteenth century. Magocsi writes: "the government in Budapest, which was literally infected by a paranoia of anything Russian, tried to reduce Russian influence by supporting Ukrainian nationalism. One indication of this was the establishment in Budapest of a new journal, *Ukránia* (1916-1917), which attempted to foster sympathy in Hungarian society for the cause of Ukrainian statehood. It was such an attitude that allowed the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen, a volunteer unit of the Austro-Hungarian Army, to be stationed in Subcarpathian Rus' as early as 1914 in order to fight off the Russian advance. The presence of the Ukrainian force could not have helped but influence the local intelligentsia." - Magocsi, 1978, pp.73-74

Nevertheless, when in 1917 the prospect of a Ukrainian state on its borders became a reality, Hungarians quickly perceived Ukrainophilism as the greater threat and supported Russophile attempts to discredit Ukrainophilism. Shandor reports: "After the end of World War I [...] Hungary, which in the past had severely persecute the Carpatho-Ukrainian

Arguably, the Magyar administration's best strategy for undermining the movement founded by Dukhnovych would have been to subtly encourage a local “Hungarian” Ruthenian identity.

When, after Duchnovych's death, a faction of the intelligentsia proposed continuing to use local dialects, rather than Russian as most nationalists now recommended, the Budapest administration, not unexpectedly, seized on the movement¹⁵⁰ and moulded it to create an *Uhro-Rusynist* orientation which could be promoted to undermine the Russophile intelligentsia, just as the Austrians promoted Ukrainophilism to undermine Russophilism in Galicia.

The Austrians were not particularly concerned if the Ruthenians in Galicia differentiated themselves from the local Polish population (in fact there were even advantages in being able to play one off against the other). But in Hungary, the main goal at all times following the 1867 *Ausgleich* was total Magyarisation. Thus Budapest's promotion of *Uhro-Rusynism* to counter Russophilism could only have had one goal: eventual assimilation of all Subcarpathian Rusyns into the Magyar nation.

So, the origins of the Rusynophile movement do not lie with Dukhnovych, but in Budapest's reaction to the Russophile movement popularised by Dukhnovych. The portrayal of the Subcarpathian Ruthenians as an indigenous Uhro-Rusyn ethnonation – East Slavic but with a Magyar character - was a strategic

people for their supposedly 'Russian Slavophilism' was now financing [...] the cultural movement of the Muscophile orientation. It was doing this with the express intention of hampering and ruining the sound Ukrainian national movement and thereby diverting the people from their natural national and cultural development.” - Shandor, 1997, pp.44-45. Clearly Budapest was prepared to adopt any strategy to discourage irredentist tendencies on its territory. 150Magocsi writes: “With the passing from the scene of Dukhnovych, Dobrianskii, Rakovskii, and Pankovics, Rusyn national life came to be dominated by two groups during the 1880s: (1) a small group of patriots who attempted to preserve some kind of Slavic national identity; and (2) a large group of Magyarones who favored complete assimilation with Magyar culture. [...] Basically there were two factions within the nationalist intelligentsia: (1) the Rusynophiles or populists, who wanted to raise the cultural level of the masses by writing in a dialectical-based language; and (2) the Russophiles, who maintained that literary Russian (perceived to be the legitimate modern descendant of Church Slavonic) was the only sophisticated means of communication. Until the 1890s the populists were in the minority, even though they were favored by the Hungarian government, which had continually frowned on using a 'foreign' language – Russian – for Subcarpathian publications. [...] To the degree that the Hungarian government favored any publications for Rusyns, it looked to those authors who used a language based on the Subcarpathian dialects.” - Magocsi, 1978, p.58

component of the late nineteenth century Magyar assimilationist project which sought to counter the *obshcherusskij*-Russophile movement of the Rusyn National Awakeners and prevent Hungary's Ruthenian population developing any sense of affinity with the powerful Romanov Empire to the northeast.

Thus, Carpatho-Rusynism as it exists today, promoting Rusyns as the “fourth East Slavic Nation” is not the intellectual offspring of an indigenous Carpathian East Slavic nation-building project, but of nineteenth century Magyar assimilationist politics. Pozun writes: “Rusyns have often been the political pawns of their larger, stronger neighbors”¹⁵¹, but arguably, the Carpatho-Rusyn national identity is *itself* the political pawn of its larger, stronger Hungarian neighbour¹⁵². How did a Magyar assimilationist project acquire such potency as to persist throughout the twentieth century, re-emerge on the eve of the collapse of the Soviet Union and persist for the next twenty years?

The survival of the Carpatho-Rusyn National Idea

The answer, once again, lies in the strategic considerations of state institutions. In Subcarpathia, it is fair to assume that, given the low education level of the population, conservatism of the mountain culture, and lack of an urban middle class, most of the local East Slavic population still retained a pre-ethnonational identity until after the Great War. Where locals were exposed to nation-building through

¹⁵¹Pozun, 2005

¹⁵²Hungary's political interest in the Kárpátalja region continues until today, suggesting that Hungary still regards Transcarpathian Rusyns as a client population. Madi notes: “Hungary resolutely supports efforts aimed at creating a special economic zone in Subcarpathia and does everything to facilitate this process. From the Hungarian point of view a special economic zone in Subcarpathia would be the best solution to the territory's economic difficulties. It would also be favourable for all neighbouring states.” - Madi, 1995, p.140.

In an interview with the author on September 8, 2007, a hotel clerk in Mukachevo explained that the Hungarian government was allowing Transcarpathian Ukrainians to apply for Hungarian (EU) passports.

Magocsi's early studies came to conclusions which closely echo the *Uhro-Rusynist* position: “Though closely related to the Rusyns (or present-day Ukrainians) living north of the Carpathians, the Rusyns of Subcarpathia lived so long within Hungary that they followed a historical course somewhat different from that of their brethren to the north.” See: Magocsi, 1973, p.325

the clergy, they encountered Magyarophilism or, perhaps, Uhro-Rusynism. So the general population would have had little sense of being anything other than *rusyn*.

Only intelligentsia were aware of other nation-building projects. Their post-war attempts to unite with Supercarpathia rather than seek autonomy suggests that, exposure to other East Slavs during the war had rendered Rusynophilism the least appealing orientation amongst elites by 1918-1919. But radicalised local leaders were unsuccessful in securing external support for Ukrainophilism (or Russophilism) during the post-war settlement.

In interwar Czechoslovakia, Rusyn political elites in *Podkarpatska Rus'* had the nominal freedom to pursue any of three ethnonational orientations¹⁵³. But, eschewing any potentially irredentist orientation, the Prague administration increasingly favoured the same local Rusynophile orientation formerly encouraged (after Magyarism) by Budapest¹⁵⁴. With support from the Third Reich, Ukrainophile institutions prevailed in “Carpatho-Ukraine” from 1938-1939. Then, during the 1939-1944 Hungarian occupation, institutions promoting the local orientation prevailed once again.

In summary: for the first forty-four years of the twentieth century, as Subcarpathia slowly entered the industrial age, state administrations governing Subcarpathia were Magyar (ie. primarily Magyarone,

153Garton Ash reports: “In those golden days of freedom, there was a great debate between Ukrainophiles, who argued that the Ruthenians were really Ukrainians, Russophiles who thought they were closer to Russians, and Rusynophiles, who said they were altogether different.” - Garton Ash, Timothy, “Long Live Ruthenia!” (pp.376-381) in *History of the Present – Essays, Sketches and Despatches from Europe in the 1990s*, London, 1999, (hereafter, Garton Ash, 1999), p.378 Given the Bolshevik recognition of a Ukrainian ethnonation, it is debatable what the Russophile orientation now represented – it could only questionably represent the nineteenth century *obshcherusskij* position held by the Rusyn “national-awakeners”. To most outsiders it probably resembled straightforward irredentism, like Ukrainophilism.

154Magosci writes: “The 1930s witnessed an increase in friction between the Russophile and Ukrainophile orientations, and Prague tried to balance off these conflicting forces by supporting the Rusynophile current. [...] Rusyns were not considered a minority [...] they were one of the dominant nationalities in the republic. [...] Subcarpathian Rus' also had its own symbol [...] Rusyns had their own national hymn [...] official and unofficial circles throughout Czechoslovakia generally perceived Subcarpathian Rus' to be a Rusyn land, as indicated in its new name, received in 1928, the Subcarpathian Rusyn Land [...] All of these factors might have been used effectively to help foster the idea of a separate Rusyn nationality.” - Magosci, 1978, pp.211-212 & 222

then Rusynophile) for nineteen years, Czech (ie. favourable towards Rusynophilism) for the next nineteen years, Ukrainophile for six months between October 1938 and March 1939 and then Hungarian (ie. Rusynophile) for the next five years. Attempts by local East Slavic elites' to promote a Ukrainian identity from 1918-1944, were constantly undermined by the more powerful state institutions in Budapest and Prague which had an interest in reminding Carpathian East Slavs that they were not pan-East-Slavic, or Russian, or Ukrainian. It would not be surprising if a significant section of the formerly pre-national *rusyn* population exposed for the first time during this period to an industrial, urban environment and ethnonational consciousness, assumed a Rusyn ethnonational identity.

After 1945, the Soviets suppressed the Rusyn ethnonational project¹⁵⁵. While exposure to Ukrainian ethnonation-building led many to (re-)identify as Ukrainian ethnonationals during that period¹⁵⁶, it seems reasonable to assume that some who became ethnonationally conscious Carpatho-Rusyns in *Rus'ka Kraïna*, *Podkarpatska Rus'* or *Kárpátalja* passed on their identity to their descendants. State institutional recognition for the Rusyn ethnonational orientation was again revived across Central Europe after 1989, starting in Czechoslovakia. Today, Croatia and Ukraine acknowledge only the Ukrainian identity, while Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania acknowledge both¹⁵⁷.

155Myšanyč writes: "After 1945 [...] There was a radical break with everything from the pre-Soviet past and a sweeping away of religion, customs, rituals, national dress, and native architecture. All was forced into ruin in the name of building a new life and a brighter future. Only from the mid-1970s [...] the newly-formed Society for Preservation of Monuments of History and Culture began to salvage what still remained." - Myšanyč, 1993, p.42

156Not only in Soviet Ukraine. Gajdoš and Konečný report: "According to the 1991 census, Rusin ethnicity was declared by 16,570 persons (1.18%), Ukrainian by 12,188 (0.87%) persons. The ratio of Rusins to Ukrainians [in Slovakia] changed during the last forty years from 4:1 to 3:2." (Gajdoš & Konečný, 2001, p.21) Nevertheless, subsequent reports suggest the trend in Slovakia might have reversed: "A census in Slovakia in 2001 registered 24,000 Rusyns, up from 17,000 Rusyns registered in a census 10 years earlier." (Maksymiuk, 2006)

157It is worth noting that In North America, Rusyn identity development followed a different course. The East Slavs of the *Felvidek* who left their peasant communities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to become industrial workers in the New World, arrived in North America with a pre-ethnonational identity. They had a culture from their homeland, spoke East Slavic dialects and, above all, they had their *rusyn* religious identity. Ukrainian ethnonational identity would likely have been a very alien concept. Naturally, the immigrants founded church communities and those who did not later convert to Orthodoxy and "become Russian" (see Dyrud, 1992 for an extensive history of the conversion of North American Greek Catholics to the Russian Orthodox Church) maintained some sense of identity from their Carpathian homeland. Since in North America, Subcarpathian Greek Catholics were not exposed to Ukrainian nation-building, their pre-national, religion-oriented identity survived as a non-Ukrainian identity. Myšanyč considers:

2.4 A third perspective: dual ethnonational identity

Having established that the Carpatho-Rusyn identity now officially recognised across Central Europe, is not a shallow-rooted project like Padanism or Transdnestrism and that it evolved in Carpathia during the twentieth century in much the same way as Ukrainian identity evolved in Galicia and Dnieper Ukraine in the nineteenth; and that, today, Carpatho-Rusyn constitutes a real Carpathian East Slavic ethnonational identity in terms of internal resources and external recognition, we may assert the following:

- 1) Ukrainian nation-builders who maintain that ethnonational identity is a question of history, religious affiliation, ethnography and language must concede that Carpatho-Rusyn linguists and historiographers have constructed a national-identity framework which can defend itself as distinct from the Ukrainian identity-framework. During the twentieth century Carpatho-Rusyn identity endured even when the Carpatho-Rusyn nation-building project lacked the resources or the institutional recognition which it has at its disposal today. Despite Ukrainophile protests, Carpatho-Rusyn identity, a century in the making, really does now exist *de facto* and *de jure* in several states outside Ukraine. Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonational identity is here to stay.
- 2) Carpatho-Rusyn nation builders who maintain that ethnonational identity is largely a matter of personal sentiment (it always is when multiple identities are available) must concede that many

“The 'Rusyn' consciousness of the American and Canadian Rusyns remained as it was at the time when they left their homeland.” - Myšanyč, 1993, p.49

After the Great War, it is not surprising that non-Ukrainian-identifying North American *rusyn* elites, denied the chance to see *Rus'ka Kraïna* elevated to an independent republic, regarded the joining of Subcarpathia with the new Czechoslovak state - in which *rusyny* would represent a distinct East Slavic minority - as preferable to the incorporation of the territory into a fledgling Ukrainian state in which they would be labelled “Ukrainian”. This, despite emerging popular sentiment in the homeland that *rusyny* on the southern slopes of the Carpathians were, notwithstanding regional cultural and linguistic idiosyncracies, as Ukrainian as their brethren in Galicia and Bukovina.

Rusyns (not least those of the Orthodox faith), will continue to regard Carpathian East Slavs as the western communities of the Ukrainian ethnonation. Thus, Carpathian East Slavs in a modern, intellectual / urban-industrial environment may plausibly claim (as they do, in fact) *either* Carpatho-Rusyn *or* Ukrainian ethnonational identity.

Neither Carpatho-Rusyn nor Ukrainian identity project – both still “works in progress” - have a superior claim to the Carpathian *rusyny*. Carpatho-Rusyn nation-builders tell a compelling story of a stateless people protesting ethnocolonialisation, but Carpatho-Rusyn nationalism, which emerged as a consequence of Hungarian and Czechoslovak policy in the region, is no more indigenous to Subcarpathia than Ukrainophilism.

Ultimately, both projects survived in the region - and Russophilism largely failed - because, during a long, slow period of industrialisation, dominant state institutions favoured one or the other. If today, more Uhro-Rusyn descendants favour Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonationality in Slovakia and more favour Ukrainian identity in *Zakarpattya*, that is only a reflection of the relative amounts of institutional Rusynisation and Ukrainianisation each region has been exposed to since the start of the twentieth century.

The arguments of Ukrainophiles - that the people formerly subject to a Hungarian assimilationist ideology needed to be taught to “become Ukrainian” - and those of the Rusynophiles today¹⁵⁸ mirror each other. But no amount of effort by nation-builders has succeeded in ascribing a single ethnonationality to Carpathian *rusyny*. Given the appeal of Carpatho-Rusyn historiography and mythos

¹⁵⁸“First, it was necessary to tell the Rusyns after half a century that they are Rusyns and nothing else. For over half a century we experienced active denationalization and false propaganda” - Fedyšynec', 1991, pp.82-83

for some Carpathian East Slavs, the sense held by others of being part of the Great Ukrainian people¹⁵⁹ and given that both Ukrainian and Carpatho-Rusyn identity projects now have resonant narratives, nation-building resources (literary language, historiography) and institutional support, it seems unlikely that the entire community-continuum will adopt a single ethnonational identity, or that either identity will fade away.

In 1991, Ukrainophile Mušynka wrote: “the issue at hand concerns not two nationalities, but one nationality, described in two ways.”¹⁶⁰ With the benefit of hindsight, we may consider the issue ever-increasingly resembles one population, with two simultaneously-available, viable ethnonational identities¹⁶¹.

The Carpathian community-continuum cannot be wholly classified as either Ukrainian or Carpatho-Rusyn. Yet more complicated, even within microethnic communities one *Bojko* or *Rusnak* may identify as Carpatho-Rusyn while another identifies as Ukrainian, making it impossible even to attribute a single ethnonationality to regional sub-groups.

Twenty years after the collapse of the Soviet-sponsored regimes across Central Europe, it may not be too soon to conclude that, for Carpathian East Slavs, the ethnonationality contest is unresolvable: two

159Whether Carpathian East Slavs see themselves as constituting a Ukrainian subethnos or an independent ethnonation doesn't only relate to personal sentiment about their own culture and vernacular but also to how they understand what Ukrainian ethnonational identity means today, given that “Ukrainian” may be seen as a separatist idea, constructed in opposition to Great Russian and Polish identities, (which failed to properly include the experience of Carpathian East Slavs under Magyar rule), or an ethnonational construction for all *malorosy*. As Dyrud writes: “it is not the facts of history, but the interpretive aspect of history which is in dispute” See Dyrud's response to the Markus-Magocsi dispute of the early nineteen-eighties: Dyrud, Keith R., Commentary 12 of “The Shaping of a National Identity – An Attempt at a Modern History of Transcarpathia” (pp.39-112) in Magocsi, PR (ed.), *Of the Making of Nationalities There is No End, Volume II*, New York, 1999, p.102

160Mušynka, 1993, p.77

161The one strategy left to those nation-builders determined to create a discrete, ideologically-committed ethnonation – to attempt to divide Lemko from Lemko and Rusnak from Rusnak - is hardly an available option.

ethnonational identities will persist across the Carpathian *rusyn* population-continuum¹⁶².

If it is impossible to insist that Carpathian *rusyny* belong only to the Ukrainian or Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonationality, the only thing left to challenge is the assertion by nation-builders on both sides that they must belong to one or the other.

We can regard the Carpathian East Slavs (Bojkos, Lemkos, Hutsuls etc.) as a limitrophic ethnic continuum¹⁶³, permeated by both Ukrainophile and Rusynophile orientations. In Slovakia, Hungary or Romania, the Rusyns' split identity resolves itself as two separate ethnic minority groups, both peripheral to the titular population. In *Zakarpattya*, the result is a *semi-peripheral ethnic group*, where Rusyns simultaneously constitute a peripheral ethnic minority *and* a subethnos of the titular population.

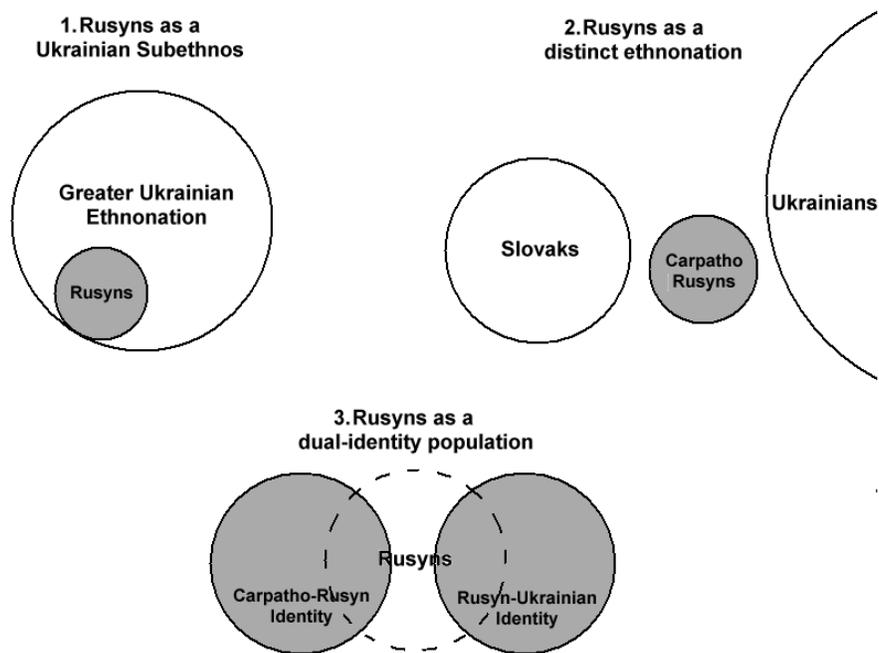
¹⁶²Of the North American descendants of the Uhro-Rusyn émigrés who left early twentieth century Hungary with a proto-national identity, some now have a substantially formed ethnonational consciousness distinct from Ukrainian and are unlikely to cease their efforts to make the descendants of Uhro-Rusyns who remained in the Carpathian homeland aware that they have an alternative plausible non-Ukrainian identity. The persistence of Rusyn nation-building beyond the borders of Transcarpathian Ukraine will have a continuing influence within *Zakarpatska oblast'* and the persistence of Ukrainian nation-building will have a continuing influence beyond Ukraine's borders.

Schöpflin contends that ethnonational identities, once formed, cannot be repressed out of existence - perhaps precisely because of this kind of cross-border influence. He lists four examples: "The Hungarians of Romania, despite very severe repression under Ceaușescu, have not given up their Hungarian identity. The Roma, at the bottom of the social ladder and universally despised throughout the area, are currently looking to construct a new, more politicised identity – even without a shared language. The Poles of Lithuania may have virtually no intellectuals and share a religion with the Lithuanian majority, yet there is no indication that they will abandon their Polishness. The Macedonian Slavophones of Greece, despite being effectively denied the most basic rights needed for cultural reproduction, have not disappeared." See: Schöpflin, George, "Language and Ethnicity in Central and Eastern Europe: Some Theoretical Aspects" (pp.116-127) in Schöpflin, G, *Nations Identity Power – The New Politics of Europe*, London, 2000, (hereafter, Schöpflin, 2000), pp.124. He argues: "the modern state [...] has proved unable to assimilate ethnic minorities once they have become conscious of their identity. [...] attempts at linguistic assimilation are futile or counterproductive. [...] Even when the minority is stripped of its intellectuals and has no prospects for upward social mobility within the ethnic group, it will not abandon its identity. From this perspective, majorities would do better to abandon their useless attempts to weaken or eliminate ethno-linguistic minorities and to concentrate on securing their loyalty as citizens." - Schöpflin, 2000, p.124

¹⁶³Ljubomir Medješi writes: "In the present industrial and post-industrial era, nations and nationalities are the major social groupings, but there exist other borderline entities namely, national minorities and limitrophic groups. National minorities are parts of a nation within a state composed of one or more nationalities. Limitrophic groups are located on the interface of two cultures. While limitrophic groups share characteristics from both of the surrounding cultures, they also try to express themselves as independent ethnic communities, such as Šops, Vlachs, Bunjevacs, Šoks, Gorals, etc." See: Medješi, Ljubomir, "The Problem of Cultural Borders in the History of Ethnic Groups: The Yugoslav Rusyns" (pp.139-162) in Magocsi, PR (ed.), *The Persistence of Regional Cultures - Rusyns and Ukrainians in their Carpathian Homeland and Abroad*, New York, 1993, p.142

Rusinko describes Rusyns as being “in-between”¹⁶⁴ but they are acutely so. Rusyns, today, do not occupy a discrete “Carpatho-Rusyn space” between West Slavic Slovaks and East Slavic Ukrainians, but a blurred space overlapping both Carpatho-Rusyn and Ukrainian ethnonational identities (see Figure 2). At the individual level, Rusyns can be categorised according to whether they favour Carpatho-Rusyn or Ukrainian orientation (or both, or neither). But at higher levels such as microethnic group (Lemko, Hutsul) and state minority (Slovak Rusnaks), communities can be described only as having dual ethnoscality.

Figure 2: Conceptions of Rusyn Identity



Kuzio observes that under certain conditions “changes in identities among peoples who are closely related is possible”¹⁶⁵. For Carpathian *rusyny*, historically exposed to both Subcarpathian and wider East Slavic ethnonational projects, re-identification from one orientation to another is not only possible

164“from a cultural standpoint, Rusyns have always been marginal, peripheral, and 'in-between.'” - Rusinko, 2003, p.20

165See Kuzio on the re-identification by three million Ukrainian civic citizens from 'Russian' to 'Ukrainian' between 1989 and 2001 – Kuzio, 2005, p.8

but a signature characteristic of the population-continuum.

Brubaker proposes that:

Ethnicity, race and nation should be conceptualised not as [...] collective individuals [...] but rather in relational, processual, dynamic, eventful and disaggregated terms [...] which... means taking as a basic analytical category not the "group" as an entity, but groupness as a contextually fluctuating conceptual variable.¹⁶⁶

We might posit that Carpathian East Slavic communities, able to re-identify backwards and forwards between two enduring national identity projects, have long contributed to the fluctuating "groupness" of both. In this sense they are both Ukrainian and Rusyn¹⁶⁷.

Since the region has long been so mixed in terms of ethnicity, culture, dialect and identity, we might also consider how far a culture of ambivalence to national orientation persists in the Carpathians¹⁶⁸ and whether it is only when *rusyny* are removed from the melting-pot, geographically or intellectually, or provoked by outsiders¹⁶⁹, that national orientation becomes a concern. After all, the *rusyny* are who they always were: Byzantine Rite East Slavs living in the Carpathians - it is only modern nation-building projects which have given them modern ethnonational identities. Accordingly, many Carpathian East Slavs might simply regard themselves as *tuteshni* (locals), lacking any ethnonational identity¹⁷⁰. But nation-builders, whatever their cause, will always seek to mobilise populations behind a

166Brubaker, Rogers, "Ethnicity without Groups" in May, S, Modood, T & Squires, J (eds.) *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Minority Rights*, Cambridge, 2004, (pp.53-54)

167Wilson similarly proposes a dual ethnicity model for Ukrainians, citing a 1997 Ukrainian survey in which 26.7% of respondents felt their ethnonationality was to some extent, "both Ukrainian and Russian" - Wilson, 2002ii, p.32. Elsewhere, Pirie discusses the concept of *bi-ethnicity* in Ukraine. See: Pirie, Paul S, "National Identity and Politics in Southern and Eastern Ukraine", *Europe-Asia Studies* 48, No.7, 1996

168Magocsi identifies this as something that other European regions can learn from when he writes: "Transcarpathia has been and remains a multinational region. An important aspect of Transcarpathia's multinationalism, or multiculturalism, has been the ability of its peoples for most of their history to live together in the absence of the national hatred and violence that has often characterized many other multinational parts of Europe, including regions adjacent [...]" See: Magocsi, 1998, p.301

169Magocsi agrees that historically in Transcarpathia, "whatever instance of friction [...] may have occurred has been the result of external forces." Though, somewhat ironically, he limits his definition of "external forces" to "states that have ruled the region" and excludes the activity of influential émigré communities. (Magocsi, 1998, p.301)

170A number of scholars have investigated the concept of *tuteshni* identity. Wilson writes: "Riabchuk and others have also argued that 'pre-national' identities are expressed as local identities in Ukraine – where individuals with a predominantly

national banner – so neither Ukrainian nor Carpatho-Rusyn activists can be expected to allow space for *tuteshni* identity.

2.5 Summary of Analysis of the Carpatho-Rusyn Question

Present-day attempts to describe the entire Carpathian East Slavic community-continuum as a unitary, distinct nation or as an inseparable part of the Ukrainian ethnonation cannot work. But, with Dukhnovych's nineteenth century *obshcherusskij*-Russophile orientation largely sidelined¹⁷¹, contemporary nation-builders expect Carpathian East Slavs to favour one position or the other. While each orientation has external support¹⁷², neither can satisfy the ethnonational sentiment of the entire community-continuum. A community-continuum which cannot reconcile itself to a single ethnonational identity has, self-evidently, more than one ethnonational identity.

We can establish, finally, that when institutionally-supported, mutually contradictory **Type-Ei** and **Type-Ee** nation-building projects both maintain resonance, appeal and credibility across a subject community - enabling each identity to continue contesting the other's legitimacy without achieving primacy - the contested community emerges in third-party states as two peripheral ethnic minorities. In the **Type-Ei** titular population's state, the contested community emerges as a *semi-peripheral ethnic group*, simultaneously peripheral and not-peripheral¹⁷³.

local identity are known as *tuteshni*, those who see themselves as coming from 'here' (tut). [...] In many respects, of course, localism is not nationalism, as the idea of a transcendent national identity is rejected or not even considered a relevant concept." See: Wilson, Andrew, "Elements of a theory of Ukrainian ethno-national identities" (pp.31-54), *Nations and Nationalism*, Volume 8, Part I, January 2002, (hereafter, Wilson, 2002ii), p.42

171 Magocsi mentions Fedor F. Aristov, Pylyp Svystun, Ivan Filevich and Ilarion Svientsits'kyi as leading proponents of this orientation. See: Magocsi, Paul Robert, "Old Ruthenianism and Russophilism: A New Conceptual Framework for Analyzing National Ideologies in Late-Nineteenth-Century Eastern Galicia" (pp.99-118) in *The Roots of Ukrainian Nationalism – Galicia as Ukraine's Piedmont*, Toronto, 2002, (hereafter, Magocsi, 2002), p.101. Arguably, the *obshcherusskij* idea will be impossible to revive as a widely-accepted construction, given the emergence of a Ukrainian state strongly committed to its own ethnonation-building programme.

172 Not least because there is now, as Magocsi notes: "a particular sympathy for fringe groups or small nationalities who have of late become attractive in certain intellectual circles." See: Magocsi, 2002, p.100

173 Other semi-peripheral ethnic groups include the Scanians on the Danish island of Bornholm (simultaneously Danish and not-Danish), Kashubs in northern Poland (simultaneously Polish and not-Polish) and Upper Silesians in Poland (simultaneously Polish and not-Polish). Bialasiewicz discusses the latter – historically a population of Germany – in

This does not complicate matters much in Slovakia, Romania, Hungary and elsewhere, where in place of one peripheral ethnic community there are now two. But in *Zakarpattya*, it renders the question of self-determination and the achievement of ethnic justice formidably complex.

PART III : The Question of National Self-Determination

The last part of this essay forms an extended conclusion. In **Part I**, we established that, while contemporary Carpatho-Rusyn nation-building may partly be motivated by a push for territorial separatism, it is likely driven more by genuinely held ethnonational sentiment. In **Part II**, we established how Carpatho-Rusyn and Ukrainian ethnonational identities each evolved, leaving the Carpathian Rusyn community-continuum with a dual identity and Rusyns in *Zakarpattya* as a semi-peripheral ethnic group. In **Part III**, we will build on the conclusions so far to assess the level of self-rule the Transcarpathian Rusyns might credibly aspire to.

National Self-Determination is, itself, an issue no less controversial than the question of Rusyn identity. Scholars have argued the rationale of adopting a principle which grants political power to constructed nations¹⁷⁴. Nevertheless, as long as existing territorial states legitimate their governance by invoking national sovereignty, populations analagous to the titular ethnonations of those states may be expected to contend that they too have legitimate claims to self-rule. This inevitably leads to a point where all

detail: "Calls for territorial-administrative reform also reflect the rediscovery of historical-cultural regional and local specificities within a national space declared homogenous during the 45 years of communist rule. Such a rediscovery is emotionally charged, and opens up new opportunities for collective self-definition, with the articulation of local and regional difference becoming a key locus of cultural politics as people reclaim their past and declare their belonging." See: Bialasiewicz, Luiza, "Upper Silesia: Rebirth of a Regional Identity in Poland" (pp.111-132) in Batt, J & Wolczuk, K, (eds.), *Region, State and Identity in Central and Eastern Europe*, London & Portland OR, 2002, p.111

¹⁷⁴Ivor Jennings: "On the surface, it [the principle of self-determination] seemed reasonable: let the people decide. It was in fact ridiculous because the people cannot decide until somebody decides who are the people." See: Jennings, Ivor, *The Approach to Self-Government*, Cambridge, 1956, p. 56

communities perceiving themselves to be ethnonational minorities will demand their own state or sub-state. But since there are many potential nations¹⁷⁵ and limited territory, it is not immediately clear *which* self-declared ethnonational minorities should be granted political autonomy or independence.

If territorially indigenous regional communities *within states* are understood to be ethnic minorities if their vernacular is non-contiguous from the state titular language (Bretons, Basques) and subethnoses if it constitutes a contiguous dialect (Saxons, Venetians), then *Zakarpattya* Rusyns¹⁷⁶ fit the criteria for the latter. But, given the issues discussed above - the low resonance of the Ukrainian mythos and historiography and a long history of institutional support for a non-Ukrainian identity - the Rusynophile descendants of Uhro-Rusyns are unlikely to be persuaded to see *Zakarpattya* Rusyns as anything but an ethnic minority.

Until 1989, anti-Rusynophiles might have persuasively argued that nineteenth century Hungarians developed the Uhro-Rusyn project only because it was in their political interest to persuade their East Slavic subjects that they constituted a distinct ethnonation - hence Rusynophilism constituted a outdated and invalid project. After twenty years of nation-building, the landscape has changed. In 2008, one may assume the Rusyn ethnonational identity has more adherents, is more widely recognised and arguably more 'real' than ever. But, given the fact that many Transcarpathian Rusyns feel that - despite an earlier history under Magyar rule - their ethnonational identity today is as Ukrainian as those whose forebears lived under Austrian or Russian rule, the Ukrainian state may feel it is under no obligation to recognise the ongoing nation-building activity, or to deliver what liberal theorists might regard as

¹⁷⁵Roeder writes: "a piece of folk wisdom often repeated in academic and policy communities holds that around the world today there may be as many as six to eight hundred active nation-state projects and another seven to eight thousand potential projects." - Roeder, 2007, p.3

¹⁷⁶Like other European communities of disputed ethnicity including the Pirin Macedonians in Bulgaria, Moravians in the Czech Republic and Kashubians and Upper Silesians in Poland.

ethnocultural justice¹⁷⁷.

This leads us to an impasse. Kymlicka defines five types of ethnic minority in the modern state¹⁷⁸, but gives no category to describe the reality of Rusyns: a community which is *itself* internally divided over whether it constitutes an ethnic minority or not. The Ukrainian state's insistence that Rusynophiles are Ukrainian ethnonationals may be regarded as illiberal but designating Ukrainophile Uhro-Rusyn descendants as Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonationals would be no more liberal. Can there be self-determination or even recognition for a semi-peripheral ethnic group?

3.1 Reviewing the case for Ukraine's recognition of a Rusyn ethnic minority

The widest calls by the *Zakarpatska* Rusyn movement are simply for Kyiv to recognise they are not ethnic Ukrainians. The common complaint is that Rusyns recognise Ukrainians so the lack of reciprocation is unfair. Trier records the typical argument of a self-identifying Rusyn in Transcarpathia:

The Rusyn minority representative answered that both parties should recognise each other. If people state they are Ukrainians, we respect them, he said.¹⁷⁹

But this (deliberately or naively) misses the point. If, as Ukrainophiles maintain, the Carpatho-Rusyns are a Ukrainian sub-ethnos, it is not in the Ukrainian nation-builders' interest to have any distinction established between Ukrainians and Rusyns. The only way the two parties could conceivably reciprocate is if the Ukrainians conceded the Carpatho-Rusyns were an ethnic minority and the Rusyns conceded they were not.

177Certainly this appeared to be Yulia Tymoshenko's position - see Footnote 56

178i) National minorities – which might be subdivided into those which are unrepresented, those which are represented and those with an ethnic kin-state; as well as ii) immigrants; iii) isolationist ethnoreligious groups; iv) metics; and v) racial caste groups. See: Kymlicka, Will, “Western Political Theory and Ethnic Relations in Eastern Europe” (pp.13-105) in Kymlicka, W & Opalski, M (eds.) *Can Liberal Pluralism be Exported – Western Political Theory and Ethnic Relations in Eastern Europe*, Oxford, 2001, p.23

179Trier, 1999, p.21

Kyiv's fears that the mainstream Rusyn project in Transcarpathia is driven by territorial separatists may be unfounded, but there is still reason for the *Verkhovna Rada* to fear recognising a Rusyn identity. The Ukrainian state has far more to lose than its Central European neighbours by recognising a Rusyn ethnocation, given that such recognition has the potential to start unweaving the state's own somewhat fragile ethnocation-building project¹⁸⁰. If Rusynophiles succeed in establishing that Carpathian *rusyny* are not Ukrainian ethnationals, other East Slavic communities included in the Ukrainian ethnocation project might question whether they are¹⁸¹. The Ukrainian state will tread very carefully in recognising Rusyns as a non-titular ethnic minority¹⁸² because, given Galicia's position on the border of the EU, any institutional recognition of descendants of Austro-Hungarian Greek Catholic East Slavs as non-Ukrainians has the power, in a worst-case ultimate scenario, to unravel both Ukrainian ethnocation-building and state-building projects.

Garton Ash reveals:

One dramatic way in which [Rusyns] describe themselves is "the Kurds of Central Europe."¹⁸³

But "Taiwanese" or "Soviet Lithuanians" of Central Europe would be a closer analogy. It is unlikely

180 Wilson notes: "Ukraine does have a problem [...] with constructing relative unity out of the past. The Ukrainians have not always existed as a nation. They were 'made' or 'invented' in the same way as any other nation, but this construction began late and is still going on." See: Wilson, 2002i, p.311

181 It may have been to the political advantage of nineteenth-century Galician Ruthenians to declare unity with the Dnieper Ukrainians, but some Galicians today might see political and economic advantage in terminating such unity. The particular peril for Ukrainian ethnocation-builders in recognising "Rusyn" as a distinct ethnocation identity is that contemporary descendants of nineteenth century Galician Ruthenians might decide that, like the Transcarpathians, they too are Rusyn-not-Ukrainian. Magocsi hints at this possibility when he discusses the development of the Ukrainophile project in Galicia after 1848: "While most leaders had a clear perception of who they were not - they knew they were not Poles - they had more difficulty in defining precisely who they were. Were they members of a separate East Slavic Ruthenian nationality which lived only in Austria?" See: Magocsi, 2002, pp.99-100

182 Kuzio notes that: "Including new ethnic groups in censuses is inevitably a controversial step. Evidence from US and Canadian censuses shows that their very inclusion can *potentially* lead to the growth of the ethnic group's national identity." - Kuzio, 2005, p.5

183 Garton Ash, 1999, p.379

that Ukrainian nation-builders will ever recognise a separate Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonationality unless, on some level, Rusyns can still be recognised as part of the wider Ukrainian ethnos.

While Kyiv administrations to date have steadfastly refused to acknowledge Rusyns as a peripheral ethnic minority, the Ukrainian state is not entirely hostile to Rusyn culture: it has already demonstrated it can accommodate Rusyn cultural expression as long as it occurs in the context of the Rusyns being a Ukrainian regional subethnos¹⁸⁴. This is better than Soviet-style repression, but given the recognition by several of Ukraine's neighbouring states of non-Ukrainian Rusyns, Kyiv risks looking fundamentally illiberal if it continues to reject the existence of a distinct Rusyn ethnonation. If Rusynophiles already constitute a *de facto* recognised ethnonation with their own literary language, associations and media in other states, it appears arguments are running out for Kyiv to continue limiting Rusynophile activity or Rusynophile Rusyn-language press (including television, radio and newspapers) in *Zakarpattya*¹⁸⁵.

Nevertheless, if it accepts that Transcarpathian Rusyns form a semi-peripheral group, there is nothing to prevent Kyiv from recognising two counterbalancing ethnic categories: Rusyn (Non-Ukrainian) and Rusyn (Ukrainian)¹⁸⁶. Constitutional recognition of both categories – one an ethnic minority (like Belarusians) and one a subethnos (like Galicians), but *both* Rusyn – might not be the preferred option

184Thus the *Zakarpattya* region plays host to Rusyn festivals and cultural and academic events, as well as private language and culture classes. Even the Ukrainian SSR was able to express some cultural tolerance - it is not insignificant that September 1989 the Soviet authorities restored legal status to the Greek Catholic Church in Transcarpathia, a central cultural pillar of the Carpatho-Rusyn community.

185Schöpflin argues that such measures in the civic sphere can even help to defuse tensions in the political sphere: "When the constitution of the state and its politics are reasonably open-minded, transactions between the [majority and minority] can take place in the civic dimension, thereby reducing the role of ethnicity in the relationship. [...] Wales is effectively bilingual in the official sphere regardless of whether a particular locality has Welsh-speakers or not, and the establishment of a separate Welsh-language television channel, S4C, has satisfied the expectations of the newly-rising Welsh-speaking elite. Had these demands not been met, there is little doubt that Welsh activists would have intensified their campaign and polarized the situation." See: Schöpflin, George, "Nationalism and Ethnic Minorities in Post-Communist Europe" (pp.151-168) in Caplan, R & Feffer, J (eds.), *Europe's New Nationalism: States and Minorities in Conflict*, Oxford, 1996, (hereafter, Schöpflin, 1996) p.158

186This would put the Transcarpathian Rusyns in the same position as the *Lemky* in Poland and the *Rusnatsi* in Slovakia who each have communities which identify separately as either Ukrainians or Rusyns.

of Ukrainian ethnonation-builders in Kyiv, but it would be a just acknowledgement of the Rusyns' dual ethnonationality and it would satisfy the criterion of allowing Kyiv to continue claiming that at some level, Rusyns are Ukrainians.

3.2 Reviewing the case for Carpatho-Rusyn territorial autonomy in Ukraine

The goal of Rusyn nation-builders who seek more than just recognition is territorial autonomy: the transformation of *Zakarpattya* into an ethnonational sub-state in which Carpatho-Rusyns form the titular population.

Unitarists fear that territorial autonomy represents a stepping-stone to secession¹⁸⁷. But even if such fears could be overcome¹⁸⁸, granting *Zakarpattya* special autonomous status on ethnic grounds would

¹⁸⁷Schöpflin notes that in post-communist states: “Long-settled minorities associated with a particular territory [...] will generally be the object of some suspicion in the eyes of the majority, for fear that the link between the minority and the territory will result in the dismemberment of the state. [...] Closely linked to this is the reluctance to perceive minority demands as justifiable.” - Schöpflin, 1996, pp.157-158

Elsewhere Kymlicka observes a more general trend that where Western states tend to see minority questions as issues of justice, post-communist states tend to see minority questions as issues of security: “To oversimplify, we can say that in the West, there is a trend toward accepting the legitimacy of minority nationalism, and toward accommodating it through some form of territorial autonomy. In the ECE, by contrast, minority nationalism is often viewed as illegitimate, and the idea of territorial autonomy is strongly resisted.” See: Kymlicka, Will, “Justice and security in the accommodation of minority nationalism” (pp.144-175) in May, S, Modood, T & Squires J (eds.), *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Minority Rights*, Cambridge, 2004, p.144

¹⁸⁸Wolff and Weller report that since the fall of the Soviet Union there has been a “180-degree reversal” in position over whether the creation of autonomous ethnonational sub-states encourages or pacifies separatist movements: “[Until] the period of time when the post-Cold War transitions in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe were beginning, [autonomy] appeared to be at best a highly unusual tool of state construction, or at worst a highly dangerous one. [...] Outside of the colonial context, any self-determination discourse was viewed with great suspicion by governments, seeing it as a first step onto that slippery slope that inevitably leads towards irredentist or secessionist claims. Thus, autonomy was widely regarded as a somewhat dangerous concept that a state would only employ at its own peril. [...] After] the end of the Cold War [...] autonomy was [...] no longer seen as the secessionists' stepping stone towards independence, but [...] as a possible tool in accommodating separatist movements without endangering the continued territorial integrity of an existing state.” See: Wolff, S & Weller, M, “Self-Determination and Autonomy – A Conceptual Introduction” (pp.1-25) in Weller, M & Wolff, S (eds.), *Autonomy, Self-governance and Conflict Resolution – Innovative Approaches to Institutional Design in Divided Societies*, Oxford & New York, 2005, (hereafter, Wolff & Weller, 2005), p.1

Nevertheless, unitarists have just cause for concern. Roeder reveals that ethnonational sub-states (or “segment-states”) have conventionally represented an important prerequisite for stateless ethnonations planning territorial secession: “Indeed, for the past century it would have been safe to bet a considerable sum with the rule of thumb, 'no segment-state, no nation-state'. No other simple rules would have yielded such a high return. For example [...] fewer than a dozen

be a controversial step. The questionable designation of Carpathian *rusyny* as regional titulars¹⁸⁹ might generate a host of claims for special autonomy arrangements. Any ethnic-oriented devolution would immediately need to accommodate the Hungarian minority population in the south of *Zakarpattya*, which might then lead to claims by other smaller regionally indigenous groups, including Romanians and Slovaks. It might well exacerbate social tensions between Rusynophiles and Ukrainophiles in *Zakarpattya*, not least given the parallel with the change of guard when Carpatho-Ukraine became Hungarian-occupied *Kárpátalja*. While scholars often remark that the territory has little history of inter-ethnic tension¹⁹⁰, Sasse suggests that it is precisely the region's extensive diversity which prevents any minority constituency from receiving special status and keeps the situation stable¹⁹¹.

Furthermore, even if the proposition were widely accepted that Carpathian *rusyny* constitute the rightful titular population in Subcarpathia, it is not clear that the kinds of arguments which support territorial self-determination for deep-rooted, indigenous and more clearly-defined minority ethnations such as Bretons or Kurds could easily apply to a semi-peripheral ethnic group.

ethnic groups without segment-states achieved sovereign independence in the twentieth century.” - Roeder, 2007, p.10
189Even assuming the East Slav majority in Zakarpattya unanimously regarded themselves as Carpatho-Rusyn ethnations, they would have no clear mandate to become regionally empowered titulars. It is often noted that Hungarians constitute 12.5% of the Transcarpathian population (Batt, 2002, p. 164), but, importantly, some populations are just as indigenous as the dual-identity Carpathian East Slavs. Madi states: “The ethnic makeup of Carpatho-Ukraine is still highly complex. Nowadays more than twenty different ethnic groups can be identified in Subcarpathia, several of which have been living side by side for centuries. The Hungarians have been living in the region for more than a thousand years and the presence of the Ruthenians can be traced back to the thirteenth century.” - Madi, 1995, p.131. Other ethnic minorities in Transcarpathia include Russians (4%) and Romanians (2.3%). See: “Appendix #1: Ethnic Composition of the Transcarpathian Region” (p.80) in *Role of Carpathian Euroregion in Confronting its Minority Agenda*, Research Center of the Slovak Foreign Policy Association / Strategies Studies Foundation, <<http://www.policy.hu/flora/carpathianmin.pdf>>, [accessed: August 29, 2008]

190Judy Batt notes: “Transcarpathia's contested position at the junction of no fewer than five states (today Ukraine, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania) has ensured its exposure to the nationalizing efforts of the rival states that claimed it over the course of the twentieth century. What is remarkable however, is the local atmosphere of goodwill and pragmatic accommodation among the various ethnic groups. Neither during the Second World War nor when the Soviet Union collapsed, did Transcarpathia see the kind of inter-ethnic tensions and conflict that occurred elsewhere. In this respect too, Transcarpathia can claim to have lived up to Kundera's ideal of 'Central European' multiculturalism rather well. The vicissitudes of history have engendered a sense of common Transcarpathian identity. Locals take pride in preserving peace among themselves, and have resisted the dubious appeals to their various national loyalties pressed by the neighbouring 'mother countries'.” See Batt, 2002, p.156

191“On the whole, the existence of sub-regional and sub-ethnic cleavages in Zakarpattya was instrumental in de-activating a range of different regional and ethnopolitical claims for special autonomy arrangements.” - Sasse, 2002, p.84

To many other regions across Ukraine who regard *Hutsuly*, *Rusnatsi*, *Lemky* or *Bojky* as Ukrainian ethnonationals, creation of a “Rusyn substate” would resemble nothing more than an excuse for Transcarpathian regional and economic autonomy. Maksymiuk concentrates on ethnic demands when he writes:

Faced with ethnic problems in other regions (not to mention Ukraine's 10 million Russians and Crimea with its Russian and Tatar problems), Kyiv is reluctant to open what seems to be a Pandora's box of ethnic demands for more rights and concessions.¹⁹²

But while different ethnic communities amongst the highly heterogeneous¹⁹³ Ukrainian civic population need consideration, it should be underlined that the Ukrainian ethnonational population is *also* highly varied in linguistic and regional identity¹⁹⁴. Thus, Ukrainian regional elites seeking devolution of power from the centre might see Transcarpathian autonomy as the cue to demand “more rights and concessions”¹⁹⁵ and, ultimately, the one prospect Kyiv-based state-building elites unilaterally oppose: a federal state¹⁹⁶.

Given the number of ethnic and regional groups capable of mobilising in both the civic Ukrainian and

192Maksymiuk, 2000

193See Footnote 23

194Wilson writes: “Ukraine does not yet possess many natural reserves of support for the national state, come what may. Modern Ukraine is not a homogenous entity. Few states are, but Ukraine has inherited a set of ethnic, linguistic, religious and regional differences that are more complex than most – many of which divide the Ukrainians amongst themselves as much as they divide them from others.” - Wilson, 2002i, p.207

195Batt quotes an Uzhhorod University academic who contends that Transcarpathia's “demand for self-government need not imply territorial change; it was not out of line with the aspirations of most regions of Ukraine” (Batt, 2002, p.166)

196Sasse writes: “In the post-Soviet period, the national Ukrainian political elite has shied away from federalism and, with the exception of Crimea, rejected autonomy as a principle of state-building. Centralization was inextricably tied to the overall rationale of consolidating the sovereign Ukrainian state and nation. [...] Federalism has primarily been an idea of the political opposition in Ukraine. Prior to independence it was a means to emphasize the 'Ukrainian' character of Galicia, but once an independent Ukraine had been established, the idea was discarded as being too subversive of central state capacity. Chornovil and with him Ukraine's national-democratic political forces emerged as staunch supporters of a unitary Ukrainian state. [...] The rejection of federalism is one of the few issues on which there is a consensus among national-level elites in Ukraine. The experience with Soviet federalism and its ultimate collapse informs this view. Leftist parties do not oppose regional autonomy [...] but wholesale federalism is interpreted as a too radical reform of the inherited structures which could put central state authority at risk.” - Sasse, 2002, pp.80-82

Transcarpathian populations, there is no way to transform the *Zakarpatska oblast'* from a Ukrainian *oblast'* into a territorially self-determining Carpatho-Rusyn ethnic substate (leading to wide-scale changes in the language of school instruction, official historiography etc.) without sparking extensive new demands for regional autonomy across Ukraine. An administration which permits Crimean *and* Transcarpathian autonomy may arguably face many more future demands for autonomy from the Donbass, Galicia, Odessa and elsewhere.

The discussion above relates to state-building. But the creation of a Rusyn sub-state would create a much more serious issue for nation-builders. Accepting Roeder's contention that it is the support lent by institutions of sub-state polities to nation-building projects which gives rise to popular national communities, the creation of a Carpatho-Rusyn national substate could potentially lead to long-term mass ethnic re-identification from Ukrainian to Carpatho-Rusyn. Such re-identification will never be in the interests of Kyiv.

In conclusion, even if the *Verkhovna Rada*, like the *Zakarpatska oblasna rada*, officially recognises a distinct (non-Ukrainian) Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonational identity, there is no strong argument for allowing the minority orientation spokespeople from within a semi-peripheral ethnic group to become the regional leaders of the ethnically mixed *Zakarpattya* region, especially when the move could threaten the integrity or stability of the already-existing Ukrainian territorial state and the Ukrainian ethnonation. Prospects for an autonomous substate of Subcarpathian Rus' in Ukraine are slim.

3.3 Considering less conventional implementations of autonomy

We might finish the essay here, concluding that the best Rusynophiles in Transcarpathia can aspire to

is state recognition and the freedom to develop media, associations and schools only in the private sector. However, Várady's argument that ethnocultural justice “clearly supposes [...] an equitable sharing of public space”¹⁹⁷ suggests that this is not an ideal conclusion for those who are committed to a Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonational identity.

Fortunately, there are other, non-territorial, forms of autonomy which would leave the integrity of both Ukrainian state and – as far as possible – ethnonation untouched, while simultaneously enabling Rusyns in Transcarpathia some self-determination to reproduce their culture, language and identity in the public sphere.

Often overshadowed by more conventional ideas of territorial autonomy¹⁹⁸, the concept of “personal autonomy” was first articulated in political theory by Austro-Marxists Karl Renner and Otto Bauer between 1902 and 1924¹⁹⁹.

Personal autonomy requires reconceptualising ethnonational identity as a category of voluntary

197Várady, Tibor, “On the Chances of Ethnocultural Justice in East Central Europe” (pp.135-149) in Kymlicka, W & Opalski, M (eds.), *Can Liberal Pluralism be Exported? - Western Political Theory and Ethnic Relations in Eastern Europe*, Oxford, 2001, p.139

198Discussion of self-determination often omits consideration that, according to Gellner's definition, nationalism is satisfied when political and national units are congruent - it does not demand congruence between the demotic and *territorial* units. Anthony Smith posits that a nation possesses, amongst other things, “an historic territory, or homeland” - Smith, Anthony D, *National Identity*, London, 1991, (hereafter, Smith AD, 1991), p.14. But there is no reason to assume that the nation's political unit *must* possess a territorial dimension and plenty of evidence from ex-patriate communities to suggest national identities can survive just on the *idea* of an “historical homeland”. Self-evidently, this has implications for minority rights theorists seeking new solutions to issues of minority group self-determination.

Smith offers an alternative definition of (ethno)nationalism: “an ideological movement aiming to attain or maintain autonomy, unity and identity for a social group which is deemed to constitute a nation.” (Smith, AD, 1991, p.20). Similar to Gellner's definition, this does not insist that the autonomy must be territorial in form.

199Bauer writes: “In its pure form the aim of the personality principle is to constitute the nation not as a territorial corporation, but as an association of persons. [...] Within the state [...] power would not be given to the Germans in one region and the Czechs in another; rather, each nation, wherever its members resided, would form a body that independently administered its own affairs. It would very often be the case that two or more nations would construct their own national administrative bodies within the one city, erect national educational institutions side by side, but undisturbed by one another – in exactly the same way as Catholics, Protestants, and Jews independently attend to their religious affairs side by side within the one city.” See: Bauer, Otto, *The Question of Nationalities and Social Democracy*, (1907), trans. Joseph O'Donnell, London & Minneapolis MN, 2000, (hereafter, Bauer, 1907), p.281

membership, analogous to chosen religious denomination or political party affiliation (rather than the essentialist, hereditary attribute described by primordialists). But the idea of choice influencing nationality is not new. In a Sorbonne lecture on March 11, 1882, the French historian, Ernest Renan considered that a nation is no more or less than the people who embrace the national idea:

A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. [...] A nation's existence is, if you will pardon the metaphor, a daily plebiscite. [...] a nation has no more right than a king does to say to a province: "You belong to me, I am seizing you." A province, as far as I am concerned, is its inhabitants; if anyone has the right to be consulted in such an affair, it is the inhabitant.²⁰⁰

While Renan did not mean "daily plebiscite" in a literal sense, Bauer's later conception of personal autonomy did advocate "the right to the free declaration of nationality."²⁰¹

Schöpflin considers personal autonomy can only have far reaching impact where a "flourishing private sector" prevails²⁰², but other scholars submit a more open-ended definition. Lapidoth's contention:

Personal autonomy applies to all members of a certain group within the state, irrespective of their place of residence. It is the right to preserve and promote the religious, linguistic, and cultural character of the group through institutions established by itself.²⁰³

does not rule out the prospect that, under a hypothetical consociational arrangement, the state might channel public sector funding towards the institutions established by the autonomous group, in

200Renan, Ernest, "What is a Nation? (*Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?*)" (1882) (pp.41-55), in Eley, Geoff & Suny, Ronald Grigor (eds.), *Becoming National: A Reader*, New York and Oxford, 1996

201"However, the state would not be able to decide who was to be regarded as a German and who as a Czech; rather, it would be the mature citizen who was accorded the right to determine to which nationality he wished to belong. On the basis of this free declaration of nationality by the mature citizen, national registers would be established containing a list of the mature citizens of each nationality" - Bauer, 1907, p.281

202"Personal autonomy suggests that the individual should be free to define his or her own ethnic identity and that the state should recognize this and use the machinery of the state in such a way as to avoid discrimination on ethnic grounds. [...] There are no particular privileges or special provisions that flow from personal autonomy, but where a flourishing private sector operates, it allows individuals to run their affairs and use their money to organize schools, churches, clubs, newspapers, political parties, and so on for the maintenance and defense of ethnic activities. Personal autonomy does not imply that the ethnic group as a whole is recognized as having a collective identity or claims to the political system as a whole." - Schöpflin, 1996, p.156

203See: Lapidoth, Ruth, *Autonomy. Flexible Solutions to Ethnic Conflicts*, Washington DC, 1997, p.175

proportion to the percentage of the population explicitly declaring group membership²⁰⁴. This would allow for collective self-determination in the public sphere but it would limit the collective's resources to contributions from those who were proactively self-identifying members.

Personal autonomy coupled with proportional public sector funding could allow constitutionally recognised (non-Ukrainian) Rusyns to achieve their stated goals of publicly-funded Rusyn-language school classes and a Rusyn-language department at Uzhhorod University, while leaving *Zakarpatska oblast'* an integral part of a unitary Ukrainian state. This would enable Rusynophiles to pursue self-determination without damaging Ukrainian territorial integrity.

Further, if the only public funding for Rusynophile nation-building institutions such as Rusyn language classes and Rusyn political parties were proportionate to the number of citizens in *Zakarpattya* who pro-actively declared Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonationality and if citizens retained a permanent right to declare or revoke such ethnonationality at any time, then there is a low chance that any Carpathian *rusyn* citizen identifying as a Ukrainian ethnonational would be exposed to so much Rusyn nation-building institutional influence that they would “become Rusynised”. Arguably the amount of Rusynophile institutional influence in Transcarpathian society would directly reflect - and be sufficient only to satisfy - the amount of Rusynophile sentiment already on the ground.

If the Kyiv administration felt certain that recognition of a non-Ukrainian Rusyn ethnonation presented no threat to the continuing Ukrainian identification of all other Carpathian *rusyny* in *Zakarpattya* who

204An alternative solution is that private-sector contributions from within the state might be supplemented by private sources outside the state. Wolff and Weller consider: “In the absence of a kin-state willing or able to support an external minority, kin-groups in [other] countries [...] or other external actors (international organisations, individual states) may be sought out and lobbied to pursue this patron role.” (Wolff & Weller, 2005, p.5) However, external patronisation is less ideal than proportional public-sector funding unless Rusynophiles are content to see the creation of Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonation-building institutions and provision for their required maintenance restricted entirely to the private sector.

did not explicitly regard themselves as Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonationals, perhaps it could allow self-declared (non-Ukrainian) Rusyns space to celebrate their own identity, utilising their own codified language in their communication and passing on their own ethnonational historiography and myths, while continuing, itself, to foster Rusyn-Ukrainian culture,

As Schöpflin notes:

It is not impossible for two or more ethnolinguistic communities to live together and share power in the same state. But that happy state of affairs requires a high degree of sensitivity towards the moral worth of all ethnic communities and before that comes about, they must all be made secure in their own future and their own unimpeded cultural reproduction.²⁰⁵

In practice it is not clear how such a consociational institutional arrangement could work as intended in Transcarpathia. The arrangement might conceivably lead to campaigns by both Ukrainian and Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonation-builders to provoke as much declared ethnonational sentiment on the ground as possible in order to secure higher amounts of public funding for nation-building institutions. Such campaigning would inevitably be accompanied by the same activities of bribery and corruption which accompany all other plebiscites.

But the suggestion is a theoretical beginning of a solution which, without threatening Ukrainian state territorial integrity, would allow all Carpathian East Slavic communities across Transcarpathia to live in an environment corresponding with their own ethnonational orientation, granting Rusynophiles their own autonomous non-Ukrainian space to determine their own affairs and exercise some degree of self-rule.

Magocsi's assertion that:

²⁰⁵Schöpflin, 2000, p.127

the various peoples, or nationalities inhabiting our planet all deserve to have their cultures preserved and fostered, because it is their manifold diversity that makes life worth living²⁰⁶

summarises the core concern of all who consider modern civic states have an obligation to continually work towards securing ethnocultural justice for their diverse populations.

After more than a century and a half of nation-building and nation-destroying, multi-ethnic civic states may in future find ways to recognise and allow some degree of proportional autonomy in the public sphere even for self-determination seeking constituencies within semi-peripheral ethnic groups.

Consequently, citizens from semi-peripheral ethnic groups, fortunate enough to belong simultaneously to two ethnonational communities, will be able to decide for themselves whether they wish to proactively participate in the self-determination of either, or both, or neither.

Conclusions

- 1) Ethnonation-building projects use both ethno-cultural-linguistic or political boundaries to define their subject communities.
- 2) Nation-building contests between two ethno-cultural-linguistically defined nations (one inclusivist and one exclusivist) leave the "national status" of the minority community more in question than that claimed by more conventional national minorities.
- 3) Events on the ground during last twenty years show why Ukrainian ethnonation-builders

206Magocsi, PR, "Preface" in Magocsi, PR (Ed.), *Of the Making of Nationalities There is No End*, Volume I, New York, 1999, p.xi

dismiss Carpatho-Rusyn activity as a politically-motivated secessionist project. But there are grounds for accepting that the Carpatho-Rusyn identity project is principally equivalent to the Ukrainian identity project in terms of committed ethnonational sentiment.

- 4) While at first glance the Carpatho-Rusyn project appears to be targeting a community which is self-evidently a subgroup of the Ukrainian ethnonation, closer analysis shows why Rusynophile sentiment which regards Rusyns as being fundamentally different from Ukrainians persists.
- 5) The Rusynophile project does not originate with Duchnovych and the Rusyn national awakeners but is a by-product of nineteenth century Hungarian assimilationist policy.
- 6) The Rusynophile orientation survived in Subcarpathia during the twentieth century for the same reasons as the Ukrainophile orientation survived in Galicia during the nineteenth century: it received strategic support for long periods from the governing institutions of external powers. Hungarian, American and Czech support for the local Rusynophile orientation in the territorial-administrative regions of *Ruska Kraïna*, *Podkarpatska Rus'* and *Kárpátalja* were the principle catalysts in the emergence of the contemporary Carpatho-Rusyn ethnonational identity.
- 7) Galician, Third Reich, and Soviet support for the Ukrainophile orientation during the First World War and in the territorial-administrative regions of *Podkarpatska Rus'* and Soviet Ukraine were the principle catalysts in the emergence of the contemporary Ukrainophile position which asserts Rusyns constitute a Ukrainian subethnos.
- 8) In the twenty-first century, Rusyn nation-builders now have access to the same nation-building

tools (resonant mythos, historiography, literary language, media, institutional support) as Ukrainian nation-builders. Rusyn ethnonational identity is now recognised *de facto* and *de jure* in several states beyond Ukraine.

- 9) Since both Ukrainophile and Rusynophile orientations persist across the Carpathian East Slavic community continuum, the continuum has a *de facto* dual ethnonational identity. In Ukrainian Transcarpathia, Rusyns form a semi-peripheral ethnic group, simultaneously part of the titular Ukrainian ethnonation and a distinct peripheral ethnic group.
- 10) The concept of ethnocultural justice requires that Ukrainian state-level institutions recognise that amongst Carpathian East Slavs today, as already recognised by several Central European states, a legitimate Rusynophile orientation persists alongside the Ukrainophile orientation.
- 11) The Ukrainian state can recognise that Rusynophile Carpatho-Rusyns in Transcarpathia constitute a non-Ukrainian ethnic minority without undermining the Ukrainian ethnonation-building project by acknowledging that Transcarpathian Rusyns as a whole form a semi-peripheral ethnic group and recognising both Rusynophile Carpatho-Rusyn and Ukrainophile Rusyn-Ukrainian ethnic categories.
- 12) The Ukrainian state can enable a degree of self-determination for Rusynophile Carpatho-Rusyns without threatening the territorial integrity of the Ukrainian state by allowing Carpatho-Rusyns non-territorial autonomy within *Zakarpatska oblast'* through institutional implementation of personal autonomy, based on the Austro-Marxist concept of the Personality Principle.

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