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Elites and the Party System of Zakarpattya Oblast': Relations among Levels of Party Systems in Ukraine

KIMITAKA MATSUZATO

Introduction: bringing in spatial factors

IT IS NO SECRET THAT the flourishing study of regional politics in Russia was inspired by the specific path of state building which Russia underwent during the 1990s.¹ A number of objective and subjective conditions led the Russian federal state to the brink of confederation. Russian regional politics seemed much more interesting than its counterparts in Ukraine, Lithuania and the Central Asian countries, which, at least officially, declared themselves to have chosen unitary paths of state building. Responding to the confederal characteristics of the Russian state, researchers, willingly or unwillingly, relied upon a methodological trick to analyse Russian regions as if they were independent political entities. Indeed, this trick enabled them to construct a 'comparative political science in one country' which has produced excellent results.² On the other hand, however, this 'comparative political science in one country' was accompanied by a dismissive attitude towards spatial factors in politics, thereby depriving researchers of a crucial standpoint from which to view interactions between regional and national politics. It is paradoxical that regionologists do not respect spatial factors, but if we consider that each region lives its own life, why do we need to care about spatial factors at all? Okayama, a specialist in interpolitical relations³ in nineteenth century USA, observes the situation of regional studies of Russia as follows:

They [specialists in Russian regional politics] would claim that they are not just studying politics that only involve 'local' governments in a given subnational region, but that they are also looking into the political process related to the central government as far as the region is concerned. This statement itself is true, for most regionologists do not strictly confine their analysis to 'local politics'. With a few notable exceptions, however, scholars who have undertaken this kind of research seem to be at a loss when it comes to bringing different levels of political process together. Lacking a theory-oriented perspective on this issue, many studies simply end up scrambling two different levels of politics together, one related to the central government and another related to the 'local' government. Even when such a perspective is employed, most of the works still suffer from not paying attention to the spatial dimension of politics. Since their analyses are usually limited to the study of a single

region or comparison among several regions, they have not tackled the conundrum of how spatial segmentation systemically affects the politics of the nation at large.⁴

This article aims to overcome two problems observed in the study of regional politics in post-communist countries: (1) the overconcentration of scholarly interest on Russia and the lack of comparison between Russia and other post-communist countries; and (2) the lack of attempts to analyse regional politics in the context of interpolitical relations. As argued already, these weaknesses are closely intertwined.

One example deriving from the dismissive attitude towards interpolitical relations is the attempt to explain varying levels of development of regional party systems only by the levels of intra-regional political competitiveness. Based on their investigation of Sverdlovsk *oblast'*, Gel'man & Golosov suggested the following conditions for the development of a regional party system: (1) the presence of dissension and competition within the elite; (2) the elite's aspiration to solve the problem of competition through elections; (3) the elite's tendency, in the pre-election campaign, to give greater weight to the official structures of parties or electoral blocs than to informal resources, in particular administrative levers; and (4) the victors' failure to liquidate the losers' organisations after the competition is resolved.⁵ Leaving aside this explanation's tautological nature, it contradicts fundamental empirical facts: why did Mintimer Shaimiev and Yurii Luzhkov need to organise official parties, All Russia and Fatherland respectively, when their positions in their regions were almost uncontested? Why in Ukraine do apparently official parties play a more important role than in Russia, despite the fact that Ukrainian politics is more clan-based than Russian politics?

We have simple answers to these questions. Shaimiev and Luzhkov organised those parties not to govern Tatarstan and Moscow but to participate in federal politics. Likewise, the mayor of Ekaterinburg, Arkadii Chernetsky, did not need to organise Our Home—Our City to govern the city. He did so to increase his political weight in Sverdlovsk's regional politics. Once established, national parties such as All Russia and Fatherland tried to organise branches in as many of Russia's regions as possible, thereby hastening the expansion of parties at the regional level. Thus the development of party systems in the context of interpolitical relations is composed of two phases: upward (challenge to the higher politics) and downward (creation of party branches at the lower level). The same can be said of the strange, at first glance, development of party politics in Ukraine. On the one hand, the regional elite in unitary Ukraine is more interested in having a regional lobby in parliament, ministries and the presidential administration than is the regional elite in federative Russia. On the other hand, in Ukraine, where there are far fewer regions than in Russia, it is easier for regional parties to overcome the 4% barrier for proportional representation in parliament. For example, in the 1998 elections to the Ukrainian Supreme Rada the Hromada party of former Prime Minister Pavlo Lazarenko received 35.3% of the votes in Dnipropetrovs'k *oblast'*, which made up 53.3% of the votes received by the party from across the whole country; and the share of the Social Democratic Party of Ukraine (United)—SDPU(o), 31.2% of the votes in Zakarpattya (Transcarpathian) *oblast'*, equalled 16.7% of all the votes the party received across Ukraine. Similarly, the Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine (headed by Nataliya Vitrenko, one of

Kuchma's strongest opponents in the 1999 presidential elections) received 20.9% in Sumy *oblast'* and 9.3% in Kharkiv *oblast'*, making up 28.4% of all the votes received by the party across Ukraine.⁶

Overall, there is a tendency in Ukraine toward closer interaction of central and regional politics, and this fosters the transformation of regional elite clans into official parties. In other words, in Ukraine, official parties do not always appear because of the emergence of political competition. On the contrary, their appearance may suggest that regional elite clans, hiding under the names of official parties, are transforming their regions into their own electoral patrimonies (*votchynty*). Regional clans are endeavouring to take part in national politics by exploiting these patrimonies for their political resources.

Thus, both Russian and Ukrainian experiences suggest that not only the political competitiveness in one or another political entity but also spatial factors, interpolitical relations in particular, determine the emergence and development of official parties. This article is aimed at examining this thesis, based on an extremely typical example of Ukrainian regions, namely Zakarpattia.⁷ Zakarpattia politics can be called extremely typical for Ukraine because in this region both political clans and official parties are quite developed even by Ukrainian standards; this apparent contradiction can be attributed to the same reason I proposed for Ukraine as a whole. Remarkably, Zakarpattia was the 'general staff', and even now (2002) remains a bastion of one of the most well-disciplined parties in Ukraine, the Social Democratic Party of Ukraine (United)—SDPU(o). SDPU(o) was one of only two influential parties that supported Leonid Kuchma in the 1999 elections,⁸ and one of the three non-left electoral blocs in the parliamentary elections in 2002.⁹

In a previous article I compared regional politics in Odesa, Zakarpattia, Donetsk and Dnipropetrovs'k during the 1990s to explain why in Zakarpattia, the least economically developed and urbanised of the four cases, official parties have been most developed in terms of membership, discipline and influence upon regional politics. My conclusion was that only Zakarpattia was blessed with the two conditions: intra-regional political competitiveness and active inclusion in all-Ukrainian interpolitical relations.¹⁰ This article will develop these findings more extensively, concentrating on Zakarpattia.

To conclude this introduction we shall briefly review the history of local reforms in post-communist Ukraine, which has been characterised by several zigzags. The first Union Law on local self-government, adopted in April 1990, produced democratic infantilism and a decline in governability. While the Russian Supreme Soviet decisively rejected the idea of 'All power to the soviets' by adopting the republican law on local self-government in July 1991, the Ukrainian law on local self-government (December 1990) repeated the idea of the Union law, which implies that the Ukrainian leadership at the time strove to eliminate the Soviet hierarchy rather than to re-establish governability in the republic. Once Ukraine became independent, unsurprisingly, the emphasis was shifted to recentralisation. In March 1992 a strict vertical command/subordinate structure of presidential representatives¹¹ was introduced for regions and *raiony* (districts). Cities were to remain the units of local self-government, although their centralised internal structure was consolidated.¹² Economic and political crises in 1993–94 forced President Kravchuk to compromise;

chief executives at regional and *raion* levels became elective offices again, and the elections were held simultaneously with the presidential elections in June–July 1994. Accordingly, regional and local state administrations were transformed into rada executive committees again. However, the constitutional agreement concluded between President Kuchma and the Supreme Rada in June 1995 recentralised the Ukrainian local system; regional and *raion* chief executives became appointed state offices, and rada executive committees at these levels were again transformed into state administrations. This system was consolidated by the 1996 constitution. Ukraine's official state theory argues that Ukrainian *oblasti* and *raiony* still preserve elements of local self-government given that their representative organs, radas, continue to be elected by the population. Overall, Ukrainian local institutions have experienced four electoral cycles—in 1990, 1994, 1998 and 2002. The regional chief executives (governors) in Ukraine often changed their name: from 'presidential representatives' in 1992–94 to '*oblast*' rada chairmen' in 1994–95, to 'chairmen of *oblast*' state administrations' after 1995.¹³

The concept of 'relations among levels of party systems'

Interpolitical relations may be seen as composed of three horizontal levels, the centre (federal level), the regions and sub-regions (cities and districts), and of three vertical axes (or columns): first—intergovernmental relations, which have traditionally been well studied; second—relations among levels of party systems; third—informal clan relations among levels of elites. In Ukrainian (as well as Russian) political jargon nationwide bosses of these clan networks are called oligarchs.¹⁴ Our interest is focused on when and how the political actors who formerly preferred to operate within the third column decide to shift their main sphere of activities to the second. A key to understanding this critical moment is to recognise that modern political parties are organised through a quite complex process, involving the acceptance of a programme at a constitutive congress, the conducting of periodic party meetings, the creation of party publications, the steady increase in party members and supporters, and the collection of members' dues and endowments. A party will only emerge once its founders think it worthwhile to bear all these burdensome tasks. Therefore, even if discord within the elite exists, as a rule, only the minority (i.e. challengers) dares to organise parties. The dominant side organises a party only if it is advantageous, and even then often quite reluctantly.¹⁵

We find abundant proof for this thesis in history. A multiparty system appeared in the USA only when a ruling minority of politicians (Madison, Hamilton and others) issued the book *The Federalist*, in which they labeled the majority of politicians anti-federalists. Pre-revolutionary Russian parties were first of all organised by marginalised groups on the extreme left. Immediately after losing gubernatorial power in 1993, Eduard Rossel' in Sverdlovsk *oblast*' founded the party Transformation of the Urals. In the same spirit, Petr Sumin in Chelyabinsk *oblast*' organised the party For the Revival of the Urals immediately after he was removed from the chair of the *oblast*' soviet (moreover, he liquidated this party after his return to power in 1996). It is not accidental that the October 1993 events, which caused many regional leaders to lose power, hastened the formation of party systems in Russia's regions. Needless

to say, one of the main ideas of this article, that official parties are organised when the politicians involved try to participate in politics at a higher level, is a corollary of the general thesis that challengers first organise parties.

It is vitally important to analyse each element (column) of interpolitical relations in its interactions with the other two columns, or on the background of all interpolitical relations. For this purpose, in previous articles I proposed the concept of 'centralised caciquismo'. Using this concept, I imply that in Ukraine (1) rampant local bossism is camouflaged by constitutional unitarism; (2) despite the system of appointing governors and *raion* chief executives, politics at the regional and *raion* levels has been determined by electoral (not managerial) performance.¹⁶ The concept of centralised caciquismo prevents formalistic (paying attention only to the first intergovernmental column) juxtaposition of unitary Ukraine and deconcentrated Russia.¹⁷ Moreover, this concept corresponds to the historiographical tradition of the study of patron–client relations, which has paid serious attention to the structure of *nationwide* networks of patrons.¹⁸

The importance of comprehensive analyses of interpolitical relations will become clearer through a dialogue with Ordeshook. In a 1996 essay he argued that a party system that facilitates the healthy functioning of federalism is one in which federal, regional and local politicians find common interest in the victory of their own party at elections. This common interest must be realised not by centralising means, such as the appointment of candidates by the higher party organs, but with cooperation among politicians at all three levels. On this theoretical basis Ordeshook compares the party systems of the United States, Canada, Germany and Russia and avers that the US party system is the ideal model for any federative state, whereas the Canadian one is at the unreliable end of the spectrum. In his view, the Canadian party system has a number of negative characteristics, such as the relative strength of regional parties and inconsistent electoral behaviour at national and provincial levels (for example, in Quebec, even prior to the 1990s when the Bloc Québécois managed to get its candidates elected at both the provincial and federal levels on a wave of enthusiastic regionalism, the provincial electorate voted so that the Liberal party won at the national level and the Parti Québécois won at the provincial level); centralised structures of the two major (liberal and conservative) parties; and more abundant opportunities for the third party to become successful in elections. Moreover, whereas in the United States successful state-level politicians rise to federal politics, in Canada professional politicians decide to become either provincial or federal politicians at an earlier stage and rarely move back and forth between the provincial and federal levels. In the United States federal, state and local elections are often conducted at the same time, but not in Canada. Ordeshook concludes that the German party system is good insofar as it is similar to the US system. But in the Russian party system politicians at the various levels do not share a common interest, and thus ultimately Russian federalism will be pushed into crisis.¹⁹

Ordeshook's argument is obviously America-centric and exaggerates the significance of the problem of Quebec,²⁰ and his prognosis of crisis for Russian federalism has not been realised. Why? A fault of Ordeshook's approach is that he focuses only on the relations among levels of party systems (or briefly, inter-party relations) and only their institutional aspects, while the level of state integration must

be measured in the interaction of inter-government, inter-party and inter-elite relations. As for the interaction between inter-government and inter-party relations, whereas the United States and Germany are symmetrical federative states, Canada and Russia are asymmetrical. Unsurprisingly, the inter-party relations in the latter two countries are different from those in the United States and Germany. Another fault is that Ordeshook confuses intensive interpolitical interactions with the homogeneity of sub-national politics. He assumes that locally divergent party systems inevitably become centrifugal and thus endanger state integration. As the Ukrainian example demonstrates, however, the existence of numerous regional parties does not necessarily signify the ascent of separatism. The problem lies in whether the actor-competitors of the regional party prefer to play by the rules established in the arena of central politics. Furthermore, the population's 'contradictory' electoral behaviour at various levels of government might become a cause of a state integration crisis but, on the contrary, often plays the role of diluting dissatisfaction with central authorities.²¹

Despite the reservations mentioned, Ordeshook's perception of common interests among politicians at various levels is actually important for the development of official parties. For example, the practice of 'electoral rehearsals' facilitated the emergence of official parties in Ukraine. In 1994 the March parliamentary elections were regarded as a rehearsal for the gubernatorial elections in the following June. Likewise, in March 1998 not only national parliamentary elections but also regional assembly and mayoral elections became rehearsals for the 1999 presidential election. In contrast, both in the 1995–96 and 1999–2000 electoral cycles in Russia only the federal parliamentary elections were rehearsals for coming presidential elections. In other words, in Russia only federal elections function as rehearsals for other, more important federal elections, whereas in Ukraine elections at various levels play this role for each other. This is one reason why vertical interpolitical relations became more activated and, as a result, official parties have been more developed in Ukraine than in Russia.

Historical and geographical background: parochial internationalism and gateway Hobbesianism

As its name suggests, Zakarpattya is the only region on the other side of the Carpathians in which eastern Slavs make up the majority of the population. Beginning in the twelfth century, Zakarpattya fell under Hungarian rule.²² During the twentieth century the region experienced the rule of five different states: until World War I, Austro-Hungary (Hungarian territory); between the wars, Czechoslovakia; after the collapse of Czechoslovakia, Carpathian Ukraine; from 1945 to 1991, the Soviet Union; since the collapse of the Soviet Union, independent Ukraine. Unlike Galicia and Bukovina, which were under Austrian rule in Austro-Hungary and thus were granted constitutional autonomy and representative assemblies, Zakarpattya was divided into four counties and remained under Budapest's direct control.²³ Today the region borders four states: Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Romania. Since the fall of the Meciar government in Slovakia, Zakarpattyan politicians often say that 'Europe has spread to the gates of Uzhhorod'. Zakarpattya is at the nodal point of the Carpathian European region, located at the crossroads of five states.

There are now 40 officially registered ethnic groups in the region. Ukrainians are the largest group, making up 73.6% of the population. Hungarians hold second place with 13.6%, followed by Russians, with about 4%, and Slovaks, Poles, Romanians, Jews, Roma and Germans each making up less than 1%.²⁴ In Ukraine's other regions, including the anti-Russian Galician regions, Russians compose the second largest ethnic group, but in Zakarpattya Hungarians are the second most numerous.²⁵ Because of the historical and geographical peculiarities, it has been necessary to foster peaceful interethnic cooperation. For example, one can receive elementary and secondary education not only in Ukrainian but also in Hungarian, Romanian, Russian and Slovak, and one may take the entrance examination for higher institutions in these languages.²⁶ This is notably different from Kyiv's language policy, and even by European standards one could say that Zakarpattya's language policy was sufficiently tolerant. Just across the mountains from Lviv *oblast'*, in Zakarpattya, there is a very different political culture.²⁷

Because of Zakarpattya's isolation from the mass of eastern Slavs, its population felt sympathy towards Russia as a saviour from afar. The region languished in poverty under Hungarian and Czechoslovakian rule. During those periods there were no higher educational institutions in Zakarpattya, and the region's potential elites migrated to Vienna, Budapest or Prague. The Rusyn national movement, which resisted Austro-Hungarian rule, was inclined to sympathise with the Russian empire as the protector of Orthodox Eastern Slavs, and thus, especially after the collapse of the Union of Three Emperors, Budapest viewed involvement in the movement as treason. After World War I, Thomas G. Masaryk managed to have Zakarpattya included in the new Czechoslovak state, promising autonomy to its inhabitants. That promise, however, was not fulfilled before the end of the 1930s, when Czechoslovakia itself was destroyed. Having suffered so much, Zakarpattya's inhabitants greeted the Soviet army's liberation from fascism and their inclusion in Soviet Ukraine (1944) as a true liberation. And the Soviet Union treated its newest territory with sufficient benevolence. In Uzhhorod, whose population even today is only 126,000, a university and branches of various institutes of the Academy of Sciences were opened. Uzhhorod citizens of the older generation still maintain that if Zakarpattya had not become part of the USSR they would not have received a higher education. According to my own observations, the balance between Ukrainian and Russian language use in Uzhhorod is about even.

Eastern Ukraine's pro-Russianism is a result of the region's proximity to Russia and the presence of a significant number of ethnic Russians there. Zakarpattya, however, is farther from Russia than any other Ukrainian region, and it has an insignificant number of Russians. Nevertheless, the region has not fallen under the influence of Galician anti-Russianism, first, because of its historical experience prior to being incorporated into the USSR and second, because of the presence of numerous non-Eastern Slavs in the region. For Hungarians, Slovaks and Romanians, Russian (and not Ukrainian) had to become the language of inter-ethnic communication.

In interwar Czechoslovakia the government concentrated its development efforts on Uzhhorod as the capital of the future autonomous region. During Soviet times the Russian elite settled mainly in Uzhhorod or Mukachevo. Possibly as a result, these were the only two cities to receive the so-called status of *oblast'* subordination,

independent from *raion* authorities.²⁸ This process explains why the city of Uzhhorod, with a population of only 126,000 (less than 10% of the region's population), has such a decent appearance and such weight in the politics of the *oblast'*.

As a result of these historical and ethnological peculiarities, Zakarpattya's political culture is a unique hybrid of peaceful cooperation among the region's various nationalities combined with a chauvinistic attitude towards all 'non-locals'. In a certain sense this is an expression of the population's wisdom, formed over centuries of experience, because the introduction of political confrontation from the outside, especially if it was connected with ethnic questions, could become explosive for the region.

Zakarpattya is a typical gateway region, located on the westernmost border of the former Soviet Union. This is not to say that Zakarpattya is 'a window on Europe'. These kinds of slogans are more political speculation than expressions of reality, as is shown by the fact that the Carpathian Euroregion is often criticised for lacking concrete content.²⁹ Rather, border regions tend to become well-disposed towards the central authorities of the country because of the necessity for cooperation to manage border guards, customs, immigration and transport and communication systems. In addition, Zakarpattya's economic structure is resource extraction (it produces timber and mineral water), and the region's leaders are more inclined to count on large-scale investments and the mass supply of goods from the centre than to train their own technical cadres and transform extracted resources into finished goods with their own forces. In a few words, Kyiv's disposition is much more important to Zakarpattya than is EU enlargement. This would seem to make Zakarpattya politicians inclined to become representatives (or marionettes) of one or other central political clan.

Another reason for the lack of oligarchic consolidation of the region's elites is their inability to settle conflicts through compromise. This seems to be caused, to an extent, by a kind of frontier mentality: ferventness, individualism, entrepreneurial spirit and a penchant for self-defence by force. This behaviour leads frontier regional politics to what Gel'man calls a 'war of all against all'.³⁰ Borrowing this phrase, I understand it to describe regional politics in which (1) there is no overwhelming majority and there is a certain balance among political forces; (2) these political forces are not satisfied with the fixed division of interests among them, and confrontation is geared toward the elimination of one's opponent; (3) they often employ coercive means in political struggles, for example, blockading opposing candidates from running for elections or a war of *kompromat*, making political use of law enforcement and judicial organs; (4) rarely do the winners of any one contest manage to eliminate the losers, who immediately find new institutions for their activities, replacing their lost positions and reinforcing their ranks by attracting defectors from the ruling clan. In other words, the political situation does not develop in such a way that the winners take all.

Remarkably, one can find a number of similar characteristics ('a war of the centre's marionettes' and 'a war of all against all') in another gateway region of the former Soviet Union, Primor'e, in Russia. And the result of these 'wars' would also seem to be similar. Losing autonomy, their politics gain national attention. The status of both regions is raised yet more by the fact that they can constantly attract the attention of the national mass media (and in the case of Primor'e even the world's media) and induce curious Western political scientists to venture there for field research.

The renewal and defence of autonomy (1990–94): inactive relations among levels of party systems

The main issues of Zakarpattyan politics from 1990 to the 1994 local elections were neither ‘pro-Russianism versus nationalism’ nor ‘rightists versus leftists’ but rather how to restore and maintain the local elite’s autonomy.

Realising the Zakarpattyan elite’s unusual regionalism and mechanisms for mutual defence, neither Moscow nor Kyiv appointed local elites to leading positions in the regional KGB or border guard.³¹ However, in the party leadership, Zakarpattyan native Yu. II’nyts’kyi worked in the position of *obkom* first secretary for 17 years, beginning in 1963.³² Under his leadership, the socioeconomic development of the *oblast’* stagnated, and in 1980 the Central Committees of the CPU decided to replace him. The local party organisation proposed another local leader, Mykhailo Voloshchuk, then the *oblast’* executive committee chairman, as II’nyts’kyi’s successor, but the CPU Central Committee did not agree, proposing instead Henrikh Iosypovych Bandrovs’kyi, the first secretary of the Lviv city CPSU committee since 1964. Born in a polonised village in Kirovohrad *oblast’*, Bandrovs’kyi graduated from Kyiv Polytechnic Institute. At 34 years of age he became first secretary of the Lviv city party organisation. When he was appointed first secretary of Zakarpattya *obkom*, the number of Communists in Lviv city had reached 57,000, whereas in Zakarpattya *oblast’* there were only 43,000. Obviously, Bandrovs’kyi had been sent to strengthen a weak party organisation. Soon after Bandrovs’kyi’s arrival in Zakarpattya, one of the *oblast’* leaders informed him of the number of *obkom* leaders who had received a higher education. Bandrovs’kyi smiled and responded: ‘It is one thing to have a diploma and another to have received a higher education’.³³ Bandrovs’kyi did not even attempt to conceal his pride in having ruled one of the most cultured cities of Ukraine for 16 years and his somewhat contemptuous attitude toward Zakarpattya’s elite. Under Bandrovs’kyi’s iron hand the *oblast’* economy developed considerably, but potential conflicts with the local elite were not soothed. For example, the chairman of the *oblast’* Rada executive committee, Mykhailo Voloshchuk, left his position after a conflict with Bandrovs’kyi and became a vice-rector of Uzhhorod University.

Even during *perestroika* the political situation in the region remained relatively quiet until 1988, when the issue of constructing anti-Star Wars military facilities in Mukachevo *raion* came to the forefront and when *Pravda* published an article criticising Bandrovs’kyi. He subsequently lost in the 1989 election of USSR people’s deputies. However, First Secretary Bandrovs’kyi’s removal in February 1990 was provoked not by the anti-*nomenklatura* forces as in the neighbouring Galician provinces but by an intra-*nomenklatura* conflict, the pushing aside of non-locals by the local elite. Bandrovs’kyi asked the CPU Central Committee for help, but the committee replied: ‘When we ourselves are barely treading water, how can we help you?’ Receiving this reply, he resolved to retire.³⁴

In February 1990, at the CPU *obkom* plenum, which was almost transformed into a series of accusations directed at Bandrovs’kyi, the attack proceeded in the following spirit:

All communists of the *oblast’* party organisation are satisfied with the position of the Central

Committee of the CPU concerning the election of the party *obkom* first secretary from amongst local cadres, who are known in the *oblast'* for their practical work.... Even now we do not understand what led the Politburo of the CC CPU and the CC CPSU to propose comrade H. I. Bandrovs'kyi as first secretary of the Zakarpattyan party *obkom*.... Why after his 16 years of work as secretary in Lviv was he not advanced to higher-level party work in Lviv *oblast'*? Yet more incomprehensible is the atmosphere surrounding the nomination of Henrikh Iosypovych, created by the CPU's then leadership. It was even insinuated that the CC thinks that in Zakarpattya some specific local egoism and nationalistic tendencies have taken root, and that, so to speak, a strong hand is necessary in order to re-establish order.³⁵

Thus, after 10 years as Zakarpattya's first secretary, Bandrovs'kyi was accused of not being local.

After Bandrovs'kyi's removal, the Zakarpattyan local elite resumed its initiative, and further elite reshuffling was carried out by an evolutionary path. Voloshchuk was recalled from the university and succeeded to the position of first secretary in place of Bandrovs'kyi. Two months later, in agreement with Gorbachev's policy on concurrence, first secretary Voloshchuk was voted in as chairman of the newly elected *oblast'* Rada. Because of the absence of an alternative candidate, Voloshchuk received 107 of 111 deputies' votes. It is strange that the national democrats did not even propose a candidate, but possibly Voloshchuk's rating was raised by the fact that he was so degraded under Bandrovs'kyi. Mykhailo Krailo, who had previously worked in the provisioning administration, was elected chairman of the *oblast'* executive committee.³⁶

In August 1990 the newspaper of the *oblast'* Rada, *Novyny Zakarpattya*, began to be published separately from *Zakarpatskaya pravda*, which had been the joint organ of the CPSU *obkom* and the *oblast'* Rada.³⁷ About the same time, Rukh's regional print organ, *Karpats'kyi holos*, began publication.

As a result of the Ukrainian republican law on local self-government, passed in December 1990, Rada chairman Voloshchuk also became chairman of the *oblast'* executive committee concurrently, and Krailo became his first deputy. Proving unable to endure criticism for his too patient position during the August 1991 putsch, Voloshchuk retired in October. Krailo took his place, and in spring 1992 he was appointed the president's representative (governor) in Zakarpattya *oblast'*.

The promotion of Zakarpattya to an autonomous territory was the most controversial question in the *oblast'* Rada from 1990 to 1994. The left forces, who sought a means for their own legitimisation after the blow of the August coup, joined with the *ex-nomenklatura* regional elite in support of autonomy, while the national democrats resisted. On 1 December 1991, simultaneously with the Ukrainian presidential elections, a referendum on support for Zakarpattya's autonomy was carried out. The overwhelming majority of the population supported autonomy.

Although the situation in Zakarpattya was not so tense as in Galicia, from 1989 to 1991 Zakarpattya's national democrats spoke out quite aggressively. Viktor Bed' (b. 1964), the young leader of the *oblast'* organisation of Rukh in 1991–92, represented the spirit of the time. But when the national democrats across Ukraine split over the question of transforming Rukh into a party in 1992, Bed' spoke against conversion of Rukh into a party and left his seat. Bed' created the *oblast'* organisation of the

Christian-Democratic Party of Ukraine and became its leader. He then became the real opponent of the incumbent Krailo in the June 1994 gubernatorial elections. In March 1994 Bed' began to publish a newspaper, *Sribna Zemlya*; this newspaper continues to be the common organ of all national democrats besides Rukh.

Because of Bed's personal history and conduct during the national democratic revolution, the local elite saw him as the importer of the Galician type of nationalism. Krailo was ready to answer to Bed's call. But in a contest with his attractive, young opponent, Krailo had several obvious weaknesses. Born in 1933, he was then already 61 years old. He had not had a distinguished career and was in power at a time when life was extraordinarily difficult for the population. The *ex-nomenklatura* political elite of the *oblast'*, which had consolidated around the governor and thus might be called the 'party of *oblast'* administration', proposed instead Krailo's deputy, Serhii Ustych, born in 1955, with a *kandidat* degree in philosophy, who possessed lengthy experience abroad in Czechoslovakia. Ustych had been recruited in 1989 to the position of deputy chairman of the *oblast'* executive committee, where he was responsible for international cooperation and laid the basis for the later Carpathian Euroregion project. The 'party of *oblast'* administration' convinced Krailo not to run and to transfer power to Ustych.³⁸

Ustych's camp created a negative image of Bed' as a Galician chauvinist and propagated the fear that, if Bed' came to power, the traditional principle of peaceful coexistence among ethnic groups in Zakarpattia would be violated. At a time when the very idea of national democracy was losing its leading authority, Bed' did not have a chance to overcome such an obstacle. First, he lost his mandate as deputy to the Supreme Rada, losing in the March elections (moreover, he was defeated in the first round), which were considered a rehearsal for the gubernatorial elections. At the same time, Ustych easily won a seat in the Supreme Rada from his native Irshava electoral district. In June 1994, in the first round of the gubernatorial elections, Ustych and Bed' gathered 33.2 and 19.7% respectively of the votes cast and entered the second round.³⁹ In the second round, Ustych received 58.8% of the vote, defeating Bed', who was able to win only 32.4%.⁴⁰ Interestingly, in the Ukrainian presidential election, taking place simultaneously with the first round of the gubernatorial elections, the Zakarpattyan electorate decisively supported Kravchuk (49.7%) versus Kuchma (16.8%).⁴¹ From the viewpoint of the pro-Russian versus nationalism axis, Zakarpattyan voters made contradictory choices at the regional and national levels.

Notably, in this context of harsh competition between national democrats and local post-*nomenklatura* elites, Rukh maintained a strange neutrality, blaming Bed' for splitting Rukh's *oblast'* organisation in 1992.⁴² After these elections Zakarpattia's national democrats conclusively split up into Rukh members and others, and this split would continue until the end of 2001, when all the national democrats were reintegrated into Viktor Yushchenko's Our Ukraine. The events of 1994 offer an example of the specific behaviour of Rukh's Zakarpattyan organisation. When the political forces in the *oblast'* split along the local vs non-local axis, the decisive voice often falls to the Zakarpattyan Rukh leaders, because they are located at the 'pivotal' place in this context. And they exploit this advantageous position maximally, even sacrificing their political credibility. Despite its vehemently anti-*nomenklatura* declarations,⁴³ and despite the theoretical improbability that the policies of Rukh, one of

the few worldview-based parties in Ukraine, can be altered depending on the region,⁴⁴ the Zakarpattyan Rukh leaders are realists. Functioning in an environment that never accepts radical nationalism, they cannot be otherwise. They would exhibit similar opportunistic behaviour in 1998 and 2000 (see below).

Despite his youth and origins in the intelligentsia, Ustych did not manage to avoid accusations of corruption directed at him and members of his family. Ustych's governorship was characterised by a number of romantic long-term projects but no concrete deeds. Zakarpattya's economy fell into deep stagnation over the period 1994–99.

Now let us examine the development of Uzhhorod politics during 1990–94. In an interview with me, Stepan Sember, the victor in the mayoral election of September 1998, proposed three stages for the history of Ukraine's municipal governments since 1990: (1) the period of tribune democracy (1990–94); (2) the period of businessmen (1994–98); (3) the turn to professionals (since 1998). Still fresh in many people's memories is that during the fall of communism, especially during the 1990 republican and local elections, tribune democracy shook the whole USSR. According to Sember, by 1994 a social group of businessmen, who began to take an interest in professional politics, had emerged. The electors naïvely thought that those who had made themselves rich would make others rich as well, and so they voted for businessmen. Businessmen were elected mayors in such prestigious cities as Odesa, Donetsk and Vinnytsya. These businessmen, however, disappointed their electors. Then, professionals who had climbed the professional ladder under the old regime, that is, the so-called *nomenklatura*, revived their reputation during the 1998 local election campaigns.⁴⁵ Considering that Sember himself is a 'professional' who completed the school of administration under the old regime and worked as vice-mayor for both the democrat Landovs'kyi and the businessman Ratushnyak, it is impossible not to notice that his periodisation helps to legitimise his own victory. Nevertheless, in the history of Uzhhorod the three periods mentioned are clearly evident.

The mayorality of Emil Landovs'kyi (1990–94) represented the period of tribune democracy. In his position at an institute for raising teachers' qualifications he threw himself into professional politics in the struggle with the bureaucratism of the institute's leadership. In the spring 1990 elections to the Uzhhorod city Rada the democrats were victorious; almost 70 of the 124 deputies elected belonged to the democratic fraction Pozytsiya.⁴⁶ In May Landovs'kyi defeated his communist opponent (second secretary of the city committee) and was elected chairman of the city Rada. When the republican law on local self-government was passed in December 1990, uniting the posts of city Rada chairman and city executive committee chairman, Landovs'kyi took on this role. The Uzhhorod Rada became one of the most radical city radas in Ukraine. During the August 1991 coup attempt the Uzhhorod Rada was the only Ukrainian rada to announce a protest as early as 19 August, while even the Lviv city Rada had yet to make any kind of accusation before the victors emerged. After the coup the Uzhhorod Rada actively worked to demolish monuments of Lenin (in Zakarpattya, that did not always arouse the population's enthusiasm), to restore churches and to organise an international union of Carpathian cities. Then President Kravchuk supported the city Rada and Landovs'kyi in particular, seeing them as counterweights to the conservative (in his opinion) Zakarpattyan *oblast'* state admin-

istration.⁴⁷ However, the political group of Mayor Landovs'kyi, although marginal, belonged to the local Zakarpattyan elite. Though the group was radical on the conservatives versus reformers axis, it shared the position of the 'party of *oblast*' administration' on strategic points such as interethnic peace and Zakarpattya's autonomy. Confrontation between the Uzhhorod mayor and the *oblast*' administration in this period was one within the local elite.

As often happened with those democrats in power at that time, Landovs'kyi was not able to avoid accusations of dictatorial tendencies, politicised selection of cadres and a lack of administrative capabilities. In an attempt to find a way out of this situation, Landovs'kyi reorganised the executive committee into a 'city board' under his personal responsibility, taking advantage of revisions made to the law on local self-government in March 1992 which made it possible for municipalities to centralise their internal structure.⁴⁸ This reform raised the city hall's administrative effectiveness to a certain degree, but it could not stop the decline of Landovs'kyi's popularity. Realising his small chance of victory, Landovs'kyi did not even become a candidate for the mayor's post in the 1994 local elections but instead ran for governor and lost.

As his successor, Landovs'kyi promoted his deputy, Stepan Sember. Sember had worked consistently in the executive committee and was politically neutral, making him acceptable to the 'party of *oblast*' administration', which had been disturbed by Landovs'kyi's political intrigue. But in the 1994 mayoral elections a Christian Democratic candidate ran in tandem with Bed', and Sember seemed to have little chance to overcome that challenge, lacking both charisma and financial resources. The 'party of *oblast*' administration' offered as its candidate Serhii Ratushnyak, a virtual unknown at the time.

Born in 1961, the young Ratushnyak had eloquence and a mighty bodybuilder's stature. After graduating from Uzhhorod University, Ratushnyak had studied at Kyiv Polytechnic Institute. He made his capital by 'business' during *perestroika*, sometimes on the borders of legality. In the early 1990s law enforcement agencies began to investigate Ratushnyak, and he was forced to marry a Slovak woman and hide in Slovakia for quite some time. When he returned to Uzhhorod, just before the 1994 elections, he was little known, except as a wealthy man, owning the syndicate RIO-LTD, which had established a trade network across the city.⁴⁹ Despite the flaws in Ratushnyak's biography and his political unpredictability, the 'party of *oblast*' administration' saw its first task as to prevent Bed's clan from winning the mayoralty. A suitable agreement was reached between the 'party of *oblast*' administration' and Ratushnyak's clan in the struggle against the national democrats.⁵⁰ At this time there was the possibility that events would create an 'elite cartel' rather than a 'war of all against all'. Ratushnyak won the election in the first round.

In addition to his charisma, Ratushnyak obtained a solid power base. He supported active privatisation and the development of tourism, trade and the service industries, exploiting Uzhhorod's geographical, historical and architectural advantages. On the other hand, Ratushnyak transformed the RIO syndicate, which formerly included only his own enterprises, into a corporatist organisation, which all the city's entrepreneurs were requested to join. Ratushnyak helped those who joined through advantages in taxes and relief in payment for municipal services, while not refraining from exerting pressure by illegal means on those who refused to submit. Despite his non-*nomenklat-*

ura background, Ratushnyak knew the importance of propaganda and created his own newspaper, *RIO-Inform*,⁵¹ and other media instruments, including his own university.⁵² The city Rada, also formed at the 1994 elections, in distinction from the previous Rada (which had achieved an all-Ukrainian reputation, both good and bad), was inactive and no more than Ratushnyak's 'pocket rada'.

The transformation of Zakarpattia into the SDPU(o)'s patrimony (1996–98): relations among levels of party systems activated

Peaceful cooperation between the mayor and the *oblast'* administration came to an end in 1996. In post-communist Russia and Ukraine tensions between the regional authorities and the regional capital's authorities have appeared when two conditions have held: first, if there was a significant demographic and economic concentration in the region's capital;⁵³ second, if the elite of the old regime was eradicated as a result of the great changes of 1990 and the new elite was unable to establish new rules of the game. Both conditions emerged in Primor'e, Sverdlovsk *oblast'*, Udmurtiya and Odesa *oblast'*. In Zakarpattia *oblast'* the second condition is present to a significant degree but the first is absent. Ratushnyak's challenge became possible probably because of Uzhhorod's privileged status in the region since it was in interwar Czechoslovakia, which cannot be expressed in economic and demographic parameters.

In 1997 the confrontation worsened when the 'party of *oblast'* administration' chose to unite with Kyivan financial-industrial capital—Medvedchuk's faction within the SDPU(o). One can trace this union's beginnings to the by-election for the Supreme Rada in April 1997. As a result of the 1995 constitutional agreement between the president and the Supreme Rada, *oblast'* executive power was incorporated into the state structure, and correspondingly, the chairman of the *oblast'* Rada, Ustych, became a state employee. Consequently, he was obliged to resign his deputy mandate to the Supreme Rada, and new elections had to be carried out in his native Irshava electoral district. However, the first elections in Irshava were ruled invalid because turnout did not reach the 50% level required by law. This caught the attention of Viktor Medvedchuk, an influential leader of SDPU(o), who had run in the prestigious Artem electoral district of Kyiv city in 1994 and come first, but had not received the deputy mandate because of insufficient turnout.

Created by former minister of justice (1991–95) Vasyl' Onopenko (b. 1949), SDPU(o) really never was anything but a centrist party (in fact, the Socialist International does not recognise it). Nonetheless, until the 1998 Supreme Rada elections the SDPU(o) under Onopenko's leadership maintained a certain distance from Kuchma. However, the SDPU(o) had another influential internal faction headed by one of the most powerful oligarchs in Ukraine, Viktor Medvedchuk. Medvedchuk was born in 1954 in the Krasnoyarsk region of Russia. In 1978 he graduated from the Law Faculty of Kyiv University, and since then worked as a lawyer. After the collapse of communism Medvedchuk established a number of corporations, together with his colleague-comrade Hryhoriï Surkis, now not only an influential entrepreneur but also the owner of the famous football team Kyiv Dinamo. Medvedchuk's clan was closely connected with Kravchuk but he also became President Kuchma's adviser in

1996. Medvedchuk became a Candidate of Law in 1996 and, as quickly as the next year, a Doctor of Law.⁵⁴ As is the case with other oligarchs in Ukraine, Medvedchuk has his own mass media; the TV channel *Inter* is almost his private property, and he controls the channel *1 + 1* as well. What distinguishes Medvedchuk from other oligarchs is that, as a lawyer and adviser to Kuchma in judicial matters, he has a strong influence on law enforcement organs. He is able to jail, or at least blackmail to jail, his political antagonists whenever he wants. Perhaps this is one of the reasons why the SDPU(o) under Medvedchuk's leadership (Onopenko was expelled from the party in 1998), despite its indisputable contribution to Kuchma's victory in 1999, became isolated from other clan parties in Ukraine; the SDPU(o) did not participate in either Kuchma's For United Ukraine or Yushchenko's Our Ukraine and ran in the 2002 parliamentary elections independently.

After failing to become a Supreme Rada deputy in 1994 Medvedchuk desperately needed a deputy's seat. Counting the great number of vacant deputies' mandates across Ukraine because of the strict requirement for turnout, one can understand why Medvedchuk chose the Irshava electoral district: votes in poor Zakarpattya could be bought very cheaply. True, former Uzhhorod mayor Landovs'kyi had already created an SDPU(o) organisation in the *oblast'* in 1996, but it did not even have 50 activists in the whole region.⁵⁵

Transferring his electoral patrimony to Medvedchuk, Ustych was apparently promised political compensation. In the election campaign in Irshava electoral district in April 1997 Medvedchuk employed up-to-date election technology and invested huge sums of money in this remote electoral district. Former president Kravchuk and Hryhorii Surkis visited the district and campaigned for Medvedchuk. The Zakarpattya *oblast'* state administration also took steps to ensure Medvedchuk's victory. Medvedchuk received 94% of the votes and, as a result, his long-awaited deputy mandate. This victory was so brilliant that one of the central newspapers described it this way: 'He came, he convinced, he conquered'.⁵⁶ Two of Ustych's men (being not only his subordinates but also close friends), Ivan Rizak (b. 1965), head of the organisational department, and Petro Tokar (b. 1953), head of the department of internal policies of the *oblast'* administration, were enthusiastically involved in this electoral campaign. In the autumn of the same year they officially joined the SDPU(o) and transformed it from Landovs'kyi's dilettante civic organisation into a real professional party.⁵⁷ Rizak would become the architect of repeated SDPU(o) victories in the region and one of the party's nationwide leaders (he was listed in fifth place on the candidate lists of the SDPU(o) for proportional representation in the 2002 parliamentary elections, even higher than Surkis), whilst Tokar would become the main ideologue of the SDPU(o) in Zakarpattya.

The union of the 'party of *oblast'* administration' and the Medvedchuk–Surkis clan had both positive and negative effects: on the one hand, after this clan gained access to the natural resources (forests and mineral water) of the *oblast'*, these resources were allowed to be plundered. On the other hand, Medvedchuk and Surkis are actively carrying out charitable work in their electoral districts, and as their efforts to overcome the consequences of the 1998 flood demonstrated, they are quite capable of lobbying for Zakarpattya's interests in Kyiv. In any case, as a result of this union, the struggle between the 'party of *oblast'* administration' and the Ratushnyak clan has

moved beyond a rivalry between the region and its capital to one between Kyiv financial capital with its regional representative (the *oblast'* administration) and the Uzhhorod mayor, representing the interests of local capital. Aiming to widen his influence at the *oblast'* level, Ratushnyak began to demand separation of the positions of chief of the *oblast'* state administration (governor) and chairman of the *oblast'* Rada, both of which Ustych then held. It was obvious that this demand reflected Ratushnyak's own desire to run for chairman of the *oblast'* Rada. Ratushnyak argued that when Ustych was elected chairman of the *oblast'* Rada in 1994 the population thought he would combine this with heading the executive, but after the constitutional agreement in 1995 the situation completely changed. Now the chief of the *oblast'* executive power must be appointed by the president, so he cannot hold the additional post of chairman of the *oblast'* Rada as the head of the region's self-government. One cannot help but recognise the correctness of this argument. In fact, in several other Ukrainian regions these two positions had been separated even before the 1998 local elections. However, in the *oblast'* Rada elected in 1994 Ratushnyak found few sympathisers and his position was not supported.

The Medvedchuk–Ustych alliance began to use law enforcement organs to eliminate Ratushnyak's clan. Although there were good reasons to prosecute Ratushnyak, one could say the same about Ustych and the Medvedchuk–Surkis clan. The prosecution of Ratushnyak alone could not avoid the criticism of politicising the legal system. In addition, administrative pressure was increased on Ratushnyak's press organ *RIO-Inform*.⁵⁸ In the heat of severe struggle Ratushnyak said 'we will not give this *oblast'* to the *zhidy*', thereby yet worsening the situation.⁵⁹

Hence the 29 March 1998 elections, in which deputies to the Supreme Rada and the *oblast'* Rada were elected, as well as the Uzhhorod mayor, became the decisive battle for both Medvedchuk's and Ratushnyak's clans. Ratushnyak organised an all-*oblast'* electoral bloc, New Zakarpattia, and put forward a significant number of candidates for the *oblast'* Rada. Interestingly, a similar attempt to create a mayoral faction in a regional representative body was made by the mayor of Vladivostok, Viktor Cherepkov, in the December 1997 elections to the Primor'e regional assembly. However, unlike Vladivostok, in which one-third of the region's population live and which correspondingly elects almost one-third of the deputies to the regional assembly, the population of Uzhhorod does not make up even one-tenth of the *oblast'* population and only five of the 75 *oblast'* deputies are elected from the city. As a result, the formation of a significant 'party of the mayor' would be difficult, unless New Zakarpattia could actually widen its appeal across the *oblast'*.

Ratushnyak ran simultaneously for the Supreme Rada and the mayor's post. Among the central political forces, the Socialist Party, the Socialist Democratic Party of Ukraine (a leftist party headed by Yurii Buzduhan not to be confused with the SDPU(o)) and Pavlo Lazarenko's Hromada Party supported him. In an effort to agitate for the pro-presidential NDP, Ustych entrusted vice-governor V. Prykhod'ko with organising its electoral campaign. Simultaneously, another vice-governor, Rizak, concentrated on the SDPU(o) election campaign. Hence the antagonisms of Zakarpattyan politics became a dress rehearsal for the following year's presidential campaign.

The results of the 29 March 1998 elections, however, did not disrupt the balance

of forces in the *oblast'*. For the Supreme Rada elections, the *oblast'* electoral commission, in agreement with the 27 March 1998 decision of the supreme court of Ukraine, excluded Ratushnyak's name from the ballot just before the election, as occurred in the 1998 mayoral elections in Vladivostok. The electors' reaction to such measures was similar as well. In the Uzhhorod electoral district 17% of the votes were declared invalid and 17.9% voted 'against all candidates'.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, the SDPU(o) achieved a significant victory in the Supreme Rada elections: of the five deputies elected from Zakarpattia, two were from the SDPU(o)—Medvedchuk for the Irshava electoral district and Surkis for Mukachevo.⁶¹ Later, Medvedchuk was elected as vice-chairman of the Supreme Rada. The transformation of Zakarpattia *oblast'* into the Medvedchuk–Surkis clan's patrimony changed the balance of forces within the SDPU(o) leadership and led to the removal of Vasyl' Onopenko from the party. After this, Zakarpattia, and not Kyiv, became the party's headquarters.

In the mayoral elections in Uzhhorod Ratushnyak received more than 35,000 votes (seven times more than the runner-up).⁶²

Elections to Ukrainian regional radas in 1998 were conducted on a specific majoritarian system, which mechanically divided regions into electoral districts identical to administrative units (cities and *raiony*) and gave each district five deputy seats, ignoring demographic factors. This formation of electoral districts was based on the idea that the regional representative organs in unitary Ukraine were not full-fledged organs of regional self-government but a union of cities and *raiony*. This system disadvantaged New Zakarpattia, which was influential mainly in Uzhhorod. Although New Zakarpattia received four of the five mandates from Uzhhorod, the SDPU(o) faction obtained first place in the *oblast'* Rada, although most of the faction's members were not party members at this time (they joined the SDPU(o) afterwards, as a result of the party's pressure for enrolment). New Zakarpattia took second place. The NDP and SPU received one mandate each. The number of deputies sympathetic to the national democratic cause decreased still more in comparison with the previous *oblast'* Rada. As the positions of chairman of the *oblast'* Rada and governor had been separated, the new Rada's first task was to elect its own chairman. The deputy faction New Zakarpattia proposed in vain as candidate the vice-mayor of Uzhhorod (that is, Ratushnyak's right-hand man), Stepan Sember. One of the vice-governors, Ivan Ivancho (b. 1946), who had earlier worked in the CPSU organisation and administration in Berehovo, a *raion* with a large Hungarian population, won the ballot.⁶³ This was not an SDPU(o) victory because Ivancho was not a party member and, as a representative of local patriotism, was critical of the SDPU(o) policy of colonising Zakarpattia.⁶⁴

Thus in the Uzhhorod mayoral elections Ratushnyak triumphed, but in the elections to the Supreme Rada the Medvedchuk–Ustych alliance was victorious. The stalemate in Zakarpattia *oblast'* continued. And precisely for this reason the Medvedchuk–Ustych alliance reinvigorated its legal prosecution of Ratushnyak. Several days after Ratushnyak's election he was forced to emigrate abroad. At the end of April 1998 the deputy general prosecutor of Ukraine, Ol'ha Kolin'ko, renowned for her prosecution of numerous forces opposed to Kuchma, was sent to Zakarpattia.⁶⁵ A new stage was begun in the investigation of 'the Ratushnyak case'. On 25 June Ratushnyak sent an announcement of his resignation to the city Rada. The city Rada resolved to conduct

new mayoral elections on 27 September and to grant Ratushnyak the title of honorary mayor.⁶⁶

Recognising the repeat election for the Uzhhorod mayor in September as a decisive chance to end the stalemate in *oblast'* politics, the Medvedchuk–Ustych alliance relied upon not only the stick (the criminal prosecution of Ratushnyak) but also the carrot, tactfully proposing Ratushnyak's former right-hand man, Stepan Sember, as their candidate for mayor. After being defeated by Ivancho in the election for *oblast'* Rada chairman, Sember was elected chairman of the Rada budget committee. This position bound Sember to be the coordinator between the *oblast'* and Uzhhorod,⁶⁷ and therefore brought him under the influence of the Medvedchuk–Ustych alliance. Hence, in the 27 September 1998 Uzhhorod mayoral election two powerful candidates were put forward: Stepan Sember and Serhii Slobodyanyuk, deputy chairman of the Uzhhorod city Rada and former deputy to the Supreme Rada (1995–98), who was considered the more legitimate successor to Ratushnyak. Born in Uzhhorod in 1965, Slobodyanyuk had lived an adventurous life, including military service in Afghanistan in 1984–86 and work in the gas sector in Surgut (Khanty-Mansi). Having returned to his native city in 1991, he became chairman of the Zakarpattia branch of the Union of Veterans of Afghanistan. Elected as deputy to the Supreme Rada from the Uzhhorod electoral district, Slobodyanyuk belonged to the SPU–Agrarian faction and was personally close to Oleksandr Moroz.⁶⁸ In the 1998 parliamentary elections he had withdrawn his candidacy in favour of Ratushnyak.

Though Ratushnyak was popular among the masses, a significant part of the city's intellectuals viewed his 'criminal' administration critically. The investigation of the 'Ratushnyak case' demonstrated the decisiveness of pro-presidential forces in Zakarpattia directed at the presidential election of the following year, and terrorised the city's elite. Under pressure from the Medvedchuk–Ustych alliance, the city organisations of the SDPU(o) and Rukh were forced to reject their own candidates in favour of Sember, and this resulted in the splitting of both parties' city organisations.⁶⁹ For Rukh activists, who had been criticising the Medvedchuk–Surkis clan as a mafia indistinguishable from Ratushnyak,⁷⁰ and who could in no way reconcile themselves with the Jewishness of this clan, it was impossible to support Sember, who had obviously made a secret agreement with Medvedchuk. To mollify the activists, the leader of the Rukh *oblast'* organisation, Volodymyr Pipash, invited the party's leader, Vyacheslav Chornovil, to Uzhhorod and called a joint plenum of the city and *oblast'* party organisations. Only there was he able to get a resolution of support for Sember passed.⁷¹ But even such a burdensome procedure could not avert an almost fatal break-up of the Uzhhorod city Rukh organisation. In other words, Sember's supporters from the SDPU(o) and Rukh considered it worthwhile to sacrifice a party split in order to receive a piece of the pie from Mayor Sember.⁷²

In this regard the other (non-Rukh) national democrats retained their moral purity, but they had already split up into many parts, each posing its own candidate. On the initiative of Bed' they did conduct a meeting of citizens with the participation of several candidates of a national democratic orientation. Even this meeting, however, did not lead to the endorsement of a single candidate but only the acceptance of a declaration that Uzhhorod's national democrats would not support either Slo-

bodyanyuk or Sember.⁷³ The local SPU organisation supported Slobodyanyuk and the CPU supported Sember, for which it was to receive a deputy mayor position.

Whereas the gubernatorial and mayoral elections of 1994 were characterised by conflict between the local elite and the national democrats (whom the local elite accused of importing Galician chauvinism to Zakarpattya), the mayoral election of September 1998 turned into a bitter battle between the Medvedchuk–Ustych alliance and ‘local capital’, which adhered to Ratushnyak’s line. Here the right–left and pro-Russianism–Ukrainian nationalism axes did not play a significant role. That is revealed by the fact that the leftists were divided into pro-Sember Communists and pro-Slobodyanyuk Socialists, and the national democrats into the pro-Sember Rukh and the others, who advanced their own candidates.

Out of this conflict, Sember garnered 10,263 votes and Slobodyanyuk received 9,528, giving Sember only a marginal victory.⁷⁴ Rukh, which had sacrificed the most for Sember’s victory, did not receive adequate compensation. It is true that V. Korol’, the leader of the rump Rukh city organisation after its split, was appointed by Sember as his deputy for economic questions.⁷⁵ However, the appointment of Korol’, who had received only an engineer’s education, to a post responsible for economic problems could only have been a tactical manoeuvre by Sember. In this post Korol’ was not able to express himself and was politely released in spring 1999, as the presidential election approached and after Rukh leader Chornovil’s death. Almost simultaneously, Mayor Sember announced his entry into the SDPU(o) and support for Kuchma’s re-election, mobilising municipal employees to gather signatures in support of Kuchma’s candidacy. In the previous year (1998) it had been necessary to organise a united front against Ratushnyak, including representatives of various political forces irrespective of their orientation. As the presidential election drew near, however, it naturally became necessary to clean the ranks.

That the NDP came only fourth by number of votes in the region in the 1998 Supreme Rada election pushed Governor Ustych into a difficult position. It was obvious that Ustych was not able to organise a struggle with the clan of ‘local capital’, tightly linked to Kuchma’s rivals, such as Lazarenko, Moroz and Marchuk. Rather, Ustych’s incompetence and corruption provided ‘local capital’ with good bases for criticism. Ustych was placed on Kuchma’s black list of governors who were to be dismissed after the election. To escape that fate, in April 1998, right after the Supreme Rada elections, Ustych entered negotiations with former Uzhhorod mayor Landovs’kyi, who was the original founder of the *oblast’* organisation of the SDPU(o) (see note 55), to persuade him to transfer the position of *oblast’* SDPU(o) leader to Ustych. After Medvedchuk’s victory at the 1997 election for the Supreme Rada the former Zakarpattyan *nomenklatura* joined the SDPU(o) *oblast’* organisation en masse, and this quickly developed into the party of power. The party organisation grew beyond the strength of Landovs’kyi, who gladly passed it on to the governor and became his deputy.⁷⁶ Governor Ustych’s seizure of the regional SDPU(o) leadership marked the final step in statification of the party. Ustych summoned each leading official of the *oblast’* administration to his cabinet and asked him to sign either the form to join the party or a letter of resignation from office. Coming to lead the *oblast’* SDPU(o) organisation, Ustych gained the possibility to ask for Kuchma’s mercy via Medvedchuk on one hand, and on the other demonstrated that now he was a governor

capable of mobilising votes for Kuchma. In this way Ustych managed to remain in the governor's post for one more year. This course of events reveals that in Zakarpattya, as was the case across Ukraine, the 1998 parliamentary elections served as a decisive moment in the creation of 'centralised caciquismo', a specific combination of state building and electoral politics.

Even after the bulwark of the Uzhhorod city hall was handed over, the former Ratushnyak clan did not lose hope. It was encouraged by SDPU(o) internal quarrels. As a result of the 1998 parliamentary elections Medvedchuk and Surkis transformed Zakarpattya *oblast'* into their patrimony and increased their political resources. In October 1998 they deserted the founder of the party, Onopenko, and moved the party to a pro-Kuchma orientation. About the same time, the leader of the SDPU(o) parliamentary faction, Evhen Marchuk, who later became Kuchma's opponent in the 1999 presidential election, left the faction.⁷⁷ Medvedchuk and Surkis then became seriously concerned about Kuchma's victory in the approaching presidential election. This situation is similar to that of Russia in 1999, when Boris Berezovsky was worried about his own personal security in a post-El'tsin epoch.

Immediately after the defeat of 'local capital' in the mayoral elections, at a session of the *oblast'* Rada, Deputy Eduard Matviichuk, then Ratushnyak's successor as the spokesman of 'local capital', proposed a resolution of no confidence in the *oblast'* state administration. Explaining what provoked his proposal, Matviichuk stressed the massive export of mineral water from the *oblast'* and the thoughtless clearing of forests,⁷⁸ alluding to the activities of Medvedchuk's and Surkis's enterprises and to Governor Ustych's external economic policies. When the vote was taken, of the 65 deputies present, 15 voted for the resolution, ten abstained, nine did not even bother to cast a vote, and only 31 deputies, less than half of those present, voted against the resolution.⁷⁹ Such a result so soon after the defeat of 'local capital' in the mayoral elections demonstrated how unpopular Governor Ustych had become.

From a Pyrrhic victory to the renewal of war (1999–2002): active relations among levels of party systems continue

In 1999, before the presidential election, the leadership of both the *oblast'* state administration and the ruling SDPU(o) were reorganised. Whereas the 'local capital' clans significantly retreated from their positions between the spring and the autumn of 1998, the Zakarpattyan SDPU(o) enveloped a large number of regional leaders, began to issue its own newspaper, *Sotsial-Demokrat*, and opened expensive offices in Uzhhorod. At the April 1999 constituent assembly of the electoral bloc Zlakhoda (Concord), organised for Kuchma's re-election, the Zakarpattyan SDPU(o) was represented by a respectable delegation headed by Governor Ustych. This demonstrated that Zakarpattya, though small, was a solid stronghold of Kuchma, who was suffering attacks from the left in the east and from the national democrats in Galicia. Nevertheless, Kuchma had no intention of entrusting Governor Ustych with responsibility in the region for his re-election. Medvedchuk protected Ustych because it was convenient for him to have his old acquaintance control the *oblast'* through both the administration and the party. Once Medvedchuk became aware that it was difficult to persuade Kuchma any longer, he tried to recommend Ivan Rizak, architect of the

repeated SDPU(o) victories in Zakarpattia, who had been promoted to the post of vice-governor in reward for his contribution to the SDPU(o) victory in the 1998 elections. But for his own re-election Kuchma needed not a shady organiser-intriguer but an attractive public politician, preferably a qualified specialist in finance, capable of liquidating the astronomical sum of arrears of pensions and salaries in Zakarpattia within the several months remaining before the presidential election. Kuchma had his candidate in mind—the mayor of Mukachevo, the second city of the *oblast'*, Viktor Baloha.

Baloha was a young businessman born in 1963 in a village of Mukachevo *raion* and was educated at Lviv Institute of Commerce and Economics. Ironically, Baloha's biography recalled that of Kuchma's recent enemy, Ratushnyak. After his victory in the 1998 Mukachevo mayoral elections, Baloha and his team had resolved the problem of arrears of wages and pensions by instituting a strict financial policy. Baloha actively eliminated the effects of the Carpathian flood in 1998 and thus attracted the attention of Kuchma, who visited Mukachevo repeatedly during the process. Eventually, Medvedchuk agreed with Kuchma's desire, perhaps presuming that it would not be difficult for him to control a young provincial businessman. Baloha agreed to become governor on the condition that he be allowed to retain his post as Mukachevo mayor, though this violated the law. Even leaving aside that Baloha was strongly attached to the city, his desire was quite natural since the possibility of Kuchma's defeat in the presidential election was then quite high. On 6 May 1999 Kuchma dismissed Ustych as governor and appointed Baloha in his place.

As was the case with the former CPSU, the almost coercive enrolment campaign by the SDPU(o) in Zakarpattia produced a paradoxical situation; Baloha's affiliation to the SDPU(o) was not proof of his loyalty to Medvedchuk. Today (2002), although after harsh conflicts with Medvedchuk, Baloha says: 'Medvedchuk likes those who drink, are unable to work, and ask him for something. When I was selected as governor, I told Medvedchuk clearly that I would never ask anything from him'.⁸⁰

In accordance with the replacement of the governor, the post of regional SDPU(o) leader was passed from Ustych to vice-governor Rizak. Apparently, Medvedchuk intended to establish a political regime similar to the communist one: 'first secretary' Rizak controls 'vykonkom (*ispolkom*) chairman' Baloha. On 11 June 1999 at 8 p.m. Medvedchuk arrived from Kyiv at Uzhhorod airport and attended an *oblast'* party conference of the SDPU(o) with the participation of distinguished *oblast'* elites later that evening. There, Medvedchuk carried out the leadership change, read a report and caught the next morning flight back to Kyiv. This leadership style—referred to as the 'arrived, saw, conquered' type—had become Medvedchuk's practice for ruling the *oblast'*, because he is a very busy politician and businessman. Even the former Central Committee of the CPU could not have ruled the Zakarpattyan *oblast'* party committee in this fashion. In the eyes of those unaware of the potential tension between Medvedchuk and Baloha/Ivancho, it appeared that Zakarpattyan regionalism, initiated by the local elite's quest for autonomy at the end of the 1980s, had come to an end.

During the short time before the presidential election 'businessman' Baloha actually paid off a huge sum of arrears and tirelessly organised the electoral campaign for Kuchma. In the second round of the presidential election in November 1999 Kuchma received 84% of all the eligible votes in the *oblast'*. This was the fourth

highest in Ukraine, surpassed only by three Galician *oblasti*. One could understand the election results in Galicia as an outpouring of the electors' great fear of the Communists' return. However, the results in Zakarpattia cannot be explained by anything other than the vigorous mobilisation of votes by the *oblast'* administration. To those unaware of the hidden friction between the 'party of *oblast'* administration' and the SDPU(o) it seemed that here ended Zakarpattia's political pluralism, which had been exceptional for Ukrainian regions in its competitiveness.

The half year from the autumn of 1999 to the spring of 2000 was fateful for Kuchma. He won the presidential election, replaced Prime Minister Pustovoitenko with Viktor Yushchenko, more acceptable to the West, dismantled the former leftist majority in the Supreme Rada by the tactics of so-called 'parliamentary majority', and organised an extremely problematic referendum in April 2000. This series of political campaigns required intensive work from regional administrations. This is why Baloha put up with Medvedchuk's constant 'guardianship' via Rizak (the vice-governor controlled the governor) until the referendum. Immediately after the referendum the political situation of Zakarpattia literally exploded. On 22 April *Novyny Zakarpattya* published an 'address' from a number of vice-governors and *raion* chief executives to Governor Baloha, in which they complained of the frequent contradiction between their party (implying only SDPU(o)) and state duties and therefore declared they were suspending their party membership during their tenure of office.⁸¹ Needless to say, this address was organised by Baloha himself. The so-called 'departisation' campaign began. One reason that made Baloha behave in such a brave manner was the support of Prime Minister Yushchenko, who was Baloha's personal friend and attached to Zakarpattia through his former work as president of the National Bank.⁸² Through Yushchenko Baloha actively petitioned Kuchma, and won a vague governmental resolution that can be interpreted as support for the departisation of state institutions. On 5 June Baloha dismissed Rizak from the vice-governor's post.

Medvedchuk's counterattack was decisive. On 11 June he attended the SDPU(o) regional conference held in Uzhhorod. Medvedchuk recognised that the SDPU(o) was being cast into the opposition in the region, accused Baloha of 'lacking the education' necessary for governor, and declared his resort to his accustomed and beloved way of political battle, saying: 'his [Baloha's] "entrepreneur" activities are now under the investigation of law enforcement organs ... I think they will come to the proper conclusions'.⁸³ The harsh battle between the *oblast'* administration and the SDPU(o) continued for a year. Rizak became a salaried party leader. Nationwide mass media under the influence of Medvedchuk were fully mobilised to attack Baloha. On the background of a general political crisis in the country after the 'cassette scandal' (the alleged contract kidnapping and perhaps killing of opposition journalist Hryhorii Honhadze by President Kuchma), Zakarpattia again attracted nationwide attention. Baloha was far from flawless; serving as governor, he never ceased to be a businessman, indirectly managing his company, Barva. More damning, he relied upon Barva when he carried out projects to overcome the consequences of the 1998 Carpathian flood; the governmental subventions were absorbed by Barva. He also continued to govern Mukachevo City through his 'team', though he officially resigned the mayoral post in an attempt to evade criticism.

Except for Rukh, almost all local political forces, parties and blocs (the *oblast'*

Rada, NDP, CPU, SPU, Slobodyanyuk and Matviichuk) supported Baloha⁸⁴ simply because this was a rare opportunity to dismantle the SDPU(o) monopoly of power. On the other hand, Baloha's administrative pressure on SDPU(o) members, ironically, consolidated the party's ranks. Those members who had been forced by Ustych to join the SDPU(o) a year ago and were thus indifferent to the fate of the party were now offended by Baloha's opposite pressure to withdraw from it and even began to identify themselves with the party. This scheme of political confrontation (local versus non-local) looked similar to that of the first half of the 1990s. However, what happened was not a renewal of the primitive isolation of regional from national politics. As mentioned, Baloha's brave challenges were facilitated by his patron, Prime Minister Yushchenko, and the latter's popularity in the wake of the 'cassette scandal'. Likewise, the SDPU(o)'s aggressiveness in the region was part of the party's nationwide shift of emphasis from unconditional support for Kuchma in 1999 to efforts to distinguish itself from other clan parties,—a shift obviously targeted at the 2004 presidential election.

The end of the SDPU(o) political monopoly was made manifest by the results of the by-elections to the *oblast'* Rada held in July 2000. Of the eight newly elected deputies, three belonged to Baloha's clan and two sympathised with Baloha, while the SDPU(o) could gain only one deputy seat.⁸⁵ Remarkably, one of the two neutral winners was former Uzhhorod mayor Ratushnyak, who had run for the election from jail. At the beginning of 2000 Ratushnyak came back to Uzhhorod from Spain. Apparently, he had made a deal with Medvedchuk. Nevertheless, Ratushnyak was arrested on 16 March.⁸⁶ His health worsened in jail and he underwent an operation. In June, from a police hospital, he declared his desire to run for the coming by-election to the *oblast'* Rada.⁸⁷ Soon after this declaration he was taken from the police hospital to a detention centre in Lviv, which endangered his life.⁸⁸ On 26 June 2000 in the central square of Uzhhorod a meeting was organised in support of Ratushnyak, and thousands of people rallied.⁸⁹ There were placards with anti-Semitic slogans: 'Medvedchuk and Surkis are eliminating our Ukrainian youth; today—Ratushnyak, and tomorrow—Baloha'.⁹⁰ Indeed, in less than a year Baloha would be dismissed. Ratushnyak was elected to the *oblast'* Rada overwhelmingly, gaining 82% of the eligible vote. On 30 October Ratushnyak was released from jail, not without the efforts of *oblast'* leaders Ivancho and Baloha.

The struggle between the SDPU(o) and the Zakarpattyan *oblast'* administration ended suddenly, because of Prime Minister Yushchenko's resignation. According to the law, governors cannot be dismissed without the prime minister's consent. So, as long as Yushchenko remained prime minister, it was impossible for Medvedchuk to remove Baloha from the gubernatorial post. In other words, Zakarpattyan politics was completely dependent on central politics, despite the apparent renewal of regional autonomy.

The only way for Kuchma to overcome the political crisis caused by the 'cassette scandal' was to reinforce the existing clan system of politics and 'pragmatise' Communists even further. For this purpose, pro-West technocrat Yushchenko had to be sacrificed, together with Kuchma's own reputation in the West. Moreover, Kuchma's political intuition has never tolerated the existence of prominent political figures who might appear equal to him in the eyes of the domestic and international

public. Formerly it was Lazarenko, now Yushchenko and, to a certain extent, Medvedchuk. Yushchenko was forced to resign on 26 April 2001, and Kuchma's candidate for prime minister, Anatolii Kinakh,⁹¹ 'grey' enough to be trusted (as had been Pustovoitenko), realised exactly what Kuchma needed. Kinakh attracted a significant number of communist deputies, and tactfully gained support from centrist/clan parties. In this context Kinakh promised Medvedchuk to 'return' to him his former patrimony, Zakarpattya, in order to obtain SDPU(o) support for Kinakh's appointment as prime minister. The tight chronology would testify to how closely Zakarpattyan politics was integrated with national politics: on 29 May Kinakh was confirmed by the Supreme Rada as prime minister of Ukraine; Baloha immediately understood that his days were numbered and resigned on 31 May. As early as 1 June Kuchma appointed the new Zakarpattya governor, 'general of the militia' Henadii Moskal', who served as head of the Zakarpattyan division of internal affairs until 1997 and subsequently in Crimea. Moskal's biography was associated with Putin's, and many expected that Kuchma had appointed a man who stood outside the struggle among the clans. However, one of the first things Moskal' did was to recall Rizak to the administration as his first deputy.⁹² At this point local observers already saw Medvedchuk's hand.⁹³ Many other leading officials of Baloha's administration were soon removed.

Responding to the general post-communist mass psychology awaiting strong leaders, Moskal' continues to be a popular governor (2002). But he could not bring the local elite, torn by the harsh battle in 2000–01, to some sort of reconciliation. On the contrary, in the summer–autumn of 2001 Governor Moskal' allied with the SDPU(o) to eliminate the last representative of the indigenous elite, the chairman of the *oblast'* Rada, Ivan Ivancho. On the grounds of alleged corruption in dealing with the consequences of the 1998 flood, the SDPU(o) and Moskal' began to collect *oblast'* deputies' signatures calling for Ivancho's resignation. Of the 75 deputies as many as 50 signed the demand, but this was largely a result of coercion. For example, the *oblast'* administration's department of education summoned teachers who were deputies to its office in the administration to 'persuade' them. Entrepreneur deputies were openly blackmailed by tax pressures. Those who signed against their will ceased to attend the plenum of the Rada. Finally, in October, the resolution of no confidence in Ivancho was rejected. The Rada building was surrounded by pickets with slogans such as 'Do Not Transform Zakarpattya into a Bridgehead of Clan Intrigues by Kyivan Oligarchs'. One deputy supposed that on the eve of the 2002 parliamentary elections Medvedchuk needed to seize the *oblast'* Rada leadership, because the Rada was authorised to carry out the formation of regional and local electoral committees.⁹⁴

Unexpectedly, in this conflict Ratushnyak joined the anti-Ivancho campaign, labeling the Baloha/Ivancho leadership in 1999–2001 as 'bandit capitalism' (meaning crony capitalism with coercive pressures). This behaviour was surprising to Zakarpattyan elites, because Ratushnyak thereby allied himself with those who had put him in jail (Medvedchuk) and attacked those who had released him from jail (Ivancho). Possibly, conscious of the fact that the political and economic niche he had occupied in 1994–98 (the 'defender of local capital') had passed to Baloha while he was in exile and jail, Ratushnyak was struggling to demonstrate that his historical mission had not yet ended.

Despite this extraordinary impassioned nature of local politics, the Zakarpattyan regional party system on the eve of the 2002 parliamentary elections became a miniature of the national one. The main feature of the 2002 elections was that three non-left electoral blocs, the pro-presidential For United Ukraine, Yushchenko's Our Ukraine and the SDPU(o), competed. If the 1998 parliamentary elections were the dress rehearsal for the presidential election the next year, and therefore parties and blocs polarised according to the axis for or against Kuchma, the year 2002 was still remote from the next presidential election. Three clan blocs competed for the distribution of posts and influence after the parliamentary elections, which would be determined by the number of votes gained. It was symptomatic that all of these blocs declared that they would collaborate with Kuchma and with each other after polling day.

In this competition Yushchenko's unexpected political genius was demonstrated by the fact that he organised Our Ukraine (in November 2001) not around his neo-classical reform programme but according to, so to speak, a healing principle. Yushchenko rallied those who had been hurt and oppressed by the Bacchanalia of clan politics in the second half of the 1990s: from defeated clans (such as former Sumi governor Vladimir Shcherban's group) to national democrats. This resulted in the extremely wide ideological and political diapason of the participants in Our Ukraine, for which it was not surprisingly criticised by its opponents. Moreover, the semi-oppositional composition of Our Ukraine dissipated Yushchenko's image as legitimate prince (successor) to Kuchma—an image which he retained even after being cast out of the prime minister post—but rather suggested that he was the stepson of Kuchma's regime. After November the relations between Yushchenko and Kuchma worsened finally. On the other hand, Yushchenko's organisational tactics revitalised Ukrainian politics, adding to it a civic enthusiasm which had long been forgotten under Kuchma's presidency. Indeed, Zakarpattyan newspapers reported that, in Uzhhorod, if meetings of pro-presidential For United Ukraine were filled with men of prime ages wearing suits and ties, at meetings of Our Ukraine one found men and women of various age groups, often in sports wear or with even more eccentric, marginalised outlooks. Attending the meetings of Our Ukraine, one might wonder whether one was attending a national democratic meeting 12 years ago.⁹⁵

In November 2001, after several months of relaxation, Baloha established the Zakarpattyan branch of Our Ukraine, in response to Yushchenko's personal request. Baloha ran for the Supreme Rada and the post of Mukachevo mayor simultaneously. Another authoritative leader of the bloc was Ivancho, who had recently been humiliated by the SDPU(o) and Governor Moskal'. Similar to Yushchenko, who was trying to create a united front with a wide ideological spectrum, Baloha tried to involve all the local patriots in Our Ukraine. For example, after 10 years of internal skirmishes, he reintegrated national democrats into the Our Ukraine camp on the condition that they should not quarrel with each other until after election day (seemingly, he persuaded the central committees of these parties to control their local leaders strictly) and not indulge themselves in narrowly nationalistic narratives. Thus Rukh leader Pipash, who had once dressed Baloha in Al Capone's hat and coat (see note 72), now accepted subordination to him. While I visited Uzhhorod in February

2002 Baloha and Ivancho even tried to invite Ratushnyak's clan into Our Ukraine, forgiving the recent insults he had delivered.

The regional branch of the pro-presidential For United Ukraine was practically organised by the *oblast'* administration. Its reliance on 'administrative resources', not surprisingly, became the object of criticism by other blocs. Although the relations between the Zakarpattyan SDPU(o) and For United Ukraine were intriguing, they stood united at least against Baloha. The penetration of official parties and blocs was much more significant than in 1998, when Ratushnyak's New Zakarpattya challenged the SDPU(o) and the *oblast'* administration. In 1998, despite the harsh battle, most of the candidates in regional and local elections belonged to neither New Zakarpattya nor the SDPU(o). In 2002 each bloc tried to put up its candidates or at least recommend someone at all the levels of elections: from the elections to the Supreme Rada to the elections of village elders. As argued repeatedly in this article, this high level of parties' penetration testifies that Zakarpattyan regional politics developed in close interaction with national politics, even after Zakarpattya refused to be the SDPU(o)'s patrimony any longer.

Conclusion

In 1990 the CPU Zakarpattyan organisation, taking advantage of the Central Committee's weakened position and under pressure from the national democratic movement, restored the local elite's monopoly on power after an interruption of a decade. Even the then aggressive national democrats did not put forward an alternative candidate for chairman of the *oblast'* Rada, to the advantage of the *obkom* first secretary, Voloshchuk, promoting the restoration of *oblast'* autonomy. Though Landovs'kyi's anti-*nomenklatura* group controlled the Uzhhorod city Rada, this group solidly supported Zakarpattyan autonomy, in distinction from the unitarian Ukrainian nationalists. At this time the confrontation between the *oblast'* authorities and the Uzhhorod mayor was only a spat within the local elite, but the real rupture in relations among levels of party systems existed between Kyiv and the region. In other words, Zakarpattyan *oblast'* politics then possessed a high level of autonomy.

In 1994 the national democrats, already in decline, strove to eliminate this autonomy, but their challenge was defeated at both the *oblast'* and Uzhhorod city levels. The situation was completely transformed when a confrontation came to the forefront between the *oblast'* administration and the Uzhhorod mayor, and a little later when the former became linked to the Medvedchuk–Surkis clan. In an effort to resist this, 'local capital' and the Uzhhorod mayoralty created a union with Kuchma's opponents in the centre: Moroz, Buzduhan, Marchuk and Lazarenko. Through this process the relations among levels of party systems were activated, and Zakarpattyan *oblast'* politics lost its autonomy to the extent that it found itself in the spotlight of national politics in the run-up to President Kuchma's re-election.

The elite's clan connections were transformed into official parties, first, when a minority of the elite challenged the majority: Rukh and the Landovs'kyi group named Pozytsiya in 1990, the Bed'–Christian Democrat group in 1994 and Ratushnyak's New Zakarpattya in 1998. Second, they were transformed when relations among levels of party systems became activated: the Medvedchuk–SDPU(o) search for a

patrimony was the first downward phase (1997); this group's seizure of the key *oblast'* deputy mandates to the Supreme Rada was the first upward phase (in spring 1998); the defeat of the mainstay of 'local capital' was the second downward phase (in autumn 1998); Medvedchuk's seizure of the SDPU(o) leadership, employing the patrimonialisation of Zakarpattya as a political resource, was the second upward phase (in autumn 1998); and the complete takeover of the *oblast'* for Kuchma's victory in the presidential elections was the third downward phase (in 1999). If one examines the relations among party systems between the *oblast'* and Uzhhorod, then the participation of the Ratushnyak clan in the elections to the *oblast'* Rada and the Supreme Rada through the organisation New Zakarpattya is also an example of a move upward (in spring 1998); and just half a year later the Medvedchuk clan managed to drive a wedge into the Ratushnyak clan's predominance in Uzhhorod and to organise an extremely competitive mayoral election campaign—a move downward (in autumn 1998).

In retrospect, Medvedchuk judged correctly in turning his attention to Zakarpattya. It would have been impossible for his clan to purchase Donetsk *oblast'* or Kyiv city, even if it had spent ten times more. Neither would it have been able to increase its influence in regions such as Kyiv or Galicia where anti-Semitic feelings were thought to affect the elite's and voters' behaviour strongly, as was testified by the crushing defeat of Surkis in the 1999 Kyiv mayoral elections. They needed poor cosmopolitan regions such as Zakarpattya. For a certain period of time Medvedchuk's clan appeared to be a more reliable patron for the Zakarpattyan elite (not even considering the financial possibilities) than the legendary first secretary, H. Bandrovs'kyi, who infringed the autonomy of cadre politics in the region, or than the Galician nationalists, who were criticised for bringing in a narrow-minded nationalism, so explosive for Zakarpattya. However, this did not protect the Medvedchuk clan from being thrown out as non-locals, a mechanism of immunity that has saved Zakarpattya's local elite from extermination and assimilation for 1,000 years. When the local elite became aware of Medvedchuk's contemptuous attitude towards them, this mechanism of immunity started to work. And once it started to work, a 'war of all against all' resumed.

However, this did not mean that the Zakarpattyan elite returned to its yearning for the primitive regional autonomy of the first half of the 1990s. On the contrary, after the 'local versus non-local' axis re-emerged in April 2000, Zakarpattya's politics began to be determined to a more significant extent by various factors in central politics, such as Yushchenko's rise, fall and revival, Medvedchuk's search for further political promotion, complicated relations between Kuchma and Medvedchuk and so on. As a result, the organisational influence of the three non-left blocs in the 2002 parliamentary elections, For United Ukraine, Our Ukraine and the SDPU(o), reached to the lowest level of government, i.e. to the elections of village elders. This phenomenon was not observed even in 1998, despite the harshness of electoral competitions in that year. Thus this article has shown a close correlation between the activation of relations among levels of party systems and the formation of official parties.

In Ukraine, where official parties are often nothing more than a façade of elite clans, the distance between relations among levels of elites and relations among levels

of party systems is small. Moreover, with the functioning of the system of appointing chief executives, the lines between relations among levels of party systems and inter-government relations are also becoming blurred. In 1998–99 Kuchma could employ both the SDPU(o) organisation and his legal right to appoint governors for the purpose of mobilising Zakarpattyan voters. Moreover, this system of dual channels (state and clan parties) has another merit for Kuchma. Whereas El'tsin had become a captive of centralised caciquismo in 1996 (despite the then existing system of appointing governors, El'tsin had become completely dependent on regional bosses for re-election), Kuchma has been able to retain a certain free hand by balancing amongst various clans. As we have seen in this article, Kuchma's and Medvedchuk's interests and intentions in regard to Zakarpattya have not always been identical. In any case, the development of the party system in Ukraine has little to do with the formation of civil society; citizens are certainly not obtaining political resources independent of the authorities.

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² For example, V. Gel'man *et al.*, *Rossiya regionov: Transformatsiya politicheskikh rezhimov* (Moscow, 2000).

³ As an alternative to the concept of inter-government relations, which concentrates on constitutional and administrative aspects of the relations between the centre and sub-national entities, this article proposes the concept of 'interpolitical relations', which strives to comprehend all aspects of political relations between the centre and sub-national entities.

⁴ Hiroshi Okayama, 'Preodolevaya ogranichenost' obshchenatsional'no-mestnoi dikhotomii: teoreticheskoe vvedenie v mezhpoliticheski e otosheniya', in Kimitaka Matsuzato (ed.), *Prostranstvennye faktory v formirovani i partiinykh sistem: dialog amerikanostov i postsovetologo v* (Sapporo, Slavic Research Center, 2002), pp. 11–12. See also Hiroshi Okayama, 'Analyzing "Political Space" Two-Dimensionally: The Notion and Prospects of Interpolitical Relations', *Japanese Journal of American Studies*, 13, 2002, pp. 25–44.

⁵ Vladimir Gel'man & Grigorii V. Golosov, 'Regional Party System Formation in Russia: The Deviant Case of Sverdlovsk Oblast', *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, 14, 1–2, 1998, pp. 45–46. See also Grigorii V. Golosov, 'From Adygeya to Yaroslavl: Factors of Party Development in the Regions of Russia, 1995–1998', *Europe-Asia Studies*, 51, 8, 1999, pp. 1333–1365.

⁶ These numbers and percentages were procured from K.I.S., *Vybory '98: yak holosovala Ukraina* (Kyiv, 1998).

⁷ The *oblast'* covers an area of about 12,800 square kilometres and has a population of about 1,290,000; the population of its centre, Uzhhorod, is 126,000.

⁸ I regard this party as influential because it was able to overcome the 4% barrier in the 1998 parliamentary elections. The other influential party that officially supported Kuchma was the People's Democratic Party.

⁹ The other two were the outspokenly pro-presidential For United Ukraine (*Za edynu Ukrainu*) and the semi-oppositional Our Ukraine (*Nasha Ukraina*) organised by the former prime minister of Ukraine, Viktor Yushchenko.

¹⁰ In contrast, Odesa politics has been competitive, but autonomous (isolated) from all-Ukrainian politics. The Donetsk and Dnipropetrovsk elites experienced confrontations with L. Kuchma (this is a pattern of inclusion in all-Ukrainian interpolitical relations) in 1996 and 1997–99 respectively, but Kuchma was not able to split the regional elites. The Donetsk and Dnipropetrovsk elites have always been monolithic; even when they changed bandwagons (for example, from P. Lazarenko to L. Kuchma), they did so in solidarity. Kimitaka Matsuzato, 'Sovremennaya patrimoniya i formirovani e ofitsial'nykh partii v Ukraine: Odesskaya, Zakarpatskaya, Donetskaya, Dnepropetrovskaya oblasti', in Matsuzato (ed.), *Prostranstvennye faktory ...*, pp. 61–100.

¹¹ One should not confuse these with the Russian offices of the same name. In Ukraine 'presidential representatives' in 1992–94 meant regional governors and *raion* chief executives.

¹² A most salient characteristic of Ukrainian local self-government is the concurrent holding of the two main offices (mayor and the chair of the representative organ) by the same person. This concurrence was introduced by the December 1990 law and, in contrast to its Russian counterpart, has never been changed.

¹³ For more detail see my 'Local Reforms in Ukraine 1990–1998: Elite and Institutions', in Osamu Ieda (ed.), *The Emerging Local Governments in Eastern Europe and Russia: Historical and Post-Communist Development* (Hiroshima, 2000), pp. 25–54.

¹⁴ In Ukrainian politics there is no observable difference of opinion between left and right over the use of the terms 'clan' and 'oligarch'. For example, a candidate in the deputy elections to the Supreme Rada in 1998, Volodymyr Pipash, the leader of the Zakarpattia branch of People's Rukh of Ukraine, stated in his pre-election programme: 'Ukraine has been led to the brink of complete catastrophe. The economy is in deep crisis. The majority of enterprises stand idle, a significant portion of them have been plundered ... An absolute majority of people has been brought to poverty, and only a small cluster grows incredibly rich. Ukraine is quickly being transformed into a mafioso state ... All power remains in *nomenklatura* hands. At present the *nomenklatura* has broken down into various groupings—clans—often linked to the mafia (they operate under the mask of so-called parties), which squabble amongst themselves for power, that is, in reality, for the possibility to steal all property not yet stolen from the state (and people)' (*Ratusha*, 10 March 1998). Likewise, Eduard Matviichuk, a famous businessman in Zakarpattia sympathising then (1998) with the Socialist Party of Ukraine (O. Moroz) wrote: '... Under such conditions family-bureaucratic monopolies are beginning to form ... A corporative-clan system of power structures, entangled with nepotistic-familial relations, is engendering anarchy, irresponsibility and corruption. Formed in this way, the regional political leadership is beginning to build a state "under itself" ... The bureaucrat is becoming the key figure of power ... It follows to search for the main cause of Ukraine's economic bankruptcy in this corrupt clan-corrupte d system of power' ('Vlada i ekonomika', *RIO-inform*, 4 July 1998, p. 5). The last quotation is from an essay by George Soros, titled 'It Isn't Enough to Shed Communism' and published in *The Washington Post*, 23 November 1999, soon after Kuchma's victory in the presidential election: 'In this environment of intimidation, those who still dared to oppose the president got a clear warning through official channels. Partisan abuse of the country's administrative structures to discourage dissent is widespread, particularly the use of tax collectors to harass opponents ... The president needs to be put on notice that the Western governments that have supported him will not tolerate the status quo. An inefficient system and corrupt government have been able to survive with international help provided largely on account of Ukraine's geopolitical position. But a system of crony capitalism that enriches a tiny elite while the vast majority of the country's 50 million beleaguere d citizens live in poverty and are bullied by bureaucrats cannot be sustained in the long run. The West must make it clear that Ukraine's geopolitical position isn't enough to guarantee continued support'. It is surprising that Rukh considers former socialist state property to belong to all the people, but we observe an unusual commonality of opinions concerning the political regime in post-communist Ukraine, irrespective of whether one is from the 'right' (Rukh), the left (E. Matviichuk), or the right (G. Soros).

¹⁵ For example, in Japan an overwhelming majority of local councilors are 'conservative independents', although they work for the ruling Liberal Democratic Party. In post-Soviet countries (except for the Baltic), in which state and municipal institutions are taking over the role of the ruling party organisation, there might be even less stimulus for politicians in power to establish or be involved in official parties. In order to establish an official party, it must be registered with the Ministry of Justice; by law at least, it cannot use its members' official position (so-called 'administrative resources') during election campaigns and must disclose its financial sources. Naturally, such stipulations do not make the ruling clans interested in becoming 'legalised' as parties.

¹⁶ Matsuzato, 'Local Reforms ...'; Kimitaka Matsuzato, 'All Kuchma's Men: The Reshuffling of Ukrainian Governors and the Presidential Election of 1999', *Post-Soviet Geography and Economics*, 42, 6, 2001, pp. 416–439; Kimitaka Matsuzato, 'Subregional'naya politika v Khar'kovskoi oblasti: g. Chuguev i Chuguevskii raion, Dergachevskii raion', *Rehiony Ukrainy: khronika ta kerivnyky*, Vol. 2, *Kharkivs'ka oblast'* (Occasional Papers on Post-Communist Ukrainian Politics, No. 1), pp. 69–92.

¹⁷ Moreover, I regard the concept of centralised caciquismo as applicable not only to Ukraine but also to other intermediate political regimes which lie, spatially and typologically, between deconcentrated Russian regions of Russia and unitary Central Asian and Eastern Central European countries (for example, national republics of Russia). See Kimitaka Matsuzato, 'From Communist Boss Politics to Post-Communist Caciquismo—the Meso-Elite and Meso-Governments in Post-Communist Countries', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 34, 2001, pp. 175–201; and also Kimitaka Matsuzato, 'From Ethno-Bonapartism to Centralized Caciquismo: Characteristics and Origins of the

Tatarstan Political Regime, 1990–2000', *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, 17, 4, December 2001, pp. 43–77.

¹⁸ For example see S. N. Eisenstadt & L. Roninger, *Patrons, Clients and Friends: Interpersonal Relations and the Structure of Trust in Society* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 228–245.

¹⁹ Peter C. Ordeshook, 'Russia's Party System: Is Russian Federalism Viable?', *Post-Soviet Affairs*, 12, 3, 1996, pp. 195–217.

²⁰ Indeed, Young has argued that the Canadian model itself (which at first seems so unstable) could be the model for Russian federalism. See John F. Young, 'The Republic of Sakha and Republic Building: The Never-endingness of Federalization in Russia', in K. Matsuzato (ed.), *Regions: A Prism to View the Slavic-Eurasian World: Towards a Discipline of 'Regionology'* (Sapporo, 2000), pp. 177–207.

²¹ One must question whether Ordeshook's image of the US party system is realistic. The aforementioned Japanese Americanist Hiroshi Okayama, 'Taking Space Seriously ...', argues that the US party system of the nineteenth century was characterised by a double quality of autonomy of intra-state politics and of a solid connection among sub-national politics with a preponderance of federal issues. This double quality could be used to characterise the Russian party system after the 1996 change to electing regional governors and local chief executives. By contrast, in Ukraine, where unitarism and a system of appointing governors has been preserved, the autonomy of intra-oblast' politics is institutionally limited.

²² I. Hrachak, *Narysy istorii Zakarpattia*. Tom 1, *z naidavnishykh chasyv do 1918 roku* (Uzhhorod, 1993), pp. 52–58.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 292.

²⁴ Rusyns, who are the leitmotif of the Carpathian Euroregion, were not recognised as an ethnic group by the old regime and thus were not included as a category in the 1989 census. Although the 2001 all-Ukrainian census remedied this situation, it is still a brave statement to identify oneself as a Rusyn.

²⁵ In the city and raion of Berehovo, where a large number of Hungarian speakers are compactly settled, there is 'a self-sufficient cycle of Hungarian language education and usage', beginning with kindergarten and concluding with pedagogical institutes and the local mass media. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, although neither a Hungarian–Ukrainian dictionary nor any textbook of Ukrainian for Hungarian speakers has been published, the Ukrainian government demands that Hungarians know Ukrainian. This has led to the growth of dissatisfaction among the Hungarian-speaking community.

²⁶ P. P. Petryshchev, head of the committee on nationality and minority questions of the Zakarpattia oblast' state administration, interview by the author, Uzhhorod city, 21 December 1998.

²⁷ In this article Zakarpattia's what I call parochial internationalism will be contrasted with Galician nationalism and anti-Russianism. But this is no more than a problem of relativity. The grotesque image of Galician anti-Russianism reported by Russian and Western mass media is often exaggerated. In Lviv we hear Russian spoken on every street and train, in the market, squares and even at Ivan Franko University; and it is tolerated. There is an operating Russian Orthodox church (Muscovite patriarchate) and a Russian culture centre that face little overt discrimination.

²⁸ Following the Soviet principles of administrative division, it would have been fairer if all the former seats of the four counties under Hungarian rule (Uzhhorod, Mukachevo, Berehovo and Khust) had received the status of oblast' subordination. However, the latter two were given only the status of raion subordination which seriously impeded their development. Recently, a public movement has emerged calling for raising these cities' status to that of oblast' subordination (I. I. Zhupan, Berehovo mayor, interview by author, Berehovo City, 16 June 1999).

²⁹ An important reason for this is the incomprehensibly large territory of the Carpathian Euroregion. The municipalities that are considered the ideal objects for carrying out the Euroregions' activities are located no more than 30 km from the border. But the overall area of the Carpathian Euroregion is 132,651 square km. The Carpathian Euroregion includes four Ukrainian *oblasti*, four *megye* and five cities of Hungary, four Polish *powiaty*, 13 *okres* of Slovakia, and five Romanian administrative units (*Karpaty'kyi Evrorehiion: 5 rokov dialohu ta spivrobimystva*, p. 2). The Carpathian Euroregion's 'great popularity' demonstrates that it is perceived only as a means of pumping out subsidies from the EU.

³⁰ Gel'man, *Rossiya Regionov ...*, p. 45.

³¹ S. I. Mityraeva, deputy chief of the department of education and science of the Zakarpattia oblast' state administration, interview by author, Uzhhorod city, 25 December 1998.

³² *Narysy istorii Zakarpats'koi oblasnoi partiinoi orhanizatsii* (Uzhhorod, 1980), p. 215.

³³ H. I. Bandrov's'kyi, director of the Transport Fund, former first secretary of Zakarpattia *obkom* of the CPU, interview by author, Uzhhorod city, 24 December 1998. See also 'Kolyshnii pershyi sekretar', *Staryi zamok*, 18 June 1998, pp. 8–9.

³⁴ Bandrov's'kyi, interview by author.

³⁵ *Zakarpatskaya pravda*, 11 February 1990, p. 1.

³⁶ *Zakarpatskaya pravda*, 8 April 1990, pp. 1–2.

³⁷ Today (2002) *Novyny Zakarpattya* is the region's official publication, issued jointly by the *oblast'* Rada and the *oblast'* state administration. *Zakarpatskaya pravda* was once discontinued, but started to be issued again on the eve of the 2002 elections (at the end of 2001) as a newspaper reporting the view of the pro-presidential For United Ukraine.

³⁸ V. O. Prykhod'ko, Zakarpattya deputy governor, interview by author, Uzhhorod city, 25 December 1998.

³⁹ *Novyny Zakarpattya*, 30 June 1994, p. 1.

⁴⁰ *Novyny Zakarpattya*, 14 July 1994, p. 1.

⁴¹ *Novyny Zakarpattya*, 30 June 1994, p. 1.

⁴² S. M. Matvienko, head of the department of political analysis of the Zakarpattyan *oblast'* state administration, telephone interview by author, 19 January 2000.

⁴³ See Pipash's statement quoted in note 14.

⁴⁴ One cannot regard Rukh as a whole as opportunists swimming between various clans. On the contrary, the national Rukh organisation is an absorber of protest votes. Generally speaking, nationalism is a peculiar type of political thought and mentality, in which conservatism and a protesting mind are mixed. But the nationalism of Ukrainians, who have almost always been ruled by other nations, is characterised by a salience of protest, accompanied by anti-elitism, egalitarianism, anti-professionalism, a sentimental Puritanism, a paternalistic view of the state and rapid bureaucratization after taking power. In essence, Ukrainian nationalism is left-wing. Rukh activists often say that their model is Margaret Thatcher, but in reality it is difficult to find elements of neo-classical conservatism in their narratives. During the first half of the 1990s Clem investigated the political consciousness of Lviv citizens, dividing their political inclinations into four sections with two axes: pro-Russianism versus nationalism, and pro-market (right) versus pro-redistribution (left). Clem was surprised at the absence of parties in the section of nationalism and pro-redistribution (i.e. left nationalist parties), despite the fact that in this quadrant there is potentially great support among Lviv citizens (James Ivan Clem, 'The Life of the Parties: Party Activism in Lviv and Donetsk, Ukraine', Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1995, p. 71). Clem is mistaken, however, in thinking that Ukrainian nationalist parties are located in the right nationalist quadrant.

⁴⁵ S. V. Sember, interview by the author, Uzhhorod city, 23 December 1998.

⁴⁶ E. F. Landovs'kyi, vice-mayor of Uzhhorod city, interview by author, Uzhhorod city, 22 December 1998.

⁴⁷ Landovs'kyi, interview by author.

⁴⁸ *Visti Uzhhorodshchyny*, 1 August 1992, p. 1.

⁴⁹ His enterprise employed about 2,000 workers, who were transformed into his electoral machine during the elections.

⁵⁰ V. O. Bobko, spokesman for a 1999 candidate for President of Ukraine, Evhen Marchuk, in Zakarpattya *oblast'*, interview by author, Uzhhorod city, 16 June 1999. Bobko had been one of Mayor Ratushnyak's three deputies.

⁵¹ RIO is an abbreviation for 'Reklama, informatsiya, ohlyad novyn' (advertisements, information, news survey), but the locals read it as 'Ratushnyak i ostal'nye' (Ratushnyak and the rest).

⁵² Ratushnyak founded the municipal Uzhhorod Institute of Information Sciences, Economy, and Law. After Ratushnyak's removal, the institute's status was changed from municipal to semi-municipal/semi-state.

⁵³ In this case the capital of the region becomes a sort of donor and begins to feel that it is being exploited by the poor *raion* and smaller cities surrounding it, which are under the regional authorities' protection.

⁵⁴ K.I.S., *Khto e khto v Ukraini* (Kyiv, 1999), p. 173. When I lived in Kyiv in 1996–97 I read his candidate dissertation, 'Constitutional Process in Ukraine: Organisation of State Power and Local Self-Government', not knowing that this dissertation was written by a person who was already famous and would become even more famous after a few years. I was surprised by the weakness not of the author but of the Ukrainian Higher Attestation Committee, which could not halt the conferment of the degree based on such a dissertation.

⁵⁵ Landovs'kyi had been out of work for 2 years, since his defeat in the 1994 governor elections, but in 1996 he became assistant to a SDPU(o) deputy to the Supreme Rada. Having obtained a source of income, Landovs'kyi renewed his political activities and created the Zakarpattya organisation of the SDPU(o). After his election to the Supreme Rada, Medvedchuk persuaded Governor Ustych to forget the old feud. Thus Landovs'kyi was provided with a position in the *oblast'* administration's department of technical education.

⁵⁶ *Demokratychna Ukraina*, 22 April 1997, p. 2.

⁵⁷ P. Tokar, director of the Zakarpattyan Regional Centre for Social, Economic and Humanities Research, interview by author, Uzhhorod city, 18 February 2002.

⁵⁸ *Sribna Zemlya*, 13 December 1997, p. 1.

⁵⁹ Medvedchuk, Surkis and other important leaders of this clan are Jews, which could not be ignored even in cosmopolitan Zakarpattya.

⁶⁰ *Yak holosuvala Ukraina*, pp. III–70.

⁶¹ Given that a mandate from the Berehovo electoral district is reserved for Hungarian candidates, this result means that the Medvedchuk clan occupied two of the electable four majoritarian mandates. Moreover, from the proportional district a SDPU(o) local candidate passed to the Supreme Rada. In the proportional district from Zakarpattya the SDPU(o) won 189,500 votes, 31.18%; Rukh won 43,710 votes, 7.2%; CPU, 40,378 votes, 6.6%; and NDP, 38,148 votes, 6.3%. The Socialists and Christian Democrats did not even receive 20,000 votes in the region and lost to the Hromada Party, based in Dnipropetrovsk.

⁶² *Edinstvo-Plyus*, 4 April 1998, p. 1. Ratushnyak's most appealing advertisement, which appeared in numerous newspapers, was a photo of him holding dumbbells on a bench. Along with the photo was the slogan: 'For mothers—[he is] a son; for the young—[he is] a model; for the old—[he is] the defender'.

⁶³ *Novyny Zakarpattya*, 11 April 1998, p. 1.

⁶⁴ Ivan Ivancho, chairman of the Zakarpattyan *oblast'* Rada, interview by author, 20 February 2002, Uzhhorod city.

⁶⁵ Among the cases in which O. Kolin'ko led the prosecution were those of Tkachenko (chairman of the Supreme Rada after 1998), Zvyahil's'kyi (Kravchuk's last prime minister), Bozhenar (former adviser to Oleksandr Moroz) and illegal privatisation in Dnipropetrovsk (Lazarenko's 'patrimony').

⁶⁶ *Korzo*, 2 July 1998, p. 4.

⁶⁷ *Novyny Zakarpattya*, 8 August 1998, p. 2.

⁶⁸ *Khto e khto u Verkhovni Radi Ukrainy—dovidnyk*, Part 1 (Kyiv, 1998), p. 252.

⁶⁹ *RIO-Inform*, 3 October 1998, p. 4.

⁷⁰ V. V. Pipash, leader of the Zakarpattya *oblast'* organisation of Rukh, interview by author, Uzhhorod city, 15 June 1999.

⁷¹ 'Rukh vyznachyvsya vykhodyachy z politychnoi neobkhidnosti', *Karpats'kyi holos*, 19–25 September 1998, p. 1.

⁷² Another act by the local Rukh organisation that left a stain on the party's name was that it joined in the Medvedchuk–Ustych campaign alleging 'Ratushnyak—criminal'. Rukh leaders would repeat this behaviour when Governor Baloha began to confront Medvedchuk in 2000. As a result, we read calls for Christian faith on the right side of spreads of their newspaper, *Karpats'kyi holos*, and on the left propaganda labeling someone opposing Medvedchuk as criminal, with grotesque montages (Ratushnyak and Baloha are wearing Al Capone's hat and trench coat). Such visual combinations of Christianity and human rights violation, in my view, only injure the dignity of Christianity, as well as the reputation of Ukrainian nationalism.

⁷³ *Sribna zemlya*, 5 September 1998, p. 4. In the mayoral election a woman candidate from the national democratic camp came third with 4,151 votes. Bed' was fourth, garnering only 2,738. Thus the star of the national democratic revolution and the real candidate at the 1994 governor election conclusively fell.

⁷⁴ *Novyny Zakarpattya*, 1 October 1998, p. 1.

⁷⁵ The new mayor, Sember, appointed his leadership from representatives of the political forces that had joined him in the anti-Ratushnyak united front, with the result that the number of deputies to the mayor increased from three under Ratushnyak to nine under Sember.

⁷⁶ Afterward he was to face sharp criticism from his old comrades, democratic activists of Pozytsiya, who correctly understood that this transfer would end up with the emergence of a clan party merged with the state and having nothing to do with civic virtues. *Karpats'kyi holos*, 30 April–8 May 1998; *Korzo*, 11 June 1998, p. 4; and Landovs'kyi, interview by author.

⁷⁷ Likewise, the unfavourable (for Kuchma) results of the 1998 parliamentary elections caused a change of leadership of the People's Democratic Party (NDP). This centrist party was founded in 1996 by Anatolii Matvienko, the former leader of the Ukrainian Komsomol under communism and then Vinnytsya governor (1996–98). During the 1998 parliamentary elections, realising the great improbability of his victory in the coming presidential election, Kuchma trusted Matvienko to carry out an experiment to increase Kuchma's ratings among centrists and the poorer electorate through populist appeals. This reminds us of El'tsin's similar experiment, entrusted to Ivan Rybkin, in the 1995 Duma elections. As was the case with Rybkin, Matvienko's officially endorsed left-centrism did not appeal to pro-communist voters. As a result of the 1998 elections, the NDP was barely able to cross the 4% barrier. In Vinnytsya *oblast'* Matvienko's NDP managed to obtain 12.4% of the vote, two and a half times more than the party received nationally. Although this was not a bad result for a region in which the Communists had traditionally been strong, one cannot say that Matvienko turned Vinnytsya into the NDP's patrimony, in contrast to Medvedchuk's Zakarpattya. Kuchma was dissatisfied with both

nationwide and Vinnytsya results, and Matvienko soon retired from the governor's office. Later he left the NDP as well, announcing his opposition to Kuchma. A NDP congress elected Prime Minister Valerii Pustovoitenko as its new leader, and the NDP began to work for Kuchma's victory as a typical party of power, like its Russian equivalent, Our Home Is Russia. At the same time, the Vinnytsya *oblast'* electorate, having lost the charismatic leader Matvienko, moved still further to the left and during the 1999 presidential election became not only the single 'red' *oblast'* west of Kyiv but also the 'reddest' *oblast'* in Ukraine. In the final round in Vinnytsya *oblast'* Symonenko garnered as much as 59% of the vote, even more than in Luhans'k and Crimea.

The movement to the right in the NDP and SDPU(o) after the 1998 elections corresponded to the changed position of Kuchma, who realised that he could not win the 1999 presidential election by taking the centrist, populist path. His influence on the NDP and SDPU(o) after the 1998 elections provides a glaring contrast to the Russian presidential faction, which neither criticised nor transformed Our Home Is Russia, let alone Rybkin's party, after their defeat in the 1995 Duma elections, but merely put them aside and organised the presidential electoral campaign by itself, openly employing administrative levers. This is another proof of the relative importance of official parties in Ukraine. Moreover, the influence of these parties has been strongly dependent on whether they are able to transform one or other region into their patrimony.

⁷⁸ *RIO-Inform*, 3 October 1998, 5.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁸⁰ V. Baloha, the former governor of Zakarpattia, interview by author, 19 February 2002, Mukachevo city.

⁸¹ *Novyny Zakarpattia*, 22 April 2000, p. 2.

⁸² Interview with Baloha.

⁸³ *Sotsial-demokrat*, 17 June 2000, p. 6.

⁸⁴ Even Uzhhorod Mayor Sember maintained his neutrality, despite his membership of the SDPU(o).

⁸⁵ *RIO*, 29 July 2000, p. 4.

⁸⁶ *RIO*, 18 March 2000, p. 1.

⁸⁷ *RIO*, 3 June 2000, p. 1.

⁸⁸ *RIO*, 10 June 2000, p. 1.

⁸⁹ *RIO*, 1 July 2000, pp. 1, 4–5.

⁹⁰ Interview with A. Matvienko, 19 February 2002.

⁹¹ Born in 1954 in Moldova. In 1992–94 the representative of the president of Ukraine in Mykolaiv *oblast'*. Since 1996 president of the Ukrainian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs. One of the founders of the NDP.

⁹² *Novyny Zakarpattia*, 12 June 2001, p. 1.

⁹³ 'Moskal', ty ne toi? SDPU(o) ponovlyue svii vplyv na Zakarpatti', *Ukraina moloda*, 26 June 2001, p. 3.

⁹⁴ *Ukraina i svit s'ohodni*, 13–19 October 2001, p. 5.

⁹⁵ On 21 February 2002 I accompanied Baloha and his comrades—candidates from Our Ukraine in their agitation tour of Mukachevo *raion*. As is often the case with rural areas in the CIS, what I witnessed was not so-called revitalisation of civic activities but a primitive rural democracy in which electors attending meetings—representing by their outlooks severe *kolhosp* (*kolkhoz*) life—cared about concrete improvements in their life. Few were interested in Baloha's heroism in his struggle with Medvedchuk, but many listened carefully to how Baloha rebuilt medical care in Mukachevo city. Accordingly, in speeches Baloha emphasised his own achievements since 1998, and promised proudly to do in Mukachevo *raion* what had been done in Mukachevo city under 'his' team. The candidates and activists told me that Mukachevo *raion* had been left in oblivion in the previous electoral campaigns in 1994 and 1998, so the population were just happy to receive attention. The excitement of those attending was such that each meeting ended with a chorus of religious hymns.