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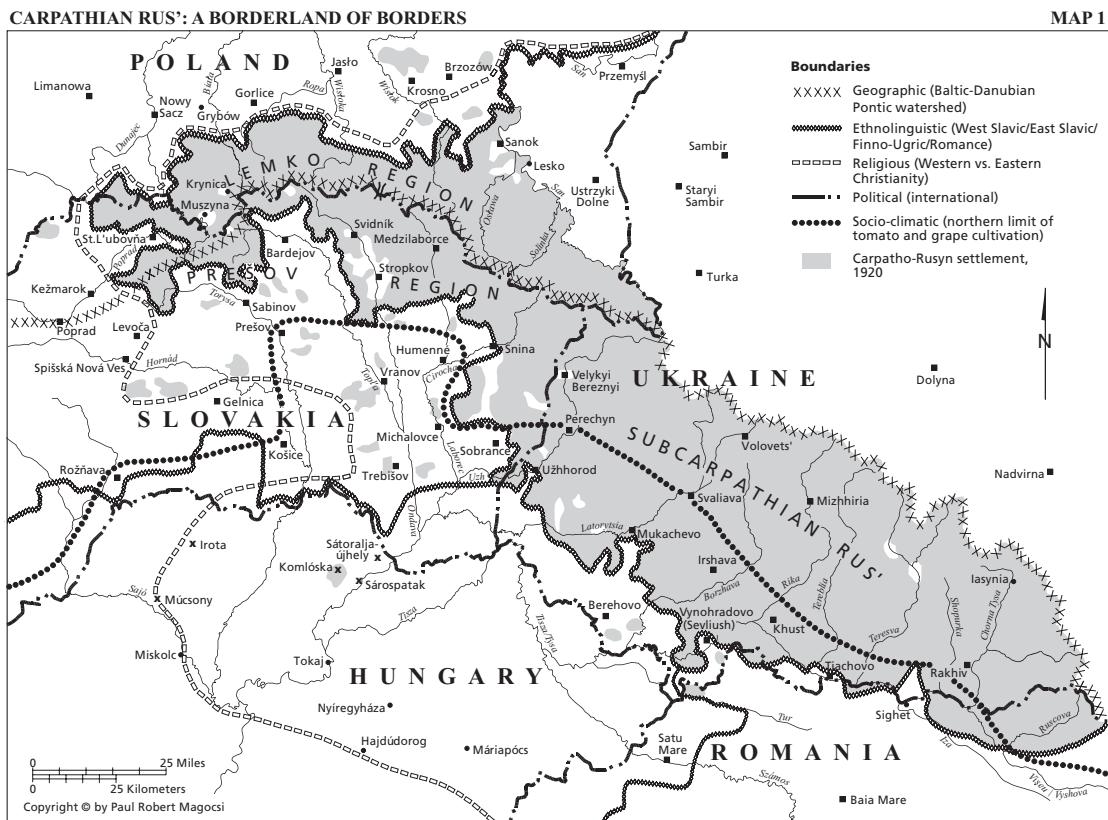
CARPATHIAN RUS' INTERETHNIC COEXISTENCE WITHOUT VIOLENCE

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The phenomenon of borderlands together with the somewhat related concept of marginality are topics that in recent years have become quite popular as subjects of research among humanists and social scientists. At a recent scholarly conference in the United States I was asked to provide the opening remarks for an international project concerned with “exploring the origins and manifestations of ethnic (and related forms of religious and social) violence in the borderland regions of east-central, eastern, and southeastern Europe.”¹ I felt obliged to begin with an apologetic explanation because, while the territory I was asked to speak about is certainly a borderland in the time frame under consideration—1848 to the present—it has been remarkably free of ethnic, religious, and social violence. Has there never been controversy in this borderland territory that was provoked by ethnic, religious, and social factors? Yes, there has been. But have these factors led to interethnic violence? The answer is no.

The territory in question is Carpathian Rus', which, as will become clear, is a land of multiple borders. Carpathian Rus' is not, however, located in an isolated peripheral region; rather, it is located in the center of the European continent as calculated by geographers interested in such questions during the second half of the nineteenth century.²

What, then, is Carpathian Rus' and where is it located specifically? Since it is not, and has never been, an independent state or even an administrative entity, one will be hard pressed to find Carpathian Rus' on maps of Europe. In that sense it is like many other European lands—Lapland, Kashubia, Euskal Herria/Basque Land, Occitanie, Ladinia, to name a few—a territorial entity that is defined by the ethnolinguistic characteristics of the majority of its inhabitants and not by political or administrative borders. Using the intellectual buzzwords of our day, Carpathian Rus' is a classic construct. Some skeptics would even say it is an “imagined community” or, at best, a construct or project still in the making.³ What we



have in mind, however, is something quite concrete; namely, a geographically contiguous territory which at the outset of the twentieth century (when census data was still relatively reliable) included nearly 1,100 villages and some small towns in which at least 50 percent of the inhabitants were Carpatho-Rusyns.⁴ Of the two component parts of the territory's name, *Carpathian* refers to the mountains which cover much of the land surface; *Rus'* refers to the ethnicity and traditional Eastern Christian religious orientation of the territory's majority East Slavic population whose historic ethnonym is *Rusnak* or *Rusyn*. That population will be referred to here as *Carpatho-Rusyn*, a term that reflects the group's geographic location and ethnic characteristics.

Carpathian Rus' is a borderland of borders (see map 1 above). Through or along its periphery cross geographic, political, religious, and ethnolinguistic boundaries. Geographically, the crest of the Carpathian mountains forms a watershed, so that the inhabitants on the northern slopes are drawn by natural as well as man-made facilities toward the Vistula-San basins of the Baltic Sea. The inhabitants on the southern slopes are, by contrast, geographically part of the Danubian Basin and plains of Hungary.

Politically, during the long nineteenth century (1770s–1918), *Carpathian Rus'* was within one state, the Habsburg Monarchy, although it was divided between that empire's Austrian and Hungarian "halves" by the crests of the Carpathians. Since 1918, its territory



has been divided among several states: Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, the Soviet Union, Ukraine, and Slovakia, and for a short period Nazi Germany and Hungary (see map 2).

Carpathian Rus' is located along the great borderland divide between Eastern and Western Christianity, spheres which some scholars have described as *Slavia Orthodoxa* and *Slavia Romana*.⁵ Most of the region's Rusnak/Rusyn inhabitants fall within the Eastern Christian sphere, although they are in turn divided more or less evenly between adherents of Greek Catholicism and Orthodoxy. Nor is the religious landscape limited to Greek Catholic and Orthodox Christians, since traditionally within and along the borders of Carpathian Rus' there have lived Roman Catholics, Protestants (Reformed Calvinists and a lesser number of Evangelical Lutherans), and a large concentration of Jews of varying orientations: Orthodox (Misnagdim), Reformed, but most importantly Hasidim.

Carpathian Rus' is also an ethnolinguistic borderland. All of Europe's major ethnolinguistic groups converge in Carpathian Rus', whose territory marks the farthest western extent of the East Slavic world and is bordered by speakers of three completely different language groups: West Slavic (Poles and Slovaks), Finno-Ugric (Magyars), and Romance (Romanians). The Germanic languages have also been a feature of the territory's culture, since until 1945 ethnic Germans (Spish and Carpathian Germans) and a large number of Yiddish-speaking Jews lived in towns and cities and also in the rural countryside of Carpathian Rus'.

Finally, there is another border that runs through Carpathian Rus' that to date has received no attention in scholarly or popular literature but is nonetheless of great significance. I refer to what might be called the socio-climatic border or, more prosaically, the tomato and grape line. It is through a good part of Carpathian Rus' that the northern limit for tomato and grape (wine) cultivation is found. Whereas tomato-based dishes are the norm in traditional cuisine south of the line, before the mid-twentieth century that vegetable was virtually unknown to the Rusyns and other groups living along the upper slopes of the Carpathians. The lack of grapes and wine cultivation north of the tomato-grape line has had a profound impact on the social psychology of the inhabitants of Carpathian Rus'. A warmer climate and café culture has promoted human interaction and social tolerance among Rusyns and others to the south. By contrast, those living farther north are apt to spend less time outdoors, and when they do interact in social situations the environment is frequently dominated by the use of hard alcohol that in excess provokes behavior marked by extremes of opinion, short tempers, and physical violence. Like all attempts at defining social or national "characteristics," the above assessment is based largely on impressionistic observation and, therefore, is liable to oversimplification.⁶ Nevertheless, further empirical research should be carried out to define more precisely the exact location of tomato and grape cultivation, to describe the resultant interregional differentiation in food and drink, and more importantly, to determine how those differences affect the social psychology of the Rusyns and other inhabitants of Carpathian Rus'.

Carpathian Rus', therefore, certainly qualifies as a borderland par excellence. How, then, does it relate to the following themes: (1) the use of multiple constructs to define identity; (2) the development of ethnic and national identities; (3) the role of the state; and (4) the historic context of ethnic violence?

Multiple Constructs to Define Identity

Elsewhere, I developed a conceptual model for analyzing national movements among stateless peoples that contrasts the idea of a hierarchy of multiple identities with a framework of mutually exclusive identities.⁷ The case study to which I applied this model concerned Ukrainians during the long nineteenth century, although I believe it can also be used to understand the evolution of most other stateless peoples in Europe.

I would argue that having multiple identities is the norm for most individuals in developed and developing societies. In other words, each individual has several potential identities from which to choose: a village, town, or city of residence; a region or state; a religious orientation; a language and/or ethnic group. Some of us also have strong loyalties and identity with the university we attended (there was a time when someone from Harvard was indeed different from a graduate from Yale or Princeton, not to mention a graduate from a state university), or with the clubs to which we belong, or with our sexual preference, especially if it is not heterosexual. Then there is identification with leisure activities, hobbies, and preferences, such as sports clubs, etc.

By way of illustration, may I be permitted a personal note. I can remember growing up in a part of New Jersey just opposite that state's largest suburb, New York City. Immersed in that environment, I had one primary identity. Whenever asked, I responded I was a Brooklyn Dodger fan—more precisely a vicarious Brooklyn Dodger.⁸ This was a clear identity associated with certain personality traits that were demonstrably different from someone who

identified with the rival New York Giants and the hated New York Yankees. Because my parents and grandparents were still alive, I had as yet no experience with personal loss, and my first such experience came in 1957, when the Dodgers left Brooklyn. In a sense, when I was 12 years old my "national" identity was taken away, not by some governmental decree or by planned ethnocide, but by greedy businessmen who saw that a bigger buck could be made by going to a foreign country—Los Angeles. The point is that it is perfectly normal for individuals to have more than one identity, and that the decision about which one to choose depends on the circumstances in which an answer to the question is needed. Put another way, situational identity is the handmaiden of multiple identities.

For self-proclaimed members of a nationalist intelligentsia, the very idea of multiple identities is an anathema. What in most circumstances might seem a normal phenomenon—such as a resident of pre-World War II Macedonia identifying as a Macedonian *and* Bulgarian (or Macedono-Bulgarian), or a resident of nineteenth-century Ukraine as a Little Russian (or Ukrainian) *and* Russian—is totally unacceptable to nationality-builders, who feel it their duty to make persons aware of their belonging only to a single nationality, in this case Macedonian *or* Bulgarian, Ukrainian *or* Russian. Hence, national identities should not be viewed as part of a hierarchy of multiple loyalties; rather, national identities, and by corollary language use, must be mutually exclusive.

Much of the history of Carpathian Rus' from 1848 to the present is a story of how the local nationalist intelligentsia has struggled—often in vain—against the natural tendency of the local Carpatho-Rusyn inhabitants to maintain more than one identity or, in some cases, no national identity at all. In the eyes of the nationalist intelligentsia, such persons are unenlightened, assimilationists, or, worse still, enemies of the nationalist cause.

The Development of National and Ethnic Identities

Questions regarding national and ethnic identity began to be raised in Carpathian Rus' during the 1830s and 1840s. The year 1848 was an important turning point for those discussions. During the next two decades Carpatho-Rusyns experienced their first national awakening.⁹ There was a classic national awakening—albeit on a small scale—of the central and eastern European variety. A small group of intellectuals, what we now call the nationalist intelligentsia, published the first books and newspapers in the native language; they founded organizations, village reading rooms, and schools in which the native culture and language were propagated; and they submitted petitions to the ruling Habsburg authorities calling for cultural and political autonomy based on territorial and/or corporate group rights.

To be sure, not all members of the intelligentsia—at the time they were mostly priests—favored the idea of promoting the local East Slavic Rus' culture. Many preferred instead association with the dominant nationality of the state, which before 1918 meant identifying as a Hungarian or, in the case of Carpathian Rus' territory north of the mountain crests, as a Pole.

As for those who believed in the desirability of association with the East Slavic and Eastern Christian world, the road to a clear national identity remained fraught with obstacles. Like many intellectual leaders stemming from stateless peoples, Carpatho-Rusyn national activists lacked pride and confidence in their own culture. Hence, it seemed easier to associate with an already existing East Slavic nationality and language. In essence, during the first national awakening in Carpathian Rus' (ca. 1848–1868), national activists proclaimed themselves to be of the Russian or Great Russian nationality; they tried to use the Russian literary

language in their publications and for instruction in schools; and they tried to convince the local Rusyn inhabitants to adopt a Russian national identity. These early national awakeners, led by figures like Aleksander Dukhnovych and Adolf Dobrians'kyi, were partly successful in having a Russian national orientation accepted by the generation that was to follow them. By the 1890s, however, some younger intellectual activists (again mostly priests) argued that Russian was too far from the dialects spoken by the East Slavs of Carpathian Rus' and that instead the local vernacular should be standardized and used as the representative language of the region's inhabitants. It was never made clear, however, what that local language should be and what alternative, if any, should there be to the Russian national identity.

The problem of ethnic, national, and linguistic identity became more complex after World War I, when Carpathian Rus' was divided between Czechoslovakia and Poland. The Russian national orientation continued to be propagated by certain local activists, who were joined by postwar émigrés of Russian orientation from the former Habsburg province of Galicia (by then in Poland) and from the former Russian Empire (by then the Soviet Union). Among such émigrés were figures like "the grandmother" of the Russian Revolution, Ekaterina Breshko-Breshkovskaia, who considered Carpathian Rus' the last land where the spirit of Russia was preserved in pristine form.¹⁰

Also from Polish Galicia and the Dnieper Ukraine in the former Russian Empire came émigrés of Ukrainian orientation to Carpathian Rus'. They found a few supporters among local Carpatho-Rusyns and educated many more young people in the belief that the East Slavic inhabitants of Carpathian Rus' were ethnically Ukrainian, that is the same people as the Ukrainians of Eastern Galicia and the Dnieper Ukraine—and certainly not Russians.

It was not long before some local activists expressed dissatisfaction with the Russian/Ukrainian dichotomy and argued that the East Slavs of Carpathian Rus' were neither Russian nor Ukrainian, but rather a distinct nationality called Subcarpathian Rusyn, or Carpatho-Rusyn, or simply Rusyn. The result was that the entire period of what became known as the second national awakening, lasting from 1918 to 1939, was characterized by a fierce ideological rivalry between supporters of three national and linguistic orientations: the Russophile, the Ukrainophile, and the Rusynophile.¹¹

As we have seen, the Russophile orientation was the oldest, having dominated the first national awakening and persisting through the second. It was the first orientation to disappear, however, so that during the third national awakening, which began in 1989 and continues to the present, there are only two orientations: the Rusynophile and the Ukrainophile.

The Role of the State

Carpathian Rus' has always been part of one or more state structures. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that the ruling authorities have always expressed an interest in the question of national identity among Carpatho-Rusyns.

During the last 70 years of Habsburg rule (1848–1918), the attitude of the state went through several phases. The first two decades of so-called Habsburg absolutism were marked by efforts of the central authorities to control and even suppress those nationalities with strong political ambitions, such as the Poles in Galicia and most particularly the Magyars in the Hungarian Kingdom. As a counterweight to the Poles and Magyars, the Habsburgs supported the efforts at national enlightenment among the East Slavs of Galicia and the Hungarian Kingdom, including Carpathian Rus'. In 1867, however, the Habsburg authori-

ties reached an accommodation with the Magyars and Poles, who consequently regained their position as the dominant political and social factor in Hungary and Austrian Galicia. This political change had a particularly negative impact on Carpathian Rus' lands in Hungary, where until 1918 the local intelligentsia and school system became subject to a policy of Magyarization intended to eliminate all remnants of East Slavic culture.

The situation changed radically with the collapse of Austria-Hungary in late 1918 and the division of Carpathian Rus' territory between two new postwar states: Czechoslovakia and Poland. Czechoslovakia was especially favorable toward Carpatho-Rusyns who, alongside Czechs and Slovaks, became one of the founding peoples of the state. Rusyns living south of Carpathians voluntarily proclaimed their desire to join Czechoslovakia, and at the Paris Peace Conference that desire was confirmed with guarantees for "the fullest degree of self-government compatible with the Czecho-Slovak state."¹² A distinct administrative entity called Subcarpathian Rus' (Czech: Podkarpatská Rus) came into being in the far eastern end of Czechoslovakia. Although the Czechs never fulfilled their promise to grant autonomy, the province was nominally a Rusyn territory with its own governor and with Rusyn as the official language used in schools and alongside Czech in government administration.

With regard to the national identity of Rusyns and the closely related language question, the Czechoslovak authorities proclaimed neutrality. In practice, however, they supported the Ukrainophile, Russophile, and Rusynophile orientations at different times as warranted by political circumstances.¹³ By the 1930s, when Czechoslovakia was in a desperate search for allies against revisionist Nazi Germany and Hungary, the territory of Subcarpathian Rus' took on special geo-strategic importance. It was the only direct territorial link to Czechoslovakia's fellow Little Entente allies, Romania and Yugoslavia. Therefore, the authorities in Prague gave greater support to the Rusynophile orientation, hoping to consolidate the formation of a distinct Carpatho-Rusyn nationality that would have no political interests beyond the borders of Czechoslovakia.¹⁴

Notwithstanding the change in government policy, the Russophile and Ukrainophile orientations did not disappear. On the contrary, the Ukrainian orientation continued to increase its grassroots support among various segments of the local Rusyn population, especially young people. So much was this the case that during the few months following the September 1938 Munich Pact, when the unitary structure of Czechoslovakia was transformed and Subcarpathian Rus' finally received its long awaited autonomy, the Ukrainian orientation soon dominated the region which it renamed Carpatho-Ukraine.

Carpathian Rus' territory within interwar Poland fared somewhat differently. The local Rusnaks, who by the outset of the twentieth century had adopted the name *Lemko* as an ethnonym, hoped at the close of World War I to unite politically with their Rusyn brethren south of the mountains in Czechoslovakia. It was in fact Lemko-Rusyn leaders who first formulated a clear territorial definition of Carpathian Rus' and submitted memoranda with maps to the Paris Peace Conference calling for its independence or autonomous status within a neighboring state.¹⁵ The Lemko-Rusyn demand for union with Czechoslovakia was rejected, however, both by Rusyn leaders south of the Carpathians and by President Masaryk in Prague. Not wanting to be ruled by Poland, Lemko activists created an "independent" republic that lasted for about 16 months, until in March 1920 the area was brought under Polish control.¹⁶

Lemko opposition to Polish rule was quickly overcome—and without bloodshed. During the interwar years, the Russophile and Ukrainophile orientations were present in what

became known as the Lemko Region of Carpathian Rus'. Ever fearful of the Ukrainian problem within its borders, the Polish government began openly to favor any national orientation among Lemko Rusyns as long as it was not Ukrainian.¹⁷ Initially, it preferred those Lemko Rusyns who assimilated to Polish culture. For those who did not, the government permitted school programs in which Lemko-Rusyn vernacular was taught, and it welcomed the decision of the Vatican to create in 1934 a separate Lemko Greek Catholic church jurisdiction that was decidedly not Ukrainian in orientation.¹⁸ The result of these efforts was the creation of a generation of individuals who believed they were part of a distinct Lemko nationality.

The relatively liberal environment of the interwar years came to an end with the onset of World War II. Subcarpathian Rus' was reannexed to Hungary, which banned the Ukrainian orientation, barely tolerated the Russian orientation, and openly supported the idea that the local East Slavs formed a distinct "Uhro-Rusyn" nationality loyal to the Hungarian state. North of the mountains the Ukrainian orientation was given a new lease on life by Nazi Germany, which incorporated the Lemko-inhabited part of Carpathian Rus' into the General Government of the Third Reich.¹⁹

The apex of state intervention in the nationality question was reached at the close of World War II. By 1945, former Czechoslovak Subcarpathian Rus' was annexed to the Soviet Union, while the other two parts of Carpathian Rus' remained within Poland (the Lemko Region) and Czechoslovakia (the so-called Prešov Region of northeastern Slovakia). The Soviet regime resolved the nationality question according to principles adopted by the Communist Party (Bolshevik) of Ukraine in December 1925. Regardless of what the inhabitants of Carpathian Rus' may have called themselves or believed themselves to be—Rusyns, Rusnaks, Carpatho-Russians, Uhro-Rusyns—they were formally designated as Ukrainians. The use of Rusyn as a nationality descriptor was simply banned. When, in 1948, Czechoslovakia became a Communist-ruled state, within a few years it adopted the Soviet model for Carpatho-Rusyns living in the northeastern corner of Slovakia. By 1951, the Rusyn population there was administratively declared to be Ukrainian. In the decades that followed, the Communist authorities of Czechoslovakia, in cooperation with those local activists who gave up a Russian national identity for a Ukrainian one, introduced a policy of Ukrainianization in schools and cultural life. Those Rusyns who were opposed to such changes generally eschewed all further association with their East Slavic heritage and adopted a Slovak national identity and Slovak language.²⁰

The nationality question among the Lemko Rusyns in Poland was resolved by state intervention in an even more drastic fashion. The Lemkos were simply deported *en masse* from their Carpathian homeland in two waves (1945–46 and 1947), thereby fulfilling the Stalinist precept—if there's no people there's no problem (*net naroda—net problemъ*).

The role of the state had again a profound impact on the nationality question in Carpathian Rus' in the wake of the Revolution of 1989 and the implosion of the Soviet Union in 1991. As part of the effort to overcome the shortcomings of the Communist past, post-1989 Poland, along with Czechoslovakia and its successor states, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, made it legally possible for people once again to identify themselves as Rusyns in the sense of belonging to a distinct nationality. Consequently, Lemkos and Rusyns within Poland and Slovakia have been officially recognized in census reports since 1989 and are provided with state funds for education, publications, theaters, and other cultural events in the Rusyn language.

Independent Ukraine also styles itself a post-Soviet democratic republic and does not restrict privately sponsored cultural activity carried out by individuals and organizations in

Transcarpathia (former Subcarpathian Rus') who espouse the Rusyn national orientation. The government of Ukraine refuses, however, to recognize Carpatho-Rusyns as a distinct nationality and instead formally defines them as a "sub-ethnos" of the Ukrainian people.²¹

The Historical Context of Ethnic Violence

Carpathian Rus' has always been in an ethnically diverse region of Europe. To the northwest live Poles, to the northeast Ukrainians, to the southwest Slovaks, and to the southeast Romanians. Carpathian Rus' itself, that is the territory in which Rusnaks/Rusyns have traditionally formed the majority population, has also never been ethnically homogeneous. Living alongside Rusyns in villages, towns, and cities have been Magyars, Jews, Germans, Roma/Gypsies, Slovaks, Poles, Romanians, and since World War II Ukrainians and Russians. For illustrative purposes let us take one part of Carpathian Rus', the former Czechoslovak province of Subcarpathian Rus'. In 1930, its 725,000 inhabitants were comprised of Rusyns (63 percent), Magyars (15.4 percent), Jews (12.8 percent), Czechs and Slovaks (4.8 percent), Germans (1.9 percent), and others (1.9 percent).²² There was no less religious diversity, with Greek Catholicism, Orthodoxy, Judaism, Reformed Calvinism, and Evangelical Lutheranism all serving one or more ethnic groups. Added to this mix are several Protestant and other Christian sects—Baptists, Seventh-Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses—whose numbers have grown rapidly in the post-Communist era.

Such ethnic and religious diversity often led to rivalry and ideological conflict. I have already mentioned the rivalry among the pro-Russian, pro-Ukrainian, and pro-Rusyn oriented intelligentsia, not to mention the displeasure toward all these orientations on the part of those individuals who opted out of an East Slavic identity and favored assimilation with the Magyar, Slovak, or Polish nationalities. The twentieth century was also characterized by frictions between adherents of Greek Catholicism and Orthodoxy. Nearly one-third of the Carpatho-Rusyn population "converted" from Greek Catholicism to Orthodoxy in the decade after World War I. The resultant controversy between the two religious groups was less the result of liturgical or ideological differences than it was over church property. But perhaps the fiercest religious rivalries occurred among Jews, between the various Hasidic dynasties (the followers of rabbis Shapira, Rokeah, Weiss, and Teitelbaum being the most intolerant of each other) and between all the Hasidim, on the one hand, and the secular Zionists, on the other.²³

The rhetoric spewed out by defenders of these various national and religious orientations was strong, even venomous. Nevertheless, while there may have occurred some scuffles at the individual level during public rallies on behalf of a specific national orientation or at protests on the steps of a church or a synagogue, there was never any organized violence and death that pitted one group against another.²⁴ True enough, pre-World War I Hungarian state officials and local gendarmes acted with disdain toward Carpatho-Rusyns, but there was never any violence between Rusyn and Magyar villagers or townspeople who lived alongside them or nearby. And Carpathian Rus' is perhaps unique in central and eastern Europe in that there has never been a pogrom of any kind perpetrated against Jews.

This is not to say that there was never any violence directed against ethnic or religious groups. There was, but in all cases it was inspired and carried out by the state. The worst fate has befallen that part of Carpathian Rus' inhabited by Lemko-Rusyns in what is present-day southeastern Poland. During the first months of World War I, the Habsburg government became suspicious of an estimated 2,000–5,000 Lemko-Rusyns who, because of their Russo-

phile national orientation, were arrested for alleged treason and incarcerated for most of the war in concentration camps set up in the western part of the empire.²⁵ Many died there from disease and malnutrition. Three decades later, at the close of World War II, Lemko-Rusyns along with other East Slavs in postwar Poland were slated for resettlement as part of a “voluntary” population exchange with the Soviet Union. About 100,000 went eastward between late 1944 and 1946. Those who refused to go east (about 60,000) were forcibly driven from their homes in 1947 and scattered in villages and towns of western and northern Poland in territories (Silesia, Pomerania) that had belonged to prewar Germany.

There was also state-instigated violence against ethnic and religious groups in those parts of Carpathian Rus' located on the southern slopes of the mountains. Perhaps the first instance occurred on the eve of World War I, when the Hungarian government tried to stop the early stages of the Orthodox movement by arresting some of its adherents and subjecting them to a trial in which religious conversion was equated with treason against the state. It was the Jews in Carpathian Rus', however, who suffered the most at the hands of the state. In 1942, the German administration killed or sent to the Belzec death camp all Jews living in the Lemko Region. Then, in the spring of 1944, Jews were deported *en masse* to the death camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau by the governments of Hungary (from Subcarpathian Rus') and Slovakia (from the Prešov Region). As a result, no less than 80 percent of the Jews of Carpathian Rus' perished.²⁶

As World War II came to an end, it was the Magyars and Germans who became the object of state violence. In Subcarpathian Rus', which was in the process of being annexed to the Soviet Union, all males of Magyar nationality between the ages of 18 and 50 were arrested and deported to forced labor camps in the Gulag. About 5,000 of the 30,000 deported Magyars died while in incarceration. In 1946, by which time Subcarpathian Rus', renamed Transcarpathia, was formally part of the Soviet Union, all males of the German ethnicity were deported to eastern Ukraine or to the Gulag forced labor camps. Between 1949 and 1950, the Soviet Union and its Communist ally Czechoslovakia outlawed the Greek Catholic Church and arrested all its bishops and many priests who refused to embrace Orthodoxy as the only Eastern Christian religion recognized by the state.

Despite these numerous examples of state-inspired violence in the Carpathian Rus' borderland, there has at the same time been a remarkable absence of interethnic violence. Why is this the case? Possible answers to that question can only be of a speculative nature. I would suggest two factors: socioeconomic status, and a common fear of the Other.

With regard to the socioeconomic factor, it should be noted that Carpathian Rus' has traditionally been an economically marginal rural area in which most inhabitants have survived as subsistence-level peasant farmers, livestock herders, and forestry workers. Industry was virtually nonexistent until the second half of the twentieth century. In contrast to many other parts of Europe, where ethnic groups are frequently differentiated according to their customary professions and socioeconomic status, in Carpathian Rus' virtually all groups were engaged in agriculture and forest-related work. In other words, all the region's peoples were equally poor. For example, it was just as common to find Jewish peasant farmers and woodcutters as Jewish proprietors of small retail shops and taverns. The local ethnic Germans and Magyars—the “superior” nationalities in the Habsburg Monarchy—were also mostly peasant farmers and woodcutters in Carpathian Rus'.

Perhaps the only exception to this pattern occurred in Subcarpathian Rus' during the interwar years of the twentieth century. At the same time the Czechoslovak government

encouraged nearly 30,000 Czechs to settle in the region and to take up posts as government officials, teachers, physicians, businessmen, and other professionals. The Czechs clearly were an ethnic group associated with one socioeconomic stratum that was quantifiably different (and perceived as such) from all other ethnic groups in the region.

Ironically, the Soviet regime after World War II also contributed to socioeconomic disparity based on ethnic differences. To staff the new industrial plants it built in the region, the Soviets initially brought in managers, technical specialists, and workers from Ukraine and other parts of the Soviet Union. Almost all these newcomers settled in Transcarpathia's few cities. Some locals may have resented this intrusion, since at least in the first years of Soviet rule the newcomers seemed to get the most lucrative paying jobs and positions in the regional administration and professional spheres. In the end, however, the downturn and eventual collapse of the Soviet economy created a situation in which the economic and social status of the postwar "newcomers" from other parts of the Soviet Union turned out to be the same or worse than that of the locals, who were able to depend on family property in villages and socioeconomic opportunities provided by kinship networks. While it is certainly true that the lack of any correlation between socioeconomic status and ethnic origin may not have eliminated envy on an individual level, it did help to prevent the basis for envy and hatred on a group level.

At first glance fear of the Other might be considered as a factor which contributes to interethnic violence. The question, however, is what specifically was the Other that produced fear? There were and still are many ethnic and religious Others in Carpathian Rus'. Those Others have never been unfamiliar, since ethnic interaction continually occurs in the workplace, village tavern and store, town market, and through the exchange of mutually symbiotic labor services (Christians cooked and cleaned for Jews on their Sabbaths; Jews operated stores and provided other services on Sundays). The comfort level on the part of the numerically dominant Carpatho-Rusyns toward other peoples in their midst was also enhanced by their ongoing inclination toward maintaining multiple identities.²⁷

Rather, the Other that all groups feared equally was the state. For people at the lower end of the socioeconomic scale—and this accounts for a significant portion of all ethnic groups in Carpathian Rus'—the state has always been a threat to the individual, whether in its role of collecting taxes or drafting young male family members into the army. As such, the state was to be avoided as much as possible. In that regard, the Magyar peasant was as fearful and probably as mistreated as the Rusyn peasant by the Hungarian gendarme. In other words, there was no "correct" ethnic identity that in and of itself could save one from the wrath of the state. Since, in general, most inhabitants of Carpathian Rus', regardless of ethnic or religious background, were resentful and fearful of the state, it was difficult if not impossible for the authorities to mobilize one group against another in its periodic campaigns of group-directed violence.

Conclusion

By way of conclusion it might be useful to assess the value of studying Carpathian Rus' in the context of borderlands. If, as many historians and social scientists have argued, east-central, eastern, and southeastern Europe is composed of borderlands characterized by ethnic, religious, or social violence, then is it possible that Carpathian Rus' is unique? I am skeptical about arguing for the uniqueness of any phenomenon, especially in the presence of scholars who are

always likely to come up with counterexamples. If not unique, then we might agree that Carpathian Rus' is somewhat exceptional. To understand any norm, one needs to account for and explain the exceptions. If violence is considered the norm in ethnic relations, then Carpathian Rus' may be an example against which other case studies may be compared and contrasted.

NOTES

1. The conference took place in May 2005 as part of the international research project: "Borderlands: Ethnicity, Identity, and Violence in the Shatter-Zone of Empires since 1848," sponsored by the Watson Institute for International Studies at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island.

2. The exact geographic center is near the village of Dilove (formerly Trebuszany), in the far southeastern corner of Carpathian Rus', present-day Ukraine's region of Transcarpathia. There, in 1875, the Hungarian government set up a monument, and a century later, in 1975, the Soviet government erected a new monument; both are still standing.

3. Benedict Anderson's now well-known concept of imagined communities and its relationship to the post-1989 revival of Rusyns is discussed with provocative irony and insight by British and German specialists on central Europe: Timothy Garton Ash, "Long Live Ruthenia!" *The New York Review of Books*, 22 April 1999, reprinted in his *History of the Present: Essays, Sketches and Dispatches from Europe in the 1990s* (London: Penguin Press, 1999), 376–82; and Stefan Troebst, "Russinen, Lemken, Huzulen und andere: zwischen regionaler Identitätssuche und EU-Ost-Erweiterung," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 16 January 2001, 9, reprinted in his *Kulturstudien Ostmitteleuropas: Aufsätze und Essays* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2006), 361–66.

4. All 1,100 settlements (with their various names) are listed in Paul Robert Magocsi, *Our People: Carpatho-Rusyns and Their Descendants in North America*, 4th rev. ed. (Wauconda, Ill.: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2005), 110–206, and mapped in Paul Robert Magocsi, *Carpatho-Rusyn Settlements at the Outset of the 20th Century with Additional Data from 1881 and 1806*, 3rd rev. ed. (New York: Carpatho-Rusyn Research Center, 2011).

5. These concepts were developed by the Italian Slavist, Riccardo Picchio, "Guidelines for a Comparative Study of the Language Question among the Slavs," in Riccardo Picchio and Harvey Goldblatt, eds., *Aspects of the Slavic Language Question*, vol. 1 (New Haven, Conn.: Yale Concilium on International and Area Studies, 1984), 1–42.

6. An early attempt at describing the differences in cuisine and the sociopsychological characteristics of Carpatho-Rusyns is found in Sándor Bonkáló, *A Rutének (Ruszinok)* (Budapest: Franklin-Társulat, 1940), 70–101; English translation in Alexander Bonkáló, *The Rusyns* (New York: Columbia University Press/East European Monographs, 1990), 57–84.

7. The conceptual framework was first laid out in Paul Robert Magocsi, "The Ukrainian National Revival: A New Analytical Framework," *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism*, 16(1–2) (Charlottetown, Canada: E. I., 1989), 45–62, and fleshed out in greater detail in chapters 29 to 35 of idem, *History of Ukraine: The Land and its Peoples*, 2nd rev. ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 374–488.

8. Lest this example be perceived as idiosyncratic, it should be noted that there is an extensive literature on the Brooklyn Dodger phenomenon in twentieth-century American culture. Many consider the classic work on this topic to be Roger Kahn, *The Boys of Summer* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), but to my mind the best of all is the elegantly written autobiographical essay by the devoted female follower of the Dodger cult—a native of Brooklyn and distinguished American political scientist—Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Wait Till Next Year: A Memoir* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997). Others that capture very well the psychology of "Dodgerness" are: Peter Golenbock, *Bums: An Oral History of the Brooklyn Dodgers* (New York: G. Putnam, 1984); Harvey Frommer, *New York City Baseball: The Last Golden Age, 1947–1957* (New York: Atheneum, 1985); and Bob McGee, *The Greatest Ballpark Ever: Ebbets Fields and the Story of the Brooklyn Dodgers* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2005).

9. For details on this first national awakening, see Ivan Žeguc, *Die nationalpolitischen Bestrebungen der Karpato-Ruthenen 1848–1914* (Wiesbaden, Germany: Otto Harrassowitz, 1965); and Paul Robert Magocsi, *The Shaping of National Identity: Subcarpathian Rus', 1848–1948* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978), esp. 42–75.

10. This attitude was best summed up in the words of another Russian émigré: “I remember with fascination how a few years before the [First] World War I learned that Russians live in Carpathians! . . . From that moment I felt inside of me an urgent desire to get to . . . Subcarpathian Rus’, to learn more about this land, to see its people in their everyday life, and to hear a Russian song sung in the Carpatho-Russian land.” Konstantin Bel’govskii, “Krai Russkii—krai neviedomyi: vpechatleniya iz Podkarpatskoi Rusi,” *Staroe i novoe* no. 3 (Tallinn, Estonia, 1932), 177.

11. For details on these controversies, see Magocsi, *Shaping*, 105–187.

12. *Traité entre les Principales Puissances Alliées et Associées et la Tchécoslovaquie* (Paris, 1919), 26–27.

13. For details on the evolution of Czechoslovak policy, see Magocsi, *Shaping*, 191–233.

14. The experience of Czechoslovak rule was to a degree successful in creating a sense of Carpatho-Rusyn distinctiveness. Part of this process was related to the group’s ethnonym. The term *Rusyn* had also been used by the East Slavs of Galicia and Bukovina until at least 1918; thereafter, most Galician and Bukovinian East Slavs adopted instead the ethnonym *Ukrainian*, arguing since then that it is the modern equivalent of the older name *Rusyn*. The Rusynophiles of Carpathian Rus’, both during the Czechoslovak period and subsequently under Hungarian rule, used the term *Rusyn* (or *Carpatho-Rusyn*, *Subcarpathian Rusyn*, and *Uhro-Rusyn*) in the sense of a distinct fourth East Slavic nationality. Carpatho-Rusyn national specificity was also helped by the appearance of several synthetic surveys propagating the view that Carpatho-Rusyns had a distinct historical, literary, and artistic tradition. Among works in this genre were: Yrynei M. Kondratovych, *Ystorija Podkarpatskoj Rusy dlia naroda* (Uzhhorod, Russia: Tovarystvo “Prosvita,” 1924; 3rd ed., 1930); Evgenii Nedziel’skii, *Ocherk karpatorusskoi literatury* (Uzhhorod: Podkarpatorusskii narodnoprosvietitel’nyi soiuz, 1932); [Stepan Dobosh], *Ystorija podkarpatorus’koi lyteratury* (Uzhhorod, Russia: Regentskii komissariat, 1942); and A. Yzvoryn [Evgenii Nedziel’skii], “Suchasni rus’ki khudozhyky,” *Zoria/Hajnal* 2(3–4) (Uzhhorod, Russia, 1942): 387–418, and vol. 3(1–4) (1943): 258–287.

15. Anthony Beskid and Dmitry Slobin, *The Origin of the Lems, Slavs of Danubian Provenance: Memorandum to the Peace Conference Concerning Their National Claims* (Prešov, Slovakia: National Council of Carpatho-Russians in Prešov, 1919).

16. For details on the little-known Lemko Republic, see Bogdan Horbal, *Działalność polityczna Łemków na Łemkowszczyźnie, 1918–1921* (Wrocław, Poland: Wyd. Arboretum, 1997); and Paul Robert Magocsi, “The Lemko Rusyn Republic, 1918–1920 and Political Thought in Western Rus’-Ukraine,” in *idem, Of the Making of Nationalities There is No End*, vol. 1 (New York: Columbia University Press/East European Monographs, 1999), 303–315.

17. For details on Polish policy toward the Lemko Region during the interwar years, see Jarosław Moklak, *Łemkowszczyzna w drugiej rzeczypospolitej: zagadnienia polityczne i wyznaniowe* (Krakow: Towarzystwo Wyd. “Historia Jagellonica,” 1997).

18. The new jurisdiction was known as the Lemko Apostolic Administration. It was called into being because of the Vatican’s concern with the large-scale defections of Lemkos to Orthodoxy. The “return to Orthodoxy” was in part a reaction by Lemko Rusyns against the Ukrainian national orientation of the Greek Catholic Eparchy of Przemyśl, of which the Lemko Region had been a part. The Vatican hoped that, having their own ecclesiastical jurisdiction headed by Rusynophile (and Russophile) prelates, Lemkos would feel they were still part of a Rus’ and not Ukrainian church structure.

19. The Nazis allowed the formation of a Ukrainian Central Committee in Cracow, which organized Ukrainian-language schools in the Lemko Region staffed largely by refugee Ukrainian nationalists fleeing from Eastern Galicia after that territory had come under Soviet rule in September 1939.

20. For details on these developments, see Pavel Maču, “National Assimilation: The Case of the Rusyn-Ukrainians of Czechoslovakia,” in Magocsi, *Of the Making of Nationalities There is No End*, vol. 1, 242–289.

21. The official Ukrainian position was formulated in a *Report Submitted by the Ukraine to the Council of Europe Pursuant to Article 25, Paragraph 1 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*, 2 November 1999, in particular the Appendix, “Ethnic Groups of the Nationalities of Ukraine,” 137–140.

22. *Statistický lexikon obcí v Zemi podkarpatské* (Prague: Orbis, 1937), xv.

23. On the various conflicts among Jews of the region, see Yeshayahu A. Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora: The Jews of Subcarpathian Rus' and Mukachevo, 1848–1948* (New York: Columbia University Press/East European Monographs, 2007), esp. 113–224.

24. The one exception of “ethnically” motivated violence occurred among Carpatho-Rusyns themselves when, in 1930, a local student of Ukrainian national orientation at the Teacher’s College in Uzhhorod, Fedir Tatsynets’, attempted to shoot the Greek Catholic priest and respected patriarch of the Russophile orientation, Evmenii Sabov. The assassination attempt failed and the student was apprehended. Tatsynets’ had been persuaded to carry out the deed by one of his teachers at the Uzhhorod Teachers’ College, Stefaniia Novakivs’ka, a radical Galician-Ukrainian nationalist, who was head of the recently-founded Subcarpathian branch of the underground Ukrainian Military Organization based in neighboring Polish-ruled Galicia. Both Tatsynets’ and Novakivs’ka were arrested and sentenced to several years in prison. Although local Ukrainophile leaders disavowed the act, it did suggest the extremes to which Ukrainian émigrés from Galicia might go in order to achieve their goals. On the “Tatsynets’ Affair,” see Mykola M. Vegesh, ed., *Vony boronyly Karpats’ku Ukrainu* (Uzhhorod, Russia: Vyd. “Karpaty,” 2002), 522–27.

25. The most infamous of the camps was at Thalerhof, a village in Austrian Styria now replaced by a runway of the airport in Graz.

26. For details, see Jelinek, *The Carpathian Diaspora*, 227–321.

27. To be sure, local Carpatho-Rusyns were not enamored of the treatment they received from Soviet “Russian” officials and bureaucrats in the first years after 1945 annexation, or by the condescending attitude of Galician Ukrainians who considered—and still consider—Transcarpathia their land as much as they do Galicia or any other part of Ukraine. Nevertheless, Carpatho-Rusyns who studied the Russian and Ukrainian languages and cultures, and who may have identified themselves in the past or present as Russians or Ukrainians, find it instinctively difficult to dislike fellow Transcarpathians from those ethnic groups.