

This article was downloaded by: [George Mason University]
On: 30 September 2014, At: 02:13
Publisher: Routledge
Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number:
1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street,
London W1T 3JH, UK



Nationalism and Ethnic Politics

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/fnep20>

The Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth since 1989: National narratives in relations among Poland, Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine

Timothy Snyder^a

^a Centre for International Affairs , Harvard University ,

Published online: 24 Dec 2007.

To cite this article: Timothy Snyder (1998) The Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth since 1989: National narratives in relations among Poland, Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine, *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 4:3, 1-32, DOI: [10.1080/13537119808428536](https://doi.org/10.1080/13537119808428536)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13537119808428536>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and

views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth since 1989: National Narratives in Relations among Poland, Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine

TIMOTHY SNYDER

Those who hold that national identity amounts to an organic historical tradition are likely to believe that it directly influences policy, while those who consider it recent and constructed are apt to contend that it is manipulated by political elites. A third position holds that nationally conscious people create narratives which, while constrained by brute historical facts, invariably prove their right to statehood. National conflicts, then, are best predicted not by the actual precedent of bloodshed, but by the interactions of the narratives of neighbouring nations which have recently attained sovereignty. This argument is tested by the case of contemporary relations among Belarus, Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine.

Terms and Territories

The character of national identity has become one of the most disputed issues in the social sciences and history. After a number of influential books on this subject were published in the early 1980s, the revolutions of 1989 and the dissolutions of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia provided a wealth of examples for favoured interpretations.¹ At one extreme, national identity is held to be itself ancient, or an unsurprising extension of authentically old social identities or ethnic traditions. Close study of individual cases should then reveal the slow emergence of a national identity. At the other extreme, national identity is understood to be a peculiarly modern idea, which calculating elites have foisted upon unsuspecting masses by way of spurious national histories. On this second view, the supposed continuities of national history are illusory, and the natural task of the scholar is to disenchant history and lay bare the political aims of nationalist politicians. A third type of position is possible, one which draws something from each. It may be that national identity is inextricably linked to history, in the sense that nationalists seek to create a continuous narrative of national history which proves the moral superiority

Timothy Snyder, Centre for International Affairs, Harvard University

Nationalism & Ethnic Politics, Vol.4, No.3, Autumn 1998, pp.1–32
PUBLISHED BY FRANK CASS, LONDON

and the right to statehood of their national group.² That this narrative is not simply an opportunistic political posture but a sincerely held belief may be demonstrated if nationalists' strivings to fill gaps in the narrative engender real costs to them and to their political fortunes.³ The aim of this article is to demonstrate the descriptive value of such an assessment of the character of national identity, on the basis of a study of the four states which have emerged since 1989 on the territory of the former Polish-Lithuanian state (1386–1795): Poland, Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine.

The vast majority of the present territories of these states fell within the boundaries of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at its peak in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and in various ways the national narratives of all four nations begin with this state.⁴ An informal Polish-Lithuanian Union was formed when the pagan Lithuanian Grand Duke accepted Catholic baptism and married a Polish queen in 1386. His Grand Duchy, which extended from the Baltic to the Black Sea, was thus informally joined to the Polish Kingdom. Lithuanian and Belarusian nationalists both lay claim to the heritage of this Duchy, founded by pagan Baltic knights but largely populated by Orthodox slavs. Lithuanian nationalists regard the Grand Duke who began the alliance with Poland as a fool if not a traitor, and the year 1386 thus marks the first of many discontinuities in the Lithuanian national narrative. The Belarusian claim is more cultural than political: the court language of the Lithuanian Grand Duchy was old Belarusian, as evidenced by the impressive Statutes of 1529 and 1566.

By the treaty of Lublin of 1569, the informal union (with its two capitals in Kraków and Vilnius) became a formal Commonwealth with a single capital in Warsaw. In 1696 Polish officially replaced Belarusian as the court language. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Belarusian and Lithuanian nobles accepted Polish language, culture and religion. By the provisions of this treaty, Ukrainian lands were passed from the Duchy to the Polish crown. The cream of the Ukrainian nobility also accepted Polish language, culture and religion (either Roman Catholicism or the Greek Catholicism invented by the Union of Brest in 1596). Ukrainian peasants who fled east to escape the heavy serfdom imposed by colonizing Polish landlords filled the ranks of the fearsome Cossacks. The Cossack rebellion against Polish rule in 1648 is regarded by Ukrainian nationalists as the first undertaking of a nationally conscious Ukrainian people, and supplies the beginning of a national narrative.

Today's Lithuanian, Belarusian and Ukrainian nationalists face a thorny problem. As they emerge from Soviet rule, they find that Poland stands in the way of a continuous national narrative. If the purpose of the national narrative is to justify a new state on the basis of an old one, their position is

already precarious. Lithuanians and Belarusians can argue among themselves about the character of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania before 1386, but from the time of the informal union with Poland it is quite clear that it was not a national state of any kind, and that its politics came to be dominated by Poles. The Ukrainian rebellion of 1648 ended in failure and submission to Moscow at Pereiaslav in 1654. When historical statehood is evidently lacking, the national narrative is drawn to culture as a substitute. Here the position of Lithuanian, Belarusian and Ukrainian nationalists becomes even less enviable. The elites who might have borne the burden of cultural continuity instead chose to learn the Polish language, accept the Baroque charms of Polish culture, and worship in Polish (which is to say Catholic) churches. Even after the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was terminated by the Third Partition of 1795, Polish culture remained dominant in these eastern lands for about another hundred years, until the national revivals of the late nineteenth century. In the Romanov Empire, Russian power made faster inroads than Russian culture (and Tsar Alexander I even promoted Polish culture for a time); in Austria the Habsburgs left the government of Galicia largely to Polish nobles who did what they could to stifle a Ukrainian national revival.

Lithuanian, Belarusian and Ukrainian nationalists came to these predicaments fresh from the experience of Soviet rule, which has influenced their attempts to form a continuous national narrative in several ways. First, they must deal with Soviet propaganda. Reacting to communist histories of their own nations, nationalists' normal response is simply to reverse the normative poles, treating what was condemned by communist history as glorious, and vice versa.⁵ This means that nationalists may reject unattractive truths about their own national histories as Soviet inventions. Some Ukrainian nationalists, for example, claim that the ethnic cleansing of Poles by Ukrainians in Galicia and Volhynia in 1943 is a Soviet fiction. But at the same time, propaganda assertions about the history of other nations, especially if they confirm prejudices or otherwise help to mend rifts in the national narrative, escape this reversal and emerge unscathed. Soviet propaganda in Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine evoked the specter of a revanchist aristocratic Poland, while much postwar Polish historiography portrayed Ukrainians as savage foes. Second, communist pre-histories of the Soviet Union copied the national narrative, seeking for example to find in the early mediaeval state of Kievan Rus' the cradle of all of the nations of the Soviet Union. Third, Soviet norms of scholarship not only isolated intellectuals from new ideas of nationality emerging in the west, they often endorsed research into such ideas as the 'blood links' among the slavic peoples.⁶ This rendered a confrontation with interwar ideas of nationality all the more difficult.⁷ Fourth, communist historiography was marred by its

certainty in naming and stereotyping the heroes and villains of the class struggle, a certainty which can be transferred to the writing of teleological national histories.⁸ Fifth, the experience of dissidence and of resistance to Russification tended to increase the importance of ethical and cultural categories, which has added stridency and even desperation to attempts to recover a narrative in which the long-suffering nation finally gets its due.

Poland's position is qualitatively different than that of its eastern neighbours. It regained sovereignty in 1989, rather than independence in 1991. Especially by the 1970s and 1980s, Polish communism was incomparably less severe than Soviet communism. The discontinuity in Polish statehood is far shorter (1795–1918), and during this period of statelessness Polish culture flourished, not least in lands now Lithuanian, Belarusian and Ukrainian. Nationalists of all four loyalties generally accept that today's Poland (the Third Polish Republic) is the natural heir of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth – even though Belarusians and Lithuanians claim to be the heirs of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania which preceded it. Since the nineteenth century, when Polish nationalists treated the Commonwealth as a Polish state which must be recreated and strengthened, Lithuanians, Belarusians and Ukrainians have laid claim to either the early years of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania or to traditions of resistance to rule from Warsaw.⁹ When a Polish national state with Lithuanian, Belarusian and Ukrainian minorities was recreated after the First World War, this 'division of history' was only strengthened.¹⁰ The interwar Polish state was tolerant enough to allow Ukrainian and Belarusian nationalism to grow on its soil, but intolerant enough to brutally oppress Ukrainian and Belarusian organizations and destroy the Uniate and Orthodox churches of Poland's Ukrainian and Belarusian citizens in several campaigns.¹¹ But if the continuity of the Polish national narrative is not under threat, the traditional definition of the Polish nation would seem to be. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was multinational and multiconfessional, for its times a bastion of tolerance. The Polish Second Republic, though no inheritor of this mantle of tolerance, extended well into what is now Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine, and counted five million Ukrainians, three million Jews and one million Belarusians as citizens. The gap is thus not so much one of lost periods of political or cultural history, but of lost lands, peoples and aspirations.¹² From 1945, communist historiography and propaganda had answers to this problem, and these provide the starting point for an assessment of today's Polish national narrative. A consideration of Polish attitudes towards the old eastern territories will thus precede separate sections treating Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine.

Poland and Ukraine

As the historian Andrzej Paczkowski recently observed, the Poland that emerged from the Second World War was a 'completely new state'.¹³ Stripped of almost half of its territory and almost all of its national minorities, postwar Poland is ethnically and confessionally homogeneous. Perhaps the most lasting and most underestimated achievement of communist propaganda was to convince Poles that that state of affairs was normal, desirable and a natural result of history. Propagandists and party historians cleverly exploited national traditions, noting for example that Poland's new borders corresponded closely to the borders of early mediaeval Piast kingdoms. Borrowing heavily from strong traditions of integral nationalism, and on this question in accord with the dominant mood, the party had little trouble convincing Poles of the desirability of homogeneity. Vilnius (Wilno) and Lviv (Lwów) for Gdańsk (Danzig) and Wrocław (Breslau) is also not such a bad bargain, and settlers from the east often found themselves living comfortably in solid German homes in the western 'recovered territories'. But even when these considerations are taken into account, the party's achievement is formidable. The party was able to redefine the point of emphasis of the national narrative from the sprawling, easterly, multiethnic early modern Commonwealth to the compact, westerly early mediaeval Piast Kingdom. In interwar Poland the question as to whether Poland was historically an ethnic Polish state which happened to have eastern minorities, or a historically multinational state in which Poles played a leading role, was debated but unresolved.¹⁴ The communist period closed the debate. Poles educated after the war generally look upon Poland's former territories in the east as alien, and the 'regained' territories in the west as unproblematically Polish. In general, the aim of the party in Poland was not so much to cultivate stereotypes of the eastern neighbours, but for them to be simply forgotten. The size of Poland's remaining minorities was underestimated, and in general their existence was passed over in silence.

The important exception was Ukraine and the Ukrainians. The conflict between Ukrainians and Poles during and after the Second World War was too bloody to simply forget, and the massive deportations and resettlements of Ukrainians by the Polish communist regime after the war required some justification. Poles and Ukrainians had fought each other in the east in 1939, as the Polish army and Polish citizens' brigades turned against Ukrainians who welcomed the collapse of the Polish state.¹⁵ In 1942 and 1943, Ukrainian nationalists led by Stepan Bandera decided to cleanse eastern Galicia and Volhynia of Poles. They killed at least 40,000 Polish civilians and boasted of forcing ten times that number to flee west. From 1944, Polish

and Ukrainian communists organized coercive population exchanges, and about 350,000 Ukrainians moved east and about 600,000 Poles moved west in the last months of the war. In 1946, the Polish communists began Operation *Rzeszów*, which aimed to destroy the Ukrainian nationalist army and drive Ukrainians out of eastern Poland. Some 140,000 were sent to the Soviet Union. In 1947, the Polish state began a second operation, called *Wisła*, designed to destroy remaining Ukrainian settlements in Poland. Some 150,000 Ukrainians were uprooted from their ancestral homes and dispersed widely in the western 'recovered territories'; 3,936 Ukrainians were interned in concentration camps for collaborating, of whom perhaps 150 perished.¹⁶ The Greek Catholic Church, which most Polish Ukrainians attended, was outlawed. Most of its buildings were transferred to the Roman Catholic Church, the rest were destroyed or left to decay.¹⁷

A stereotype of Ukrainians as savages was of old vintage in Polish literature, which in the aftermath of massive atrocities committed by Ukrainians against Poles the communists had little trouble exploiting. School texts placed the savageries of 1942 and 1943 at the centre of Polish-Ukrainian relations.¹⁸ Ukrainians were treated as slavish counterparts to the Nazis, bound to them not only by similar goals but by a kind of wild spiritual kinship.¹⁹ Ukrainian nationalists did try to cooperate with the Nazis, which enabled them to be treated as their mere henchmen.²⁰ In postwar Polish histories of the Second World War, Ukrainian units were singled out as such, while collaboration by other nations (especially Russians) was minimized.²¹ Ukrainians were associated with Nazi atrocities, and the Ukrainian part in the crushing of the Warsaw Uprising was exaggerated. Ukrainian patriotism was thus reduced to a kind of mindless collaborationism with fascism, which fit the Polish prejudice of believing the Ukrainians to be something less than a nation. Meanwhile, the history of Ukrainians and of Ukraine became a kind of taboo.²² One aim of this propaganda effort was to deflect attention from the crimes committed by communists during the same period, and here the communists achieved at best mixed results.²³ The success of postwar historiography, literature, and propaganda was to move the centre of gravity of the Polish-Ukrainian conflict westwards into Poland, away from Lviv and other areas incorporated Soviet Union. The Ukrainian became less a traditional competitor for dominance in certain historically specific regions than a faceless fascist foe, whose specter could be called into service by the communists at any time. The possibility of an alliance between Polish and Ukrainian oppositionists was combated in this way.²⁴ The communists successfully nurtured a general distaste for Ukrainians, and to this day Poles express more fear of Ukrainians than of any other nation.²⁵

Polish historians, who enjoyed a great deal more discretion than their

eastern colleagues, began to reassess actions such as Operation *Wisła* and in general to challenge the official account of Polish-Ukrainian relations during the 1970s.²⁶ During the Solidarity period, famous oppositionists spoke directly to this issue.²⁷ But the great achievement of Polish oppositionists in the 1980s was that, instead of simply trying to overturn the communist version of the national narrative, they built upon its most important elements. Opponents to the regime accepted its verdict that Poland's borders were unchangeable, and that its destiny was to remain in the centre of Europe rather than reach to the east. Arguments for this stance were easily available, as this had been the position of the famous émigré journal *Kultura* since its founding in 1947. By the time martial law was imposed in December 1981, most of the Polish opposition had accepted this line. After the imposition of martial law, Solidarity writers began to turn much more attention to the east. This was partly because martial law taught the lesson that international cooperation was needed, partly because Jaruzelski's regime had tried to manipulate Polish nationalism against an internal enemy, and partly simply because being interned, imprisoned or exiled gave many oppositionists time to reflect. During the 1980s, Polish thinkers moved beyond simply accepting Poland's present borders and sending good wishes to their neighbours. They articulated a paradigm for the foreign policy of a sovereign Poland, in which interests would be calculated rather than drawn from tradition, and in which the independence and prosperity of the eastern neighbours clearly lay among these interests. Eastern patriotism was to be respected rather than scorned, and eastern neighbours were to be treated as equals and future partners.²⁸ To this end, history would be consciously used as a source of example of cooperation, mastered rather than served. *Kultura* once again served as an inspiration, as certain articles by the farsighted essayist Juliusz Mieroszewski were read and reread.²⁹ This paradigm was absorbed by much of the Solidarity elite, as well as by future foreign minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski, well before 1989.³⁰ Solidarity supported Lithuanian, Belarusian and Ukrainian dissidents during the 1980s,³¹ and then Solidarity-led governments of sovereign Poland supported the national aspirations of the eastern neighbours between 1989 and 1991.

The achievement of the Polish opposition was substantial, but it must be granted that this new paradigm for foreign policy was very much an elite phenomenon. (As we shall see, popular prejudices against Ukrainians are alive and well.) In Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine the emergence of such a consensus reconsideration of the national past was quite impossible, even at the level of elites. Dissidents were occupied by much more pressing concerns, such as preserving the national culture and staying out of prison. While Solidarity was able to send a message to the nations of the Soviet

Union from its national congress, individuals in the Soviet Union who wrote simple letters in reply were sent to Siberia for years of hard labour. When Lithuania, Ukraine and Belarus gained their independence in 1991, nationalists thus asserted the continuity of the national narrative in a much simpler way than their Polish interlocutors. Despite the welcome given to these newly independent nations by Polish foreign policy, the assertion of a coherent national narrative was still blocked by the history of Polish culture and power in the east. To varying degrees for each of Poland's three eastern neighbours, questions of religion, national minorities and assessments of historical events create ruptures in the national narrative and call forth not only intellectual but political attempts to somehow make the story whole and get the past right.

Lithuania and Poland: Chapters and Capitals

From its beginnings in the late nineteenth century, Lithuanian nationalism has been directed against Russian power and Polish culture. The first Lithuanian nationalists had to confront not only the absence of a Lithuanian state, but the dominance of Polish elites in the cities that would have to be included in any conceivable Lithuanian political community. Their national narrative began with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, whose capital was Vilnius. But before the First World War, Vilnius was a multinational city dominated by Poles and Jews, with only a tiny minority of Lithuanians (see Table 1). Lithuanian nationalists claimed the city nonetheless as their capital. When Lithuania and Poland gained independence after the First World War, both contested the city with Soviet Russia. Polish head of state Józef Piłsudski wished to create a federation of Poland and its eastern neighbours; Lenin and Trotsky hoped to expand the borders of the new Soviet state and spread revolution as far west as possible. The Bolsheviks granted the city to Lithuania in 1919 in exchange for permission to attack Poland through Lithuania. In 1920, Polish soldiers led by General Lucjan Żeligowski occupied Vilnius. Though the city was inhabited by very few Lithuanians, the inhabitants of the lands occupied by Żeligowski voted for accession to Poland, and the Entente confirmed Poland's eastern frontier in 1923, the Lithuanian state treated the seizure of Vilnius as an act of war. Lithuania opposed a plebiscite in Vilnius, arguing (in the words of a prime minister) that 'a nation is composed more of the dead than the living'. The importance of Vilnius to the Lithuanian national narrative could hardly be more evident. As the editor of *Lietuva* argued, 'to give up Vilnius would break the organic tie which links the present of Lithuania to its past'.³² Lithuania was willing to pay a high price for its insistence upon its version of history, remaining officially at war with Poland until 1938. Poles were

TABLE 1
NATIONAL POPULATIONS IN THE CITY OF VILNIUS

1897 Tsarist Russia (total population: 140,200)			
Lithuanian	Russian	Jewish	Polish
2.1%	12.2%	45.0%	37.8%
1931 Polish Second Republic (total population: 195,100)			
Lithuanian	Russian	Jewish	Polish
0.8%	insignificant	28.0%	65.9%
1989 Soviet Union (total population: 576,700)			
Lithuanian	Russian	Jewish	Polish
50.5%	20.2%	insignificant	18.8%

Source: On the basis of Piotr Eberhardt, 'Przemiany narodowościowe na Litwie w XX wieku', *Przegląd Wschodni*, Vol.1, No.3 (1991) pp.449–95.

popularly regarded as the greatest threat to Lithuania, and a stereotype of Poles as imperialists grew up to compensate for the loss of the historic capital.³³

Lithuania regained Vilnius as a result of the Molotov–Ribbentrop pact. The Soviet Union occupied eastern Poland in September 1939, and in October 1939 granted Vilnius and surrounding lands to Lithuania in exchange for an alliance and military bases. Vilnius was part of free Lithuania for a scant ten months, for the Soviet Union occupied the Baltic states in August 1940. The effect of Soviet and German occupation of Lithuania over the next five years was to effectively destroy the country's Jewish populations and reduce enormously its Polish population.³⁴ Because Soviet atrocities were aimed at national elites, Poles in Vilnius were particular targets. Tens of thousands were executed or exiled. At the end of

the war, the new Lithuanian Soviet Social Republic had an empty capital to fill. In the decades to come, Lithuanians poured into Vilnius, achieving an absolute majority sometime in the late 1980s.

Soviet rule confirmed the traditional Lithuanian attitude towards Poland. The simple possession of Vilnius was not enough to allay suspicions of future Polish aggression, and Lithuanians continued to decry the 'occupation' of Vilnius in 1920. Partly this served to distract from the holes in the national narrative while they were being filled; it took a long time to populate Vilnius with Lithuanians. Partly it was a protest against the remnants of Polish culture in Lithuania, the Polish peasants who continued to live south and east of Vilnius after the war and after the massive 'repatriations' of 1944–48 and 1956–58. But to a great extent the fact that Lithuanians continued to identify themselves in opposition to Poles had to do with obvious discontinuities in the cultural side of the national narrative, which no amount of demographic change could undo. The character of Lithuanian opposition to Soviet rule strengthened this emphasis upon the importance of cultural continuity, and thereby upon the dangers of Poland.

After Lithuanian armed resistance to incorporation into the Soviet Union was finally crushed in the 1950s, Lithuanian intellectuals faced a difficult choice. Given the necessity of accepting (once again) Russian power, many Lithuanian intellectuals chose to direct their attention to the protection of Lithuanian culture. As a rule, they joined the communist party, for without party membership no position of influence was attainable. Lithuanians managed to dominate the nomenklatura of their Soviet Republic, an unusual achievement.³⁵ They kept Russian migration at a far lower level than in their Baltic neighbours Latvia and Estonia. They published a large number of books in Lithuanian, and even ran a Lithuanian-language university. The language was nurtured as the fundament of national life, and the national history was tailored to meet the needs of the Lithuanian narrative. The Lithuanian nation was cast as an innocent victim, whose statehood and culture fell prey to powerful neighbours. Isolated from People's Poland and encouraged by Soviet propaganda, Lithuanians preserved their interwar stereotype of the imperialist Pole.³⁶ The elites who emerged to run independent Lithuania in 1991 gave voice to this preference for the 'true' Lithuanian past over the compromises of politics. Once in power, they tried to impose the national narrative upon the stubborn features of the present which defied its logic.³⁷ Poland was seen as the 'greatest threat' to Lithuania's present security because it presented the greatest problems for any such attempt.³⁸

The Polish minority was their first victim. Lithuanian nationalists tend to regard the Polish minority as polonized Lithuanians. On this line of thinking, national identity is treated as a question of race rather than of

history or personal choice. Appeals to race paradoxically help mend the national narrative, for if it is believed that minorities were 'truly' Lithuanian all along, there is less reason to worry about their presence on Lithuanian lands.³⁹ Re-lithuanizing them is also justified, for if Poles are 'truly' Lithuanian, they must be rid of their false national consciousness and returned their 'true' one. The rise of the Lithuanian national movement coincided with the rise of racist and anti-Polish groups such as Vilnijá, which made no secret of their desire to forcibly assimilate Poles.⁴⁰ The prominence of such views contributed to the indifference or hostility of most Lithuanian Poles to Lithuanian independence. Moscow cleverly played upon Polish reactions, encouraging Poles to organize themselves and claim territorial autonomy.⁴¹

After the coup in Moscow in August 1991 brought Lithuania international recognition as an independent state, Lithuanians turned on their Polish minority. On the very day (5 September 1992) that Poland recognized Lithuania, Lithuania dissolved the regional governments of Vilnius and Šalčininkai, where Poles form a majority.⁴² The reason given was that members of these councils had supported the coup in Moscow and had opposed Lithuanian independence, which was true. Lithuania imposed direct rule on these regions on 9 September 1992, three days before negotiations with Poland on a declaration of good relations were to begin. In these negotiations, the Lithuanians then refused to accept the Polish proposal that each side refrain from actions aiming to change the nationality structure.⁴³ Lithuanian authorities continued direct rule on the region for 18 months, citing various pretexts for not holding elections to replace the regions' councils.⁴⁴ In the meantime, Poland's requests that such elections be held were treated by Lithuanian Prime Minister Vytautis Landsbergis as 'interference in internal affairs', and international characterizations of the Lithuanian policy as directed against a national minority as 'incorrect', 'tendentious' and a manipulation by the Soviet communist party.⁴⁵ The Polish media, in Landsbergis's view, was 'conducting a strange campaign spearheaded against the government and parliament of the Lithuanian nation'. Though Poland had repeatedly renounced any claim to Vilnius or any other Lithuanian territory, its interest in the Polish minority earned it the labels 'nationalist' and 'expansionist' from the Lithuanian prime minister.⁴⁶ This approach delayed for several months a common declaration on good relations with Poland, though in the end the Poles accepted a simple promise that elections would soon be held.

At the same time, Lithuania began to argue that the initiation of normal relations with Poland would be contingent upon a Polish condemnation of General Żeligowski's 'occupation' of Vilnius in 1920. Over the course of several governments and even after the socialist victory in the general

elections of 1992, Lithuania continued to insist that Poland accept its account of the historical event. The Polish side consistently took the position that Poland had no claims to Vilnius or to any other Lithuanian territory, but that a state treaty was an inappropriate place for historical judgements (especially one-sided ones). Every attempt by Polish officials to question the Lithuanian account of Želigowski's 'occupation' of the 'Lithuanian capital' was met with cries of Polish imperialism.⁴⁷ Despite several promises by Lithuanian prime ministers, throughout 1993 the Lithuanian side stood by its insistence on a historical declaration. A treaty was finally signed in 1994, after the success of Zhirinovskiy in Russian parliamentary elections and the announcement of NATO's Partnership for Peace programme made clear to Lithuanians that the costs of delaying a treaty further were growing ever higher.⁴⁸

The presence of a Polish minority and the fact that Vilnius was part of Poland in the interwar period clearly stood in the way of a Lithuanian national narrative. The minority reminds Lithuanians of the continuity of a culture which had once deprived the Lithuanian people of their cultural elite. That the present-day capital of Vilnius was part of Poland between the wars recalls not only the historical life of Polish culture but the fact that Lithuania gained Vilnius as a result of the Molotov–Ribbentrop pact.⁴⁹ The Lithuanian national narrative must treat the Molotov–Ribbentrop pact as unjustifiable aggression, but this then draws attention to what Lithuania gained by it: Vilnius. Želigowski must be condemned, so it will be clear that Vilnius was 'really' part of Lithuania all along, and so that no one can say that Lithuania gained its capital as a result of an agreement with the Soviet Union after the Molotov–Ribbentrop pact.⁵⁰ Lithuanian nationalists were willing to pay a price for their attempt to persuade Poland to endorse their national narrative by condemning Želigowski. Numerous Polish citizens had supported Lithuanian independence by acts of charity, and Poland did more than any other state to bring Lithuania's plight to the attention of the world.⁵¹ Lithuania's relations with Poland were eventually regulated in 1994, but large reserves of goodwill were spent in the meantime.

Belarus, Lithuania and Poland: Boundaries and Borders

There are two ironies to Lithuanian accusations that Poland intended to reannex Vilnius and surrounding territories. The first is that at the very time that Lithuanians expressed such fears, Poland made clear that it had no such intentions, and meanwhile did more than any other state to support Lithuania and defend its case before the world. The second is that at the very time Lithuania was accusing Poland of revanchism, actual claims upon its territories were being made by another of its neighbours.⁵² Belarus, which

unlike Poland actually borders the Vilnius region and other territories in question, made clear its intentions to modify its borders with Lithuania in 1991 and 1992. Lithuanians generally disregarded these claims, believing that Belarus was simply acting as cat's paw for Russia. This is probably not a good reason to downplay Belarusian revanchism, and is disproved in any case by irredentist claims made by the Belarusian democratic opposition and Belarusian émigré groups as well as by Belarusian officials. In any case, it does not explain why Lithuanians preferred to dwell on imagined claims by Poland. The Lithuanian national narrative is simply not threatened by Belarusians as it is by Poles; the Lithuanians smile at Belarusian claims to be the real inheritor of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and sniff that the Belarusians have borrowed Lithuanian state symbols for lack of their own.⁵³

To the outside observer, this is not as clear as it is to Lithuanians, and a brief look at the history of the Belarusians may explain why their national narrative is so similar to that of the Lithuanians, and suggest why an independent Belarus might make claims upon the territory of its neighbours. Though slavs did not found the Grand Duchy, they far outnumbered Lithuanians. Many of the most important noble families of the Duchy spoke Belarusian, and old Belarusian became the realm's written language. The sixteenth century saw the peak of Belarusian literature, as the Bible was translated into Belarusian and original poetry and prose was composed in that language. The first books of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (founded in 1569) were printed in Belarusian. Belarusian language and culture did succumb to Polish after about 1650, and Belarusians would be careful to point out that many of the Lithuanian nobles who chose Polish culture had also been speaking not Lithuanian but Belarusian. At the time of the Third Partition in 1795, more than three quarters of Belarusians were Greek Catholics.

Almost all Belarusian territory was absorbed by the Russian Empire, and the encounter with the Russian state was fatal for Belarusian culture. The Greek Catholic Church was outlawed in 1839, and Belarusians had to choose then between Orthodoxy and the 'Polish faith', Roman Catholicism. A fragile Belarusian literary revival, led by men who also wrote in Polish, was stifled by Russian censorship. The few major works which appeared in the Belarusian language were published in Kraków. At the turn of the century, Vilnius became a magnet for Belarusian political activity.⁵⁴ A congress of Belarusians declared a republic in December 1917; they were promptly dispersed by the Bolsheviks. The Treaty of Riga (1921) which ended the Polish-Soviet War divided Belarus between the Soviet Union and Poland. In the 1920s, Soviet Belarus was allowed great cultural freedoms so as to increase discontent in Polish Belarus. The Polish state did its part, suppressing efforts to build up Belarusian schools and political

organizations.⁵⁵ Then deportations of Soviet Belarusians began in 1930, and by the end of the decade hundreds of thousands of Belarusians were in Siberia and hundreds of thousands more had been executed and buried in mass graves outside Belarusian cities. After the Second World War, the Soviet Union absorbed the rest of ethnically Belarusian territory from Poland.⁵⁶ Much to the surprise of Belarusian communists, however, the Vilnius region was passed to independent Lithuania in 1939; after the Soviet Union invaded the Baltics in 1940, Vilnius became the capital of the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic.⁵⁷ Stalin outlawed the Greek Catholic Church in 1946, purged the Belarusian party of Belarusians in 1945–48, and began a sweeping Russification of the entire republic.

Belarus lacked Lithuania's three barriers to sovietization: Belarusians were eastern-rite believers while Lithuanians were Roman Catholic; the Belarusian language was similar to Russian whereas Lithuanian was not; and the Belarusian party and educational system were Russified while Lithuanians dominated their own nomenklatura and built their own primary and secondary schools and even a university.⁵⁸ The number of nationally-conscious Belarusians today is very small, and Belarusian has been reduced to a predominantly rural language which rarely appears in written form.⁵⁹ The independent Belarusian state is itself in jeopardy, especially since the election of Aleksandr Lukashenka as president in 1994. Thus Belarusian nationalists face a much more difficult task than their Lithuanian counterparts, more difficult still because their only great political and cultural tradition was internationally known by the name 'Grand Duchy of Lithuania'.⁶⁰ The first demands of the nascent Belarusian national movement in 1988 were for truth about the national past and a return to the tradition of Belarusian statehood by a return to ancient symbols.⁶¹ Not incidentally, Belarus shares its coat of arms with Lithuania, and any attempt to retell the national narrative would require some claim upon the traditions of the Grand Duchy. In contesting those traditions, Belarusian nationalists initially took the offensive.⁶² They have claimed Lithuanian and Polish territories, and decried the hidden 'Polish imperialism' within the resurgence of Roman Catholicism in Belarus.

The first sign of Belarusian irredentism came in 1990, when the Belarusian Supreme Soviet responded to the Lithuanian declaration of independence by stating that it would contest the Vilnius region. This announcement, like the declarations of territorial autonomy by certain Lithuanian Poles, was part of Gorbachev's effort to frighten Lithuania. It is notable, however, for the response it evoked in other circles. The Belarusian movement 'Renewal' (which corresponded to Rukh in Ukraine and Sąjūdis in Lithuania) announced that while it did not approve of blackmail, it too was in favour of some changes in borders. The logic of the Supreme

TABLE 2
NATIONAL POPULATIONS ON THE LANDS OF THE CONTEMPORARY
BELARUSIAN REPUBLIC

1897				
Tsarist Russia*				
(total population: 6,424,200)				
Belarusian	Russian	Polish	Jewish	
67.8%	3.5%	13.0%	14.2%	
1931				
Poland and the Soviet Union				
(total population: 8,576,800)				
Belarusian	Russian	Polish	Jewish	
71.5%	5.6%	12.7%	8.4%	
1959				
Soviet Union				
(total population: 8,054,000)				
Belarusian	(Russophone)	Russian	Polish	Jewish
81.1%	(5.5%)	8.2%	6.7%	1.9%
1989				
Soviet Union				
(total population: 10,151,800)				
Belarusian	(Russophone)	Russian	Polish	Jewish
77.9%	(15.4%)†	13.2%	4.1%	1.1%

Notes:

* A very small portion of western Belarus was taken by Prussia in the Third Partition of Poland of 1795.

† Eberhardt's is a very conservative estimate, in that he counts only Belarusians who named Russian as their mother tongue in the last Soviet census. Most of the remaining 64.4% also speak Russian mainly or exclusively in daily life.

Source: On the basis of Piotr Eberhardt, 'Przemiany narodowościowe na Litwie w WW wieku', *Przegląd Wschodni*, Vol.2, No.3 (1992-93) pp.527-56.

Soviet's case must have been appealing: since everyone was condemning that Molotov-Ribbentrop pact, in which Belarusians had had no voice in any case, the territory of the Vilnius region should be subject to negotiations. This was consistent with the first issue of the independent

journal *Kontakt* in 1989, which called for a response to the national crisis from all ethnically Belarusian territories (including Vilnius), as well as with the positions of major Belarusian émigré publications in 1990.⁶³ These publications, and prominent members of the Belarusian opposition, also insist that Lithuania's Poles are actually Belarusians, and conclude that the regions in which they form a majority (Vilnius and Salcíninkai) should belong to Belarus.⁶⁴ In the summer of 1990, Belarusian oppositionists tried to persuade Lithuanians that a joint state would solve any border or minority problems. The Lithuanians declined, noting that Belarus was run by communists and knowing that they would be swamped in any common state.⁶⁵

The coincidence of official and unofficial irredentism was revealed again when Poland initiated negotiations in October 1990 on a declaration of good relations. The Belarusian delegation, composed of official diplomats and representatives of the democratic opposition, refused to accept the finality of the 1945 settlements. They made it known that they believed that all borders in the region were up for discussion, and Zianon Paźniak (a leader of the opposition) argued that Białystok (in northeastern Poland) was 'ethnic Belarusian territory'. Meanwhile, Belarusian oppositionists picketed the Polish consulate, demanding that Polish 'terror' against Belarusians in Poland be stopped, and claiming Białystok for Belarus.⁶⁶ The Belarusian government picked up on the issue, and began to issue its own criticisms of the Polish mistreatment of its Belarusian minority.⁶⁷ Yet after the Moscow coup of August 1991 and the declaration of Belarusian independence, Belarus was willing to sign a declaration which included a statement on the inviolability of present borders.⁶⁸

Claims to Lithuanian territory continued in 1991 and 1992, although Lithuanian authorities declined to take them seriously. In January 1992, Lithuanian Prime Minister Vytautas Landsbergis met with Belarusian Supreme Soviet speaker Stanislaus Šuškievič in Minsk. The two men agreed that the Polish minority in Lithuania is in fact composed of autochthonous inhabitants who consider themselves Polish only because of their Roman Catholic religion.⁶⁹ The political importance of such a statement was made clear by a declaration of Belarusian historians, writers and ethnographers that same month. They warned against a disadvantageous territorial settlement with Lithuania, motivating their concern by the presence of a Belarusian minority in Lithuania. They argued that Poles in Lithuania are actually Belarusians, who preserve Belarusian folklore and a natural Belarusian speech; they may choose to call themselves Polish, but their 'ethnocultural essence' remains Belarusian. They argued further that a more aggressive Belarusian policy might encourage ethnic Poles to change their minds. The borders could be changed, as all relevant treaties were invalid

under international law for failing to take Belarus into account and were concluded without its participation. The declaration concluded (shades of Danzig!) that Vilnius should be made a free city under the jurisdiction of the United Nations.⁷⁰ In February 1992, Belarusian Foreign Minister Piotr Kraučanka renewed Belarusian claims to Lithuanian territory before an astonished delegation from the European Community, saying he wished to record the claims before an international audience.⁷¹ This was to be the peak of Belarusian irredentism. A few months later, in July 1992, Belarusian and Lithuanian historians gathered in Herviaty, Belarus, to discuss the legacy of the Grand Duchy. After long and trying discussions, a fragile consensus emerged that both Belarus and Lithuania can lay claim to the traditions of the Duchy, each without prejudice to the other.⁷² In effect, this removed one of the major problems of the Belarusian national narrative, and allowed Belarusian nationalists to try to build a coherent national past without elbowing the Lithuanians aside. Belarusian nationalists have muted their claims to Lithuanian territories, and Belarusian governments have followed their cue. In 1993, Šuškievič took a crucial step, and sought to distinguish between national existence (of which history is the foundation) and the practice of state policy (for which close attention to national history is not always appropriate).⁷³

While pressing claims on Lithuania's territory and capital, Belarusian nationalists complained of Polish religious imperialism. Belarus has no national church, as the vast majority of the population are Orthodox (and thus associated with Moscow), and most of the remainder are Roman Catholic (and thus associated with Poland). The historic Belarusian national church was the Greek Catholic Church, but this institution was destroyed in eastern Belarus by the tsars and in western Belarus by Stalin. At present, Greek Catholicism is simply unknown to most Belarusians.⁷⁴ A handful of Belarusian nationalists have converted to Greek Catholicism, and in 1991 the Greek Catholic Church was finally registered in Minsk. These Belarusian Greek Catholics have *subordinated themselves* to a Ukrainian metropol rather than to the Polish Roman Catholic Episcopate, for fear of polonization.⁷⁵

Ever since the tsar forced Greek Catholics to choose between Orthodoxy and Polish identity in 1839, Polishness and Roman Catholicism have meant much the same thing in Belarus. Then as now, many of those who worship in Roman Catholic Churches have identified themselves as Poles, whether they spoke the Polish language or not.⁷⁶ At present, there are about one million Roman Catholics in Belarus, of whom 400,000 identified themselves as Poles in the last Soviet census. These numbers are disputed, as Belarusian nationalists claim that the Poles are in fact Belarusians, and the Poles claim that the remaining Roman Catholics are in fact Poles who

were afraid to say so.⁷⁷ The Roman Catholic Church has nurtured this dual identity by sending Polish priests to Belarus. Most Roman Catholic priests in Belarus are Poles, and mass is said in Polish in all but a handful of Roman Catholic churches. This is in accord with the wishes of believers: although many Belarusian Roman Catholics do not understand Polish well, they nevertheless generally prefer to hear it in church.⁷⁸ This is offensive to Belarusian nationalists, who believe (with reason) that Polish clergy bring Polish culture and Polish identity along with the language and the religion. When Pope John Paul II named Tadeusz Kondrosiewicz apostolic administrator of Minsk and Belarus in 1990, Belarusian nationalists protested that he gave mass solely in Polish in his Hrodna parish.⁷⁹ Though it has taken some time, the Vatican has become more sensitive to the need to respect Belarusian culture, and Belarusian-language masses are slowly being added to Polish-language masses.⁸⁰ The pope named Kazimierz Świątek to replace Kondrosiewicz in 1992, and Świątek promptly turned a page by forbidding priests and parishioners from decorating churches with the symbols and attributes of a foreign state.⁸¹

This quarrel, like the one over Białystok, is fading into a past in which Belarusian nationalists thought that they had the resources to fight enemies beyond the Russian state and Russian culture. Belarusian patriots now recognize that their major problem is that the vast majority of their compatriots identify with Russian culture and Russian history: in short, that they accept the Russian national narrative instead of the Belarusian one.⁸² As the question has become one of the simple survival of Belarusian independence, Poland has taken on a more positive image as a reformed and western alternative to Russia. Belarusian officials, however, continue to treat Poland as a traditional menace, with precisely the hope of convincing Belarusians that they have no alternative to integration with Russia.⁸³ The Russian language communist press has called nationalist leader Zianon Paźniak both a Jew and a Pole.⁸⁴ When Paźniak stopped in Poland in May 1996 on his way to apply for asylum in the United States, the leader of the Belarusian parliament remarked that 'Poland has always oppressed Belarus'. He went on to claim that the birth of Belarusian consciousness is the work of the Soviet Union.⁸⁵ A few days later, a delegation from the Polish trade union Solidarity was expelled from Belarus.⁸⁶ As President Lukashenka dismantles the Belarusian state, the debate about Poland has become one pivot of the debate about the Belarusian future.

Ukraine and Poland: Cupolas and Candour

Unlike the Lithuanian national opposition, the Ukrainian national opposition never captured the state. Unlike the Belarusian national

opposition, the Ukrainians did gather the broad masses of the population behind Ukrainian independence, and manage to impose much of their agenda on the former communists who held power from 1991. In Lithuania, governing nationalists were able to act out their version of the national narrative in foreign policy, delaying the signing of a treaty with Poland for years. In Belarus, governing elites have remained pro-Russian, and have tried to manipulate the anti-Polish sentiments of Belarusian nationalists to serve their cause. In Ukraine, the governing national communists have striven from the beginning to protect their nation's independence from Moscow. National communists and nationalists alike have resisted the Russian national narrative, which claims for Moscow the right to rule the three nations of Ruś (Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians) who were dispersed from the mediaeval state of Kievan Ruś. Ukrainians claim Kievan Ruś as the cradle of their own nation. Facing serious threats of secession and wishing to prevent pretexts for Russian intervention from arising, they have also worked to protect the cultural rights of minorities. Ukrainian nationalists, though some harbour anti-Polish sentiments, do not face a domestic 'Polish question' on the scale of those of their Lithuanian or Belarusian counterparts. Poles make up 7 per cent of the population of tiny Lithuania, and 18 per cent of the population of Lithuania's capital Vilnius. They constitute 4 per cent of the population of an uncertain Belarusian nation. In Ukraine, Poles make up no more than 0.5 per cent of the population, and are scarce even in the large cities where they once formed a majority, such as Lviv. Though Polish culture was once dominant in Ukraine, nationalists and national communists agree that since the Second World War Russian culture has proved to be the greatest danger. The Lithuanians successfully rebuffed Russian culture; the Belarusians yielded and must now start from scratch; the Ukrainians stand somewhere in between: they now must return a living but tarnished language to education, literary creation and urban life.

Neither the Belarusians nor the Lithuanians can boast of a national religion which distinguishes them sharply from their neighbours. The Lithuanians are Roman Catholic, even if some nationalists consider Christianity tainted with Polishness and flirt with the paganism abandoned only in the fourteenth century. Though Lithuanian nationalists have some quarrels with the Vatican, in their own state they are able to turn religion against Polish culture.⁸⁷ Three quarters of Belarusians are Orthodox and thus subordinate to the patriarch in Moscow, a situation distasteful to the handful of Belarusian nationalists who have tried to resurrect the Greek Catholic Church. Greek Catholicism was also outlawed in the Ukraine in 1946, but survived underground to make a remarkable comeback in the late 1980s, winning legalization in late 1990.⁸⁸ Although smaller than the Russian

Orthodox Church and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church and extant only in western Ukraine, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church has perhaps the best claim to be a national institution.

Because the Greek Catholic Church uses the eastern rite and is subordinate to the pope in Rome, it is theoretically vulnerable to two kinds of assimilatory pressures. Although Pope John Paul II and certain other important Polish clerics are regarded as friendly to Greek Catholicism, Ukrainian nationalists in Lviv have felt it necessary to protect their Church from an expansion of (or undue subordination to) Roman Catholicism. When Pope John Paul II officially restored the Greek Catholic hierarchy in January 1991, he followed traditional practice and made the metropol of Lviv subordinate to the primate of Poland.⁸⁹ This aroused the ire of Ukrainian nationalists, who noted that this practice dated from a time when Ukraine was stateless. In February 1991, Viacheslav Chornovil, the leader of the Lviv regional government and later Rukh's candidate for president, protested the manner in which the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Ukraine was being restored. In particular, he objected to the fact that the proposed archbishop of Lviv (Marian Jaworski) was a Pole, and that the archdiocese of Lviv was to be subordinate to the Polish primate. The Lviv city government echoed this protest in March 1991, and protesters picketed the Polish consulate demanding that Jaworski be sent back to Poland. Jaworski fled the scene, only to return in May to be installed as archbishop in a secret ceremony. The Vatican defended its actions on the grounds that it had never accepted political interference in its appointments. Although this was technically a dispute between Ukrainians and the Vatican, Polish officials tended to take the side of the pope and thereby strengthen Ukrainians' perceptions that their national institution par excellence was under siege. As one Ukrainian writer quite rightly pointed out, Poles would have a similar reaction if asked to accept the authority of German bishops in Wrocław or Gdańsk.⁹⁰

The tendency of the postwar Polish national narrative to disregard Ukrainians' claims to equality and to treat Ukrainians as a threat (discussed above) was all the more visible in events in Przemyśl, just across the border in Poland. Until the time of the postwar 'repatriations', Ukrainian Greek Catholics had worshipped in St. Teresa's Cathedral in Przemyśl. The Ukrainian character of the church had been unquestioned under Austrian rule and in interwar Poland, and both of its wartime bishops had died a martyr's death in the Soviet Union. In 1947 this Ukrainian cathedral was passed to the Roman Catholic Church, who gave it to the order of Barefoot Carmelite monks. A law of May 1989 returned church property to its postwar users, and made no distinction between the Roman and Greek Catholic Churches. The Barefoot Carmelites thus came into legal

possession of the former St. Teresa's, which they and the Poles of Przemyśl (now over 90 per cent of the city's population) know as St. John the Baptist's. Ukrainians in Przemyśl and Lviv were incensed that their claims to the building had no force of law. The Roman Catholic Bishop of Przemyśl, Ignacy Tokarczuk, agreed in February 1991 to give the use of the church to the Greek Catholics for five years. This sparked the creation of a 'Social Committee to Defend the Polish Church', whose members picketed Tokarczuk's residence. Their protest was supported by conservative political parties and by the local Solidarity committee, and it continued despite appeals from local clergy, the Polish episcopate, and finally the pope himself. In April 1991, days before a Ukrainian was to take up his appointment as metropol of Przemyśl in St. Teresa's, Poles from the 'Social Committee' occupied the building. He was installed as Greek Catholic metropol in a Roman Catholic church. Poles continued their occupation through May, until it became clear that the Vatican would concede to their wishes. In a June 1991 visit to Przemyśl, the pope gave the Greek Catholics another church as their cathedral, and restored the St. Teresa's/St. John the Baptist's to the Carmelites. Though the Greek Catholics eventually received some 250 churches in Poland, they lost the one with (arguably) the greatest national significance.⁹¹ Insult was soon added to injury. In November 1992, the Carmelites began the (illegal) demolition of their church's copula, infuriating Ukrainians and earning a reproach from the Polish episcopate.⁹² In 1995 the Carmelites again began to reconstruct the copula, once again causing protests in Lviv.⁹³

The controversies in Lviv and Przemyśl say more about Poland than about Ukraine. It is unsurprising that Ukrainians would defend the national institution with real historical continuity, especially given that this institution is seen by many as a national church. Polish behaviour shows both sides of the fear-laden stereotype of Ukrainians which is implicit in the postwar national narrative of a western Poland: they are to be ignored if possible, and to be treated as culturally inferior if necessary. The Przemyśl protests carried a heavy dose of national arrogance, as they were designed to 'protect' the city from an ostensible threat of 'ukrainization'. As argued above, in this stereotype we may see the success of the communists in justifying Poland's shift to the west, and in deporting or dispersing its remaining Ukrainian minority. To return St. Teresa's to the Greek Catholics (or to accept that Roman Catholics in Ukraine should have their own bishop in Kiev) would have meant accepting not only the equality of the Ukrainian people, but the historical reality of their presence in Poland.

The second major dispute between Poland and Ukraine also has to do with the assignation of guilt for crimes during and after the Second World War, but in this case it is the Ukrainian national narrative which is at risk

and Ukrainian nationalists who contort history in order to protect it. In February 1990, a congress of the Union of Ukrainians in Poland articulated a demand of most Ukrainian nationalists in calling for Poland to officially condemn Operation *Wisła*.⁹⁴ The upper chamber of the Polish legislature passed such a resolution in August 1990. Most Poles expected that this would bring some sort of gesture from the Ukrainian side with respect to the ethnic cleansing of Poles by Ukrainians in 1942 and 1943 in Galicia and Volhynia, which preceded Operation *Wisła*. No such response was forthcoming, either before or after the Ukrainian declaration of independence in December 1991. A treaty on good relations with Poland was ratified in September 1992, after a long debate over Operation *Wisła*. Ukrainian deputies found the delay of the lower chamber of the Polish legislature, the Sejm, in condemning Operation *Wisła* 'impossible to understand'. The Ukrainian foreign minister managed to persuade deputies not to delay ratification until such a resolution was passed, assuring them that *Wisła* was in 'the field of view' of Ukrainian diplomacy.⁹⁵ In fact, the Polish Sejm's delay was easy to understand: Poles believe (with good reason) that the cleansing of Poles by Ukrainian nationalist forces (the UPA) during the Second World War is a crime of at least the same scale as Operation *Wisła*, and were awaiting some gesture from independent Ukraine in this regard.⁹⁶ In 1993, it became clear that important Ukrainians simply did not believe that these crimes had been committed.⁹⁷ When Polish Prime Minister Hanna Suchocka visited Kiev that January, Ukrainian deputies pressed her on Operation *Wisła* while refusing to comment on crimes committed by Ukrainians against Poles.⁹⁸ In February in Kraków, the chair of the foreign affairs committee of the Ukrainian parliament again called for the Sejm to condemn Operation *Wisła*, and said that Ukrainians would then apologize in their turn. But he then made it clear that he did not know what Ukrainians would apologize for: 'We will never accept as truth the lies and calumnies spread by Soviet historians about the UPA. The UPA is part of, and the pride of, Ukraine'.⁹⁹

This is the heart of the matter. These Ukrainian nationalists are now honoured as martyrs for independence, and fill a crucial place in the Ukrainian national narrative. For Ukrainians, these nationalist units are heroic anti-Soviets, and their exploits comprise 'a major constituent of beliefs, transcending history, which form their identity'.¹⁰⁰ As the leading scholar of this question noted, 'It is impossible not to acknowledge that [these battles against the communists] bequeathed to the Ukrainian people a legend of the struggle for independence'.¹⁰¹ Ukraine may have been stateless for all but a few months of the twentieth century, but the existence of these nationalist organizations proves that Ukrainians wanted independence, and were thwarted only by the machinations of a superior

power. To accept that these same people slaughtered innocent civilians by the tens of thousands would weaken this crucial part of the narrative, fragile enough already. This example also demonstrates one of the ways in which nationalists deal with Soviet historiography: when it paints an undesired picture of an important incident in national history, it can be dismissed as 'lies and calumnies'.

Qualifications and Conclusions

Nevertheless, inter-state relations between Poland and Ukraine have been very good. It is not my contention that disagreements about the national narrative must be associated with problems of international relations, only that costly foreign policies may furnish evidence that the national narrative is a sincere belief rather than a hoax put over on electorates. It is entirely possible to decide in advance that the national narrative should be kept separate from foreign policy (as in the case of Poland, which has not insisted that Ukrainians accept the truth about wartime ethnic cleansing), or to decide that further pursuit of the national narrative is simply too costly (as in the case of Lithuania, feeling threatened by Russia and drawn to NATO). On the other hand, political leaders may have non-nationalist motives for risking national conflict. Pro-Russian Belarusian leaders are clearly unmoved by the gaps in the Belarusian national narrative, and Belarusian irredentism must be explained with reference to Soviet policy and then by attempts to discredit Belarusian nationalists. Belarusian nationalists supported official revanchism, but only in a very limited sense can they be seen as its cause. Political problems are a signal that questions of national identity may be at stake, but no simple correlation between such problems and rifts in national narratives should be assumed.

The attempt by nationalists to establish a coherent national narrative should also be distinguished from the history of violent conflict between two nations. To take one example, all observers agree that the Polish-Ukrainian conflict has been far bloodier than the Polish-Lithuanian conflict. Poles occupied Vilnius in 1920 without firing a shot, but fought Ukrainians house to house in 1919 for Lviv. In the interwar period, Ukrainians met Polish denial of their national claims with violent terrorism. Poland and Lithuanian were technically at war during the interwar period, but there were no engagements on any scale. There were some battles between the Polish Home Army and Lithuanian collaborators during the Second World War, but these pale in comparison to the massacre of Polish civilians in 1942-43 and the deportations and dispersal of Ukrainians in Poland that followed. If the simple tradition of national conflict were a good predictor of national problems between independent states, one would

FIGURE 1
SOME WAYS IN WHICH NATIONAL NARRATIVES COHERE



expect Polish–Ukrainian relations to be far worse than Polish–Lithuanian relations. The opposite has in fact been the case. Yet if nationalists seek to render national narratives coherent rather than simply settle old scores, this outcome is not surprising. At the end of the twentieth century, Poland is far more important to the Lithuanian national narrative than to the Ukrainian.

The cases of Poland, Lithuanian, Belarus and Ukraine provide good evidence that attempts to assert national identity involve efforts to render a national narrative coherent. The preferred form of such coherence is a continuous state tradition. Absent that, the rifts in the state tradition must be explained, and more attention is paid to culture. Where there is no continuity of cultural traditions (such as a national language, a national literature or a national church), discontinuities must be mended. Weaknesses in both the political and cultural side of the narrative will be explained in terms of malevolent neighbours, and the nation will be found ethically faultless whenever it pursues a course of action which improves the narrative (see Figure 1). Although the chosen beginning and desired end of the narrative may change over time (as in the case of postwar Poland), this general scheme holds in the case of each nation. On such an account, real events in history matter a great deal, insofar as they are the necessary foundation of the national narrative. The creativity of nationalists also comes into play, though they are not free to manipulate symbols as they wish. On these examples, it appears that nationalists are bound to defend a certain pattern of national history.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Professors Andrzej Paczkowski and Andrzej Walicki for their comments, and participants in the November 1996 conference on 'Recasting Social and Political Identities in Europe' of the University of Colorado, Boulder, for their reactions. This essay was written during my tenure as a junior fellow at the Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen in Vienna.

NOTES

1. A typical survey would include Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso Books, 1983); John Armstrong, *Nations before Nationalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1983); John Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1982); Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983); Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds) *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Anthony Smith, *Theories of Nationalism* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1983).
2. By 'nationalists' I mean anyone who believes that they belong to a nation, and that this nation deserves a national state. These beliefs may be held by a small group of intellectuals, as in Belarus; be widespread but not completely dominant, as in Ukraine; or be generally accepted, as in Lithuania or Poland. On the basis of a number of historical case studies, the Czech sociologist Miroslav Hroch postulates a three-stage model for the spread of nationalist ideas. See his *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
3. This position borrows from that of a Polish student of modern nationalism, Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz. See my 'Kazimierz Kelles-Krauz (1872–1905): A Pioneering Scholar of Modern Nationalism', *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol.3, No.2 (July 1997).
4. A complete treatment of the national identity of these peoples would have to include a lengthy discussion of Russia. The importance of Russia will be evident at various points, but Russia will not play a major role in any of the examples to come. I have chosen these four states because they have much less to do with each other now than they once did, and thus problems which arise from attempts to complete national narratives (as opposed to those which arise from running political disputes understandable in terms of interests) should therefore be more readily distinguishable as such.
5. This 'reversal of poles' argument is made by Taras Kuzio, in Monika Agopowicz, 'Początek końca pieriestrojki?' (interview with Taras Kuzio), *Kultura*, 514–15 (July–August 1990), p.126.
6. On blood links and Soviet national narratives, see Roman Solchanyk, 'Politics and the National Question in the Post-Shelest Period', in Bohdan Krawchenko (ed.) *Ukraine after Shelest* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1983), pp.18–19. Another example of the use of such categories was the 'scholarly' attempt to prove that Hungarians in Ukraine were 'racially' slavic. See John A. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism* (Englewood: Ukrainian Academic Press, 1991), p.134.
7. This has been observed and chronicled by Tomas Venclova. For an enlightening essay on the Lithuanian case, see his 'O problemie stereotypu litewskiego', in Teresa Walas (ed.) *Narody i stereotypy* (Kraków: Międzynarodowy Centrum Kultury, 1995), pp.77–84.
8. For some examples, see Mykoła Riabczuk, 'Od 'Małorosji' do 'Indoeuroy': stereotyp 'narodu' w ukraińskiej społecznej świadomości i myśli społecznej', in Walas (ed.) *Narody i stereotypy*, p.114.
9. Andrzej Kamiński, 'Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and its Citizens', in Peter Potichnyj (ed.) *Poland and Ukraine: Past and Present* (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1980), pp.48–50.
10. Ilya Prizel, 'The Influence of Ethnicity on Foreign Policy: The Case of Ukraine', in Roman Szporluk (ed.) *National Identity and Ethnicity in Russia and the New States of Eurasia* (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 1994), p.106; Ryszard Torzecki, *Polacy i Ukraińcy: Sprawa*

- ukraińska w czasie II wojny światowej na terenie II Rzeczypospolitej* (Warsaw: PWN, 1993), p.11.
11. For political appeals full of useful documentary and photographic evidence, see Emil Revyuk (ed.) *Polish Atrocities in Ukraine* (New York: United Ukrainian Organizations of the United States, 1931); V.J. Kushnir, *Polish Atrocities in the West Ukraine* (Prague: Nemeč, 1931).
 12. The greatest tragedy which took place on Polish soil during the Second World War was of course the German attempt to exterminate European Jewry. The place of Jews in Eastern Europe will not be treated in any depth in this article. For a suggestion of some of the problems, see my 'A Polish Socialist For Jewish Nationality' *Polin*, xii (1999).
 13. Andrzej Paczkowski, *Pól wieku dziejów Polski, 1939–1989* (Warsaw: PWN, 1996), 147. For interesting reflections on Poland's boundary changes, see Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), volume 2, pp.492–535.
 14. Stanislaw Grabski, a National Democrat, exemplifies one pole of the debate. He valued Poland's west far more than its east, and as negotiator at Riga after the Polish–Soviet war of 1919–20 effectively told the Soviets to take more Belarusian and Ukrainian territory than they demanded. The treaty that resulted split Belarusian and Ukrainian lands between Poland and Soviet Russia, thus ending any hope of the east European federation advocated by certain men of the left. The most articulate of these was Leon Wasilewski: see his *Litwa i Białoruś* (Warsaw: Morkowicz, 1925).
 15. Jan T. Gross, *Revolution from Abroad: The Soviet Conquest of Poland's Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), pp.18–31.
 16. The best source on the totality of the Polish–Ukrainian wartime conflict is Torzecki, *Polacy i Ukraińcy*. On the resettlement of Ukrainians, see the sources presented in Eugeniusz Miśiło, *Akcja 'Wisła'* (Warsaw: Archiwum Ukraińskie, 1993); and Stefan Zabrowarny, 'Polityka narodowościowa polskich władz komunistycznych w kwestii ukraińskiej', in Jacek Pietraś and Andrzej Czarnocki, *Polityka narodowościowa państw Europy Środkowowschodniej* (Lublin: Instytut Europy Środkowowschodniej, 1993), pp.127–48.
 17. Czech, 'Nie tylko Łwów i Przemyśl', p.79; Vasył Markus, 'The Religious Situation of Ukrainians in Poland and Poles in Ukraine', in Potichnyj (ed.) *Poland and Ukraine*, p.136.
 18. One such text, authorized for use in high schools and technical schools, was published by the Polish ministry of defense. Jan Gerhard, *Luny w Bieszczadach* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Obrony, 1974).
 19. The argument about the use of old stereotypes is developed by Danuta Sosnowska, 'Stereotypy Ukrainy i Ukraińca w literaturze polskiej', in Walas (ed.) *Narody i stereotypy*, pp.126–30. On literary traditions, see also Prizel, 'The Influence of Ethnicity', p.114.
 20. This was of course the basic line of Soviet historiography, as well. Solchanyk, 'Politics and the National Question', p.479.
 21. John Basarab, 'Postwar Writings in Poland on Polish–Ukrainian Relations', in Potichnyj (ed.) *Poland and Ukraine*, p.249.
 22. There were some honorable exceptions. Zbigniew Wójcik attempted to teach his readers that Ukrainians had indeed suffered greatly under Polish rule during the old Commonwealth. See his *Dzikie Pola w Ogniu* (Warsaw: Wiedza Powszechna, 1962), especially pp.281–2.
 23. Józef Lewandowski, 'Polish Historical Writing on Polish–Ukrainian Relations During World War Two', in Potichnyj (ed.) *Poland and Ukraine*, pp.232–3, and 237–42; Roman Szporluk, 'The Role of the Press in Polish–Ukrainian Relations', in Potichnyj (ed.) *Poland and Ukraine*, 223. This is not to say that all works absolving the communists of blame were official histories. Edward Prus was not a member of the party. The point is that he was allowed to publish in sizable editions, while other views received much less support. See Edward Prus, *Operacja Wisła* (Wróclaw: Nortom, 1994).
 24. One of Jaruzelski's ministers, Włodzimierz Oliwa, was known for scapegoating Ukrainians. Boris Bej, 'Ukraińcy w Polsce', *Kultura* 429 (June 1983), p.125. For the reflections of Adam Michnik, see Roman Solchanyk, *Ukraine: From Chernobyl to Sovereignty. A Collection of Interviews* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), p.64.

25. John Basarab argues for the continuity of this attitude in Basarab, 'Postwar Writings', p.249. His view is confirmed by survey results. In June 1992, for example, 53 per cent of Poles surveyed named Ukraine as the country most likely to threaten Poland. Prizel, 'The Influence of Ethnicity', p.111. For a survey of January 1992 with similar results, see 'Ukraine Seen as "Most Dangerous Neighbor"', Warsaw PAP in English, 14 February 1992, in *FBIS-EEU*, 18 February 1992, p.31. The continuity of this fear is also evidenced by the fact that Polish authorities considered prosecuting the author of a study of Polish-Ukrainian relations on the grounds that the work could inflame national hatred. Regarding this work (Michał Siwicki, *Dzieje konfliktów Polsko-Ukraińskich* (Warsaw: Tyrsa, 1992), see Stanisław Podemski, 'Książka na ławie oskarżonych?' *Polityka*, 14 December 1996, p.87.
26. Prizel, 'The Influence of Ethnicity', p.108. For a widely-read example, see Władysław Serczyk, *Historia Ukrainy* (Wrocław: Ossolińskich, 1979).
27. As early as 1972, Father Jan Żeja (later to be a member of KOR) preached a sermon in the Warsaw Cathedral on the eastern neighbours. He told the assembly that Poles had wronged Lithuanians, Belarusians and Ukrainians, and should ask for forgiveness. He also said that Poles cannot be free while their neighbours are enslaved, and that the liberation of Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine is a matter for Poles. In December 1980, Jacek Kuroń argued before Warsaw students that an independent Poland is impossible without an independent Ukraine. (Interestingly, while the Polish regime 'exposed' other activists as Jews, it called Kuroń a Ukrainian). In January 1981, Polish farmers in the Bieszczady mountains named among their demands the restoration of the old Ukrainian names of towns and villages. On these three incidents, see respectively Jacek Kuroń, *Wiara i wino: do i od komunizmu* (London: Aneks, 1989), p.347; Taras Kuzio, 'The Polish Opposition and the Ukrainian Question', *Journal of Ukrainian Studies*, Vol.12, No.2 (Winter 1987), p.26; Timothy Garton Ash, *The Polish Revolution: Solidarity* (London: Granta 1991), p.133.
28. The most influential text was perhaps Kazimierz Podlaski, *Białorusini, Litwini, Ukraińcy*, which was published illegally several times from 1983 and received Solidarity's cultural award in 1985.
29. In particular, see Juliusz Mieroszewski, 'Polska "ostpolitik"', *Kultura* 309 (June 1973); and Juliusz Mieroszewski, 'Rosyjski "kompleks polski" i obszar ULB', *Kultura* 324 (September 1974).
30. Ilya Prizel, 'Warsaw's Ostpolitik: A New Encounter with Positivism', in Ilya Prizel and Andrew Michta (eds), *Polish Foreign Policy Reconsidered* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), pp.96-102. For an interview with Adam Michnik, Solchanyk, *Ukraine: From Chernobyl to Sovereignty*, pp.59-61. Interestingly, the KPN - which in almost every respect was the far right of the Polish opposition - was very supportive of Ukrainians independence.
31. On Ukraine, see Taras Kuzio, 'The Polish Opposition', pp.26-58. As Kuzio reported (p.48), 'The Polish opposition has grasped the initiative to launch a wide-ranging debate dealing with the entire breadth of Polish-Ukrainian relations. The overwhelming majority has declared its support for a Polish-Ukrainian alliance, the rights of national minorities, and the recognition of existing frontiers'. See also Stephen R. Burant, *Poland's Eastern Policy, 1990-1995: The Limits of the Possible*, Paper Prepared for the 27th National Convention of the AAASS, 27 October 1996, p.28. On Belarus, see Włodzimierz Brylewski, 'Kronika białoruska', *Kultura* 416 (May 1982), p.130; Józef Darski, 'Kronika białoruska', *Kultura* 471 (December 1986), p.96; and Antoni Pospielaszki, 'Kościół katolicki i białoruski odrodzenie', *Kultura* 505 (October 1989), p.99.
32. For these quotations, see A.E. Senn, *The Great Powers, Lithuania, and the Vilna Question 1920-1928* (Leiden, 1966), pp.55 and 144. This is an altogether excellent account.
33. 'Poles were defined as occupiers, thieves, traitors, liars, criminals, who thought of one thing only: how to most quickly polonize and annex Lithuania by whatever means necessary'. Greta Lemanaitė, 'Stereotyp Polaka w oczach Litwina', in Walas (ed.) *Narody i stereotypy*, p.92.
34. 96 per cent of Lithuanian Jews were killed, the highest proportion in Europe. John F.

- Crossland, 'A Difficult Enquiry Into Lithuania's Holocaust Bears Grisly Fruit', *International Herald Tribune*, 22 March 1994.
35. E. Żagiell, 'Kronika litewska', *Kultura* 508–9 (January–February 1990), p.128.
 36. See Lemanaitė, 'Stereotyp Polaka', 135; Jacek Borkowicz, 'Polska – Litwa: Ukryte bariery porozumienia', *Polska w Europie* 12 (June–September 1993), pp.34–5; Alicja Nagórka, 'Języki – narody – kultury', *Lithuania* 5 (1991), p.194; Stephen R. Burant and Voytek Zubek, 'Eastern Europe's Old Memories and New Realities: Resurrecting the Polish-Lithuanian Union', *East European Politics and Societies* 7:2 (Spring 1993), p.375. I develop this idea at greater length in Tim Snyder, 'National Myths and International Relations: Poland and Lithuania, 1989–1994', *East European Politics and Societies*, 9:2 (Spring 1995).
 37. For some striking examples, see 'Litwa i Polska: Ankieta', *Znak* 442 (March 1992), pp.30–31; Bogdan Szlachta, 'Liczę na młodzież: Rozmowa z Vytautisem Landsbergisem', *Znak* 442 (March 1992), 5.
 38. 'Poland Termed "Greatest Threat"', Warsaw *Słowo Powszechne* in Polish, in Foreign Broadcast Information Service: Soviet Union (hereafter FBIS-SOV), 27 November 1991, p.36. The interview was with the Lithuanian defence minister.
 39. Assertions that Poles in Lithuania are 'racially' Lithuanian have found their way into prominent Lithuanian academic studies, even those intended for a Western audience. See Algirdas Budreckis, 'Demographic Problems of Vilnius Province', in Algirdas Budreckis (ed.) *Eastern Lithuania: A Collection of Historical and Ethnographic Studies* (Chicago 1980), pp.314–15. This sort of claim eerily echoes the traditional Russian claim that Polish nobility in Lithuania were in fact ethnic Russians. More generally, this kind of argument from 'autochthony' – the assumption that migration matters little and that some sort of racial identity remains stable for centuries – was a staple of Soviet archaeology for some time. For illuminating examples, see Neil Ascherson *Black Sea* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1995), pp.43–4, 75–6.
 40. Poles came to believe that Lithuanian nationalists wanted them to assimilate or emigrate. This pressure was all the more frightening, given that Poles in Lithuania associate Lithuanian nationalism with the onset of Soviet and Nazi rule. See the anthropological study by Lech Mróz, 'Problemy etniczne w Litwie wschodniej', *Przegląd Wschodni*, 1:3 (1991), p.497, the survey by Thomas S. Szayna, 'Ethnic Poles in Lithuania and Belarus: Current Situation and Migration Potential' (Rand Monograph, 1993), and the summary of Piotr Lossowski, 'The Polish Minority in Lithuania', *The Polish Quarterly of International Affairs* Vol.1, No.2 (Summer–Autumn 1992), pp.73–4. After Lithuanian independence, Vilnij boasted deputies, ministers and a state subsidy. See Józef Szostakowski, 'Vilnija podsumowała to, czego dokonała', *Kurier Wileński*, 25 March 1992, reprinted in *Biuletyn Informacyjny* (Wspólnota Polska), Wydanie specjalne, June 1992, pp.80–81; Józef Darski, 'Kronika litewska, białoruska i ukraińska', *Kultura* 532–3 (January–February 1992), p.148.
 41. On these declarations, see Piotr Lossowski, 'The Polish Minority in Lithuania', *The Polish Quarterly of International Affairs* Vol.1, No.1–2 (Summer–Autumn 1992), pp.75, 80–81; Stephen R. Burant, 'Polish-Lithuanian Relations: Past, Present and Future', *Problems of Communism* (May–June 1991), p.80; V. Stanley Vardys, 'Lithuanian National Politics', *Problems of Communism* (July–August 1989), pp.60, 80; Edward Krzemień, 'Dwa nacjonalizmy', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 18 January 1992, reprinted in *Biuletyn Informacyjny* (Wspólnota Polska), Wydanie specjalne, June 1992, pp.17–18; Anatol Lieven, *The Baltic Revolution: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Path to Independence* (New Haven, 1993), p.168.
 42. 'Polish Councils Disbanded: Area Under Direct Rule', Tass World Service in English, 9 September 1991, SWB/SU, 14 September 1991; Radio Vilnius, 12 September 1991, SWB/SU, 14 September 1991. People who consider themselves Poles make up 7 per cent of Lithuania's population; their total number is about 260,000. Vilnius region does not include Vilnius city.
 43. Maja Narbutt, 'Polacy na Litwie – Kalendarium konfliktu', *Rzeczpospolita*, 11–12 April 1992, reprinted in *Biuletyn Informacyjny* (Wspólnota Polska), Wydanie specjalne, June 1992, pp.9–10.

44. At various times, reasons given were that communists were behind the drive for elections, that Poles in Lithuania were not mature enough to vote for themselves, that elections would bring 'politics' into reforms such as privatization, that elections could not be trusted to bring 'authentic' representation, and so on. In the meantime, the Lithuanian foreign ministry and parliament ignored a report of the Helsinki Commission for Human Rights, which called the dissolution of the regional councils an unacceptable example of applying collective responsibility, and called for immediate elections. Lithuanian deputies also occasionally charged Poland with oppressing its own Lithuanian minority. These charges are contradicted by statements of the Lithuanian minority in Poland. See Grażyna Strumiłło-Miłosz, 'Litwini w Polsce' (interview with Eugeniusz Pietruszkiewicz, president of the Association of Lithuanians in Poland), *Kultura* 546 (March 1993), pp.93-104; E. Żagiell, 'Kronika litewska', *Kultura* 422 (November 1982), p.96.
45. 'Landsbergis on Relations with Poland', Lithuanian Radio, 25 September 1991, Summary of World Broadcasts/Soviet Union, 27 September 1991. (Hereafter cited as SWB/SU).
46. 'Landsbergis Accuses Poland of Being "Nationalist and Expansionist"', Tass World Service in English, 23 September 1991, SWB/SU, 25 September 1991.
47. For examples, see 'Deputy says relations with Poland are unsatisfactory: Ambassador disagrees', Lithuanian Radio, 7 April 1993, SWB/SU, 9 April 1993; 'Polish ambassador accused of "anti-Lithuanian" comments', Radio Vilnius, 6 May 1993, SWB/SU 10 May 1993; 'Foreign Ministry protests to Poland over "distorted" history', Radio Vilnius, 20 April 1994, SWB/SU, 23 April 1994; 'Polish Foreign Ministry refutes Lithuanian allegations over history text', PAP, 21 April 1994, SWB/SU, 25 April 1994.
48. To follow the importance of international events on the decision to sign a treaty with Poland which lacked a historical declaration, see 'Brazauskas, political parties discuss NATO at foreign policy meeting', Radio Vilnius, 15 October 1993, SWB/SU, 20 October 1993; 'President Brazauskas subscribes to US view of European security', Radio Vilnius, 25 October 1993, SWB/SU 1 November 1993; 'Brazauskas meets ambassadors of NATO countries; keen on closer NATO ties', Lithuanian Radio 24 November 1993, SWB/SU, 2 December 1993; 'President Brazauskas addresses Seimas on foreign policy', Lithuanian Radio, 22 December 1993, SWB/SU 29 December 1993; 'Lithuania asks to join NATO', *RFE/RL News Briefs*, 27 December 1993-4 January 1994; David White, 'Lithuania applies to join ranks of NATO', *Financial Times*, 5 January 1994. On the conservative opposition's role, see 'Brazauskas, political parties discuss NATO at foreign policy meeting', Lithuanian Radio, 15 October 1993, SWB/SU 20 October 1993; 'Seimas resolution on foreign policy', Lithuanian Radio, 29 December 1993, SWB/SU, 3 January 1994. Lithuanian President Brazauskas and Foreign Minister Gylys were still hard pressed by the Lithuanian parliament. See *Rzeczpospolita*, 21 April 1994, SWB/SU, 23 April 1994; 'President views normal relations with Poland as "indispensable"', BNS in English, 22 March 1994, SWB/SU, 28 March 1994; 'Premier and foreign minister on relations with Russia and Poland', Lithuanian Radio, 30 March 1994, SWB/SU, 9 April 1994; 'President Brazauskas refers to 1920 events in speech at treaty signing', Lithuanian Radio, 26 April 1994, SWB/SU, 28 April 1994; 'Foreign minister defends Polish-Lithuanian treaty against criticism', BNS in English, 14 March 1994, SWB/SU, 19 March 1994.
49. That Lithuanians make precisely this connection is clear in a number of public statements. See, for example, 'Deputy demands historical assessment of Żeligowski by Poland', Lithuanian Radio, 13 October 1992, SWB/SU, 16 October 1992.
50. In the words of one Lithuanian scholar, 'Due to Żeligowski's act of aggression, Poland ruled Vilnius for 19 years, but in moral terms this act of aggression has remained forever in the eyes of the world a testament to the fact that justice and truth were on Lithuania's side and not with the Poles'. Kazimieras Graužinas, 'Lithuania's Conflict with Poland over the Territories of Vilnius and Suvalkai', in Budreckis (ed.) *Eastern Lithuania*, p.509.
51. For assessments, see Burant, 'Polish-Lithuanian Relations'; Jan B. de Weyenthal, 'Economic Issues Dominate Poland's Eastern Policy', *RFE/RL Research Report*, 5 March 1993; Burant and Zubek, 'Eastern Europe's Old Memories'.
52. This irony is discussed by Stephen Burant, 'Belarus and the Belarusian Irredenta in Lithuania', *Nationalities Papers* (forthcoming) p.1.

53. In 1993, the Lithuanian foreign minister cautioned his Belarusian counterpart not to speak of Belarus as the heir of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. See 'Belarusian Foreign Affairs Minister Continues Visit', Vilnius Elta News Bulletin in English, 3 September 1993, in FBIS-SOV, 8 September 1993. For recent Belarusian historiography of the Grand Duchy, see Naš Radavad: Materyjaly miznarodnaj navokovaj kanferencyi 'Čarkva i kul'tura narodau vjalikaha knjastva Litouskaha i Belarusi', Hrodna 1992–93.
54. Belarusians were then a small minority of the city's population, but then again so were Lithuanians. Many representatives of the first generation of both Lithuanian and Belarusian nationalists hailed from Polish-speaking families. Piotr Eberhardt, 'Struktura narodowościowa Polski północno-wschodniej w latach trzydziestych XX wieku', in Małgorzata Giżejewska and Tomasz Strzembosz (eds) *Spoleczeństwo białoruskie, litewskie i polskie na ziemiach północno-wschodnich II Rzeczypospolitej w latach 1939–1941* (Warsaw: Instytut Studiów Politycznych Polskiej, 1995), p.49.
55. For a Belarusian account, see Aleksiej Litwin, 'Problem Białorusi w oficjalnej polityce polskiej w latach 1918–1939', in Giżejewska and Strzembosz (eds) *Spoleczeństwo białoruski, litewski i polskie*, pp.17–31.
56. With the exception of territories around Białystok.
57. Belarusian communists saw Vilnius as a crucial part of the national inheritance, and many of them had devoted their careers during the interwar period to the Belarussification of the city. See Mikołaj Iwanow, 'Sprawa przynależności Wilna i problemy narodowościowe na Białorusi', in Giżejewska and Strzembosz (eds) *Spoleczeństwo białoruskie, litewskie i polskie*, pp.17–31.
58. Whereas in Lithuania the communist party was patriotic in its way, in Belarus the party lacks even a patriotic substitute for the old nomenklatura. The Belarusian party structure remains largely unchanged since 1991.
59. For a pessimistic estimate of the number of nationally conscious Belarusians (5000), see Mieczysław Jackiewicz, 'Białoruś dziś i jutro' (interview with Aleś Kraucewicz, historian and activist of the Democratic Party of Belarus), *Kultura* 580–81 (January–February 1996), p.89. For a research note on the prospects for the language (not spoken in urban homes), see Siarhiej Dubawiec, 'Białorusini chcą, by było jak przedtem' (interview with Valerijus Cekmon, director of the department of slavic linguistics at the University of Vilnius), *Kultura* 576 (September 1995), p.127.
60. Thus when Belarusian officials mention that Vilnius is the historical capital of their country as well, the claim is met with incomprehension as well as fears of revanchism. See Vilnius *Tiesa* in Lithuanian, 15 March 1994, in FBIS-SOV, 23 March 1994. For an optimistic but very informative account of the resurgence of Belarusian historiography, see Rainer Linder, 'Nationsbildung durch Nationsgeschichte. Probleme der aktuellen Geschichtsdiskussion in Weissrussland', *Osteuropa*, 44:6 (June 1994), pp.578–90.
61. Józef Darski, 'Kronika białoruska', *Kultura* 492 (September 1988), pp.115–17.
62. This argument is pursued in Burant, 'Belarus and the Belarusian Irredenta in Lithuania', p.23.
63. On *Kontakt*, Józef Darski, 'Z lektury czasopism białoruskich', *Kultura* 505 (October 1989), p.106. On émigré opinion, Józef Darski, 'Kronika litewska, białoruska i ukraińska', *Kultura* 520–21 (January–February 1991), p.146; see also Józef Darski, 'Kronika białoruska', *Kultura* 477 (June 1987), pp.85–9.
64. For an English-language statement of a Belarusian patriot, see 'Interview with Vintsuk Vyachorka', *Uncaptive Minds*, Fall 1991, p.41. On the Supreme Soviet announcement and these reactions, see Burant, 'Belarus and the Belarusian Irredenta in Lithuania', pp.4–7; Józef Darski, 'Kronika litewska, białoruska i ukraińska', *Kultura* 512 (May 1990), p.87.
65. Józef Darski, 'Kronika litewska, białoruska i ukraińska', *Kultura* 517 (October 1990), p.120.
66. On these negotiations, see Józef Darski, 'Kronika litewska, białoruska i ukraińska', *Kultura* 519 (December 1990), pp.103–4.
67. Tadeusz Kosobudzki, 'Stracone szanse', *Kultura* 560 (May 1994), p.19.
68. On this visit of communist Prime Minister Kiebič to Warsaw, see Tadeusz Kosobudzki, 'Stracone szanse', *Kultura* 560 (May 1994), p.19; Jan Zaprudnik, *Belarus: At a Crossroads*

- in History* (Westview: Boulder, 1993), p.216. In February 1992 Poland and Belarus signed treaties on transit and education, and in March 1992 Belarus asked for Poland's help in a bid for a temporary seat on the UN Security Council. In April 1992, Kiebič again travelled to Warsaw and signed more agreements. See Tadeusz Kosobudzki, 'Stracone szansy', *Kultura* 560 (May 1994), p.20; and Zaprudnik, *Belarus: At a Crossroads in History* (Westview: Boulder, 1993), p.216.
69. Zaprudnik, *Belarus*, p.221.
 70. This summary from Burant, 'Belarus and the Belarusian Irredenta in Lithuania', pp.7–9.
 71. Józef Darski, 'Kronika litewska i białoruska', *Kultura* 535 (April 1992), p.106; Burant, 'Belarus and the Belarusian Irredenta in Lithuania', 1995, p.1.
 72. Burant, 'Belarus and the Belarusian Irredenta in Lithuania', 1995, p.11. On recent improvements in relations, see Bohdan Cywiński, 'Gdy imperium sięga Bugu', *Rzeczpospolita*, 21 April 1996, p.16.
 73. For an important address of 27 July 1993, see 'My przyjdziem da Belarusi', *Narodnaja hazeta*, 29 July 1993, p.1.
 74. Siarhiej Dubawiec, 'Białorusini chcą, by było jak przedtem' (interview with Valerijus Čekmon, director of the department of slavic linguistics at the University of Vilnius), *Kultura* 576 (September 1995), p.125.
 75. Józef Darski, 'Kronika litewska, białoruska i ukraińska', *Kultura* 532–3 (January–February 1992), p.149.
 76. As Piotr Eberhardt notes, many of those who identified themselves as Poles in the nineteenth century did not speak Polish, so the contemporary situation is not as strange as it may seem. Eberhardt also points out that these Belarusian Poles have suffered greatly for their choice, generation after generation, and that willingness to risk death or deportation is a good reason to take this Polish national identity seriously. Piotr Eberhardt, 'Przemiany narodowościowe na Białorusi w XX wieku', *Przegląd Wschodni*, Vol.2, No.3 (1992–93), pp.527–56.
 77. On the position of the Polish minority, see Nikolaj Iwanov, 'Die Polen Weissruslands', *Osteuropa*, Vol.44, No.5 (May 1944), pp.472–82. One of the first demands of the Union of Poles in Belarus was a new census.
 78. For a vivid first-person account, see Anne Applebaum, *Between East and West: Across the Borderlands of Europe* (London: Macmillan, 1995), pp.100–106.
 79. Józef Darski, 'Kronika litewska, białoruska i ukraińska', *Kultura* 512 (May 1990), p.86.
 80. Józef Darski, 'Kronika litewska, białoruska i ukraińska', *Kultura* 532–3 (January–February 1992), p.149.
 81. Zaprudnik, *Belarus*, p.218.
 82. On this point, see Dubawiec, 'Białorusini chcą, by było jak przedtem', 128. For some revealing anecdotes, see Jacek Hugo-Bajder, 'Białoruskie upiory', *Gazeta Magazyn* 182 (30 August 1996), pp.6–9.
 83. Lukashenka meanwhile proposed that Poland build a direct rout from Belarus to Kaliningrad, so that the Russians would not have to pass through Lithuania. The idea of such a 'corridor' (shades of Danzig, once again) was immediately rejected in Warsaw. See 'Nie będzie "korytarza"', *Rzeczpospolita*, 1 March 1996, 6; 'Nie ma sprawy "korytarza"', *Rzeczpospolita*, 15 March 1996, p.7.
 84. Aleksander Antipenka, 'Współczesny Białorusin (przeżywający kryzys etniczny)', in Walas (ed.) *Narody i stereotypy*, p.98.
 85. Maja Narbutt, 'Niece ufać Warszawie', *Rzeczpospolita*, 4–5 May 1996, p.1.
 86. Jan Krauze, 'Nouveaux signes de raidissement du régime en Bélorussie', *Le Monde*, 16 May 1996, p.3.
 87. Józef Mirski, 'Smutna sprawa w Wilnie', *Kultura* 468 (September 1986), pp.103–6.
 88. Mass rallies of as many as 200,000 pressed for this outcome. Czech, 'Nie tylko Lwów i Przemysł', p.78.
 89. Czech, 'Nie tylko Lwów i Przemysł', pp.79–80. The pope did make the Przemysł diocese of the Greek Catholic Church directly subordinate to the Vatican rather than to the Polish primate. Dominik Morawski, 'Polsko-ukraińskie zgrzyty', *Kultura* 546 (March 1993), p.119.

90. Czech, 'Nie tylko Lwów i Przemysł', pp.81–6. See also Burant, 'Poland's Eastern Policy', p.7.
91. This figure from J.F. Brown, *Hopes and Shadows: Eastern Europe after Communism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), p.208. Ukrainians in Przemysł had been thinking for years about the possibility of their cathedral being restored to them. See Boris Bej, 'Ukraińcy w Polsce', *Kultura* 429 (June 1983), p.125.
92. Morawski, 'Polsko-ukraińskie zgrzyty', p.118.
93. 'Ukraina: demonstracja w sprawie Przemysła', *Rzeczpospolita*, 3 May 1996, p.7. This article noted that the church had belonged to the Ukrainian Greek Catholic church 'for a certain time', which is misleading. The church had been Ukrainian until 1947, when it was taken by force.
94. For the text, see 'Do społeczeństwa polskiego', *Kultura* 415 (June 1990), pp.47–8.
95. Bogusław Bakula, 'Z prasy ukraińskiej', *Kultura* 544 (January–February 1993), p.130; Józef Darski, *Ukraina* (Warsaw: Sorograf, 1993), p.73.
96. In the view of one student of the question, 'The present rehabilitation and glorification of the UPA (the registration of the Volhynian Brotherhood UPA on 9 March 1992, treating UPA combatants as soldiers) as well as of Bandera's group, though understandable in the context of the rebirth of traditions of struggle with the Soviets, for Poles who are not presented with a clear position on the question of the slaughter, forms an impenetrable barrier on the road to understanding and forgiveness'. Józef Darski, *Ukraina* (Warsaw: Sorograf, 1993), p.69.
97. Conferences of historians have made progress on other issues, but this one seems to defy the kind of compromise that Belarus and Lithuanians found on the question of the ownership of the traditions of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. See for example 'Konferencja Polsko-Ukraińska', *Kultura* 562–3 (July–August 1994), pp.69–74.
98. Ilya Prizel, 'Warsaw's Ostpolitik: A New Encounter with Positivism', in Ilya Prizel and Andrew Michta (eds), *Polish Foreign Policy Reconsidered* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), p.112. On this visit, see also the somewhat varying accounts in 'Suchocka Signs Economic Agreements With Belarus', Warsaw PAP in English, 19 November 1992, in FBIS-EEU, 19 November 1992, p.16; Bohdan Osadczyk, 'Ukraina i sąsiedzi: łatanie dziur', *Kultura* 546 (March 1993), pp.116–17; Tadeusz Gawin, *Ojcowizna. Odrodzenie polskości na Białorusi, Grodno and Lublin* (Fundacja Pomocy Szkołom Polskim na Wschodzie im Tadeusza Goniewicza, 1993); Tadeusz Kosobudzki, 'Stracone szanse', *Kultura* 560 (May 1994), pp.18–19; Jan B. de Weydenthal, 'Economic Issues Dominate Poland's Eastern Policy', *RFE/RL Research Report*, 2:10 (5 March 1993), p.24; Mirosław Czech, 'Polska i Ukraine: działanie i rozmowy', *Kultura* 547 (April 1993), p.87; and Prizel, 'The Influence of Ethnicity'.
99. Czech, 'Polska i Ukraine: działanie i rozmowy', pp.92–3.
100. Armstrong, *Ukrainian Nationalism*, p.212.
101. Torzecki, *Polacy i Ukraińcy*, p.309.