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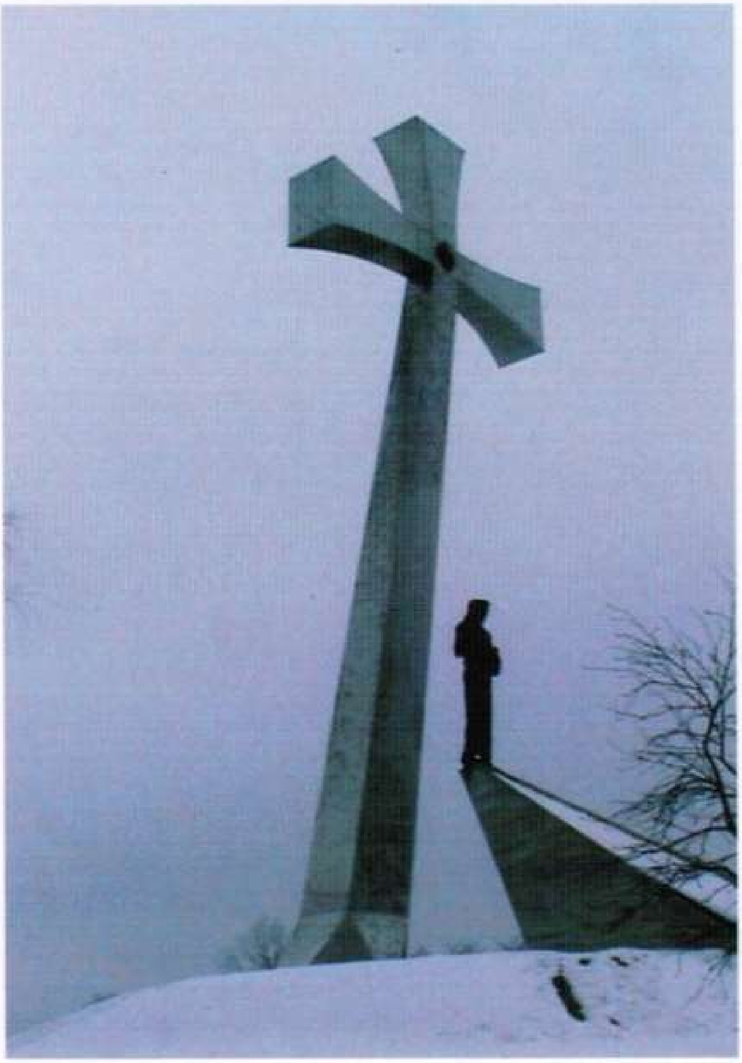
Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology

Nation and Religion

The Politics of Commemoration in South-East Poland

Juraj Buzalka



LIT

Nation and Religion

The Politics of Commemoration in South-East Poland

In this book Juraj Buzalka offers an ethnographic account and an anthropological analysis of the interplay between religion, politics and memory in the context of postsocialist transformations in south-east Poland. This interplay feeds on long histories of nationalism and the outcomes have major implications for Poland's integration into the European Union. Both majority and minority Catholic churches play a crucial role in constructing and maintaining the place of the past in present-day politics. The author draws attention to an alternative to the perspective of urban, middle-class, secular-liberal definitions of civil society and tolerance. He also offers an original conceptualization of 'post-peasant populism' in Eastern Europe, which is shown to be a type of modern populist political culture, strongly influenced by religion.

Buzalka's ethnographic focus is on the city of Przemyśl and its rural surroundings. The overwhelming majority of the city's seventy thousand inhabitants identify themselves as Polish Roman Catholics. Following ethnic cleansing and state policies during and soon after World War II, ethnically Ukrainian Greek Catholics, together with a handful of Orthodox believers, now form a small minority. The Greek Catholic Church, although it was not legally banned in Poland during the socialist years, was effectively subordinated to the Roman Catholic Church and regained its independence only in 1991. At that time Przemyśl became known across Poland and abroad for nationalist tensions, played out in a national-religious struggle over ownership of a church that had served as a Greek Catholic cathedral until 1946.

The Ukrainian 'community of memory' which Buzalka studied during his fieldwork in 2003–2004 consisted predominantly of victims of the deportation of 1947 and of their descendants, who have been migrating back to this region since the late 1950s. State policies of multiculturalism, resulting in part from the expectations and stipulations of the European Union, and the promotion of tourism in a region perceived as 'exotic' by many Poles, are generating new forms of mutual accommodation. Tolerance is encouraged by a range of actors and organizations, who seek to mitigate Polish Roman Catholic dominance of the city's public sphere and to reverse the region's historical underdevelopment and marginalization. However, although conflicts have subsided in recent years, Buzalka shows that policies to revive 'multicultural tradition' tend to reinforce the exclusivity of national 'cultures'. This nation-based multiculturalism, in which the nations are virtually congruent with institutional religions, is quite unlike the plural, tolerant, everyday forms of conviviality characteristic of the agrarian era before the Second World War.

Buzalka concludes that religion and the populist mobilization and manipulation of the past are crucial in understanding contemporary social changes in Eastern Europe. His approach to political culture will interest political scientists, social historians and sociologists as well as anthropologists.

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Juraj Buzalka

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Cover Photo: The popular landmark of postsocialist Poland, the cross in the Tatar hill above Przemyśl (winter 2004) (Photo: Juraj Buzalka).

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Preface

Since 2003 the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology has supported scholars exploring changes in eastern Christianity in various postsocialist countries. The Greek Catholics of Central Europe have figured prominently in the first phase of this research, and Juraj Buzalka's project in south-east Poland is the first to come to fruition. Further volumes in this series will present the work of other members of his research group, whose topics were introduced in volume 11, *The Postsocialist Religious Question* (2006).

In this book Juraj Buzalka explores the relevance of religion for the anthropology of politics, particularly with respect to national identity and the consolidation of populist, 'organic' conceptions of the nation in the eastern borderlands of the European Union as it is presently constituted. The zone in which East Slavs and West Slavs have for centuries lived alongside each other and intermingled is ideally suited to allow an anthropologist to engage with and critique the master narratives of national historians. Besides exploring topics of lively debate in socio-cultural anthropology in recent years – notably the processes that underlie social memory – Buzalka addresses a wide range of other scholars, from ethnographers with a local or regional focus to sociologists and political scientists concerned with problems of postsocialist societies at the macro level and with the social bases of rural conservatism more generally.

The city of Przemyśl and its rural surroundings lie some five hundred kilometres from Poland's capital. Like other peripheral rural areas it has suffered economic hardship since the collapse of socialism. In the 1990s it also experienced some inflammatory incidents that pitted the minority Greek Catholics against the dominant Roman Catholic Church. To understand the role of religion in south-east Poland, however, it is necessary to look not only at the legacy of the socialist era but also at much longer histories of nation-building and uneven modernization. Elaborating on my own earlier work in this region but going far beyond it, Buzalka sets the religious-national tensions of the early postsocialist period in wider contexts and traces their deeper causes. He ploughs an original furrow through his focus on political culture.

In this part of Poland the end of socialism was marked by a revival of forms of politics rooted deeply in rural society and in the nationalist movements of the pre-socialist period. The changes that took place between the 1940s and the 1990s reduced the significance of the peasantry, suppressed one Catholic church, and denied the other, dominant Catholic church access to the public sphere. Yet a close inspection of the 'politics of commemoration' after 1990 shows that each of these factors retained its significance in one way or another. The term *politics of commemoration* is used broadly here. Buzalka investigates not only symbols and rituals but also the narratives and 'traditional social structure' that shape and sustain the collective memory. Both the Polish majority and the Ukrainian minority communities are tightly linked to their respective churches, and both have to come to terms with a long history of economic backwardness and the traumatic events that culminated in the expulsion of Ukrainians from the region in 1947.

Buzalka worked primarily with Greek Catholic, Ukrainian families. He shows how, in spite of considerable internal diversity, those families have been forged through recollections of violence into a single community of memory. Long before the end of socialism, Ukrainian deportees were being attracted back to the south-east through a nostalgic mythologizing of the rural homeland in the private sphere. In the public sphere, which was opened up to the 'religious nations' after the collapse of communism, collective national(ist) rituals are nowadays supervised by the clergy of the respective nationals. Private recollections and nationalist ideologies flow together in this 'fuzzy borderland', and some of the narratives of civil society activists differ little in substance from those of the newly dominant national ideologies.

Although the importance of the Roman Catholic Church for political life in Poland is well documented at the macro level, anthropologists have not hitherto investigated the micro-level functioning of this church in local society. Buzalka presents some intriguing village case materials, including an account of a local controversy over a Marian apparition, and gives examples of widespread anti-clericalism. He offers a detailed analysis of a sermon on Corpus Christi Day in which the Roman Catholic archbishop of Przemyśl warns against the dangers of a new, unbridled capitalism and a deterioration of Christian family values. Buzalka shows this to be consistent with Catholic social teaching since the nineteenth century. The church's moral critique of neoliberal capitalism is especially effective in this region, Buzalka argues, because of its economic marginalization.

Buzalka also makes a valuable contribution to current debates about tolerance and the tensions inherent within liberal multiculturalism. He contrasts spontaneous expressions of 'agrarian tolerance' by ordinary people in the past with new rituals in which leading clergymen and NGO intellectuals celebrate modern notions of multiculturalism. The contrast is exemplified by changes that have taken place in carol singing in the village of Krasiczyn, just outside Przemyśl. The new 'artificial tolerance' is based upon essentialized constructions of national cultures, which have been transmitted by teachers and priests alike. These constructions are in reality quite out of keeping with the lived interactions of the different communities over the centuries.

The religious identity of Greek Catholics has also been subject to repeated manipulations from above. Buzalka outlines the key phases of 'anti-syncretism', or systematic efforts to 'purify' this church of its western borrowings, efforts encouraged from Rome since Vatican II. Here, too, it seems that flexible processes of identity construction have hardened, though the purifiers (mostly young and well educated) still meet with opposition from believers who remain deeply attached to Latin accretions from over the centuries.

The phenomenon of 'ethno-revivalism' is conspicuous in postsocialist Poland, and in his penultimate chapter Buzalka gives a fine example with detailed ethnographic descriptions. A hitherto stigmatized 'other', the Ukrainian minority, is being turned into a valued commodity, perceived as existing close to nature, mysteriously oriental, an 'authentic' culture on Polish territory - and therefore attractive to tourists. If the multiculturalism of the liberal intelligentsia is 'artificial', then what we see in the Kupaly Night midsummer celebrations in the beautiful Wiar Valley is entrepreneurial, pagan pastiche, more postmodern than post-peasant. (Covering the event, Poland's only black journalist asks people what it is like to live in 'two cultures'.) The Christian ritual performed on the following day seems comparatively tame, yet the alleged 'deeper spirituality' of eastern Christianity can be reconciled with the antics of the young pagans for the purposes of ethno-tourism. Buzalka draws attention to the organic narratives favoured by some of the enthusiasts but observes that others distance themselves from the intensifying commercialization.

Although the details are specific to this borderland region, the issues Buzalka raises in this chapter are pertinent to Europe-wide debates about nature, heritage, and the problematic reification of culture. The same is true for his leitmotiv of 'post-peasant populism', which he believes is a pan-European phenomenon, independent of the extent to which small-scale cultivators have persisted as a social group numerically. The Polish case is merely more visible than others, such as that of neighbouring Slovakia, owing to the failure of the Polish socialist authorities to carry through collectivization. Even such apparently benign forms of tolerance as contemporary liberal multiculturalism may retain a malignant potential if they remain locked in organic fusions of nation, religion, and culture. Buzalka is not joking when he suggests that the pragmatic spirit of ordinary tolerance is better preserved in the inter-ethnic petty commerce of the bazaar than in festivals evoking a romanticized Habsburg Galicia.

The results of Poland's 2005 elections convincingly confirm Buzalka's diagnoses and hence the topicality and practical significance of this kind of anthropological approach to politics. The eastern boundary of the European Union has for the moment been fixed to include Poles and exclude Ukrainians. Some scholars believe this boundary to be a profound fault line separating the two 'civilizations' of western and eastern Christianity. One hopes that reading this book might lead such people to revise their opinions. If that is too optimistic, because the 'post-peasant' views that Buzalka exposes and criticizes are also deeply engrained in many scholars, then at least they will gain many new insights into the inter-ethnic relations of this border zone and the contingencies that have shaped them down to the present day. At the same time, this study draws fruitfully on several bodies of theoretical work, both inside and outside anthropology, and its implications are by no means restricted to Europe. It makes a contribution of enduring significance to political anthropology, particularly with respect to the links between religious and national identities and the manifestations of these links in political rituals and contested memories.

Chris Hann

Halle/Saale, November 2006

Acknowledgements

This book benefited from the advice and help I received from many people. My thanks go first to Professor Chris Hann at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology (MPISA), who not only shared his knowledge with me and helped me to clarify my arguments but also encouraged me to re-study the region in which one of his own field sites was located.

I received extremely important material and advice concerning the history of Przemyśl and south-east Poland from Stanisław Stępień, both in the field and during his subsequent visits to Halle. I also benefited greatly from discussions with the historian Professor Paul Robert Magocsi, whom I had the pleasure of meeting during his regular visits to MPISA. In Przemyśl, warm thanks go especially to Olga Hrińkiw, Eugeniusz Zawaleń, Bogdan Huk, Wojtek Kalinowski, Agnieszka Kluba, Andrzej Juszczyk, Volodymir Pilipovic, and Mikhailo and Kateryna Kozak.

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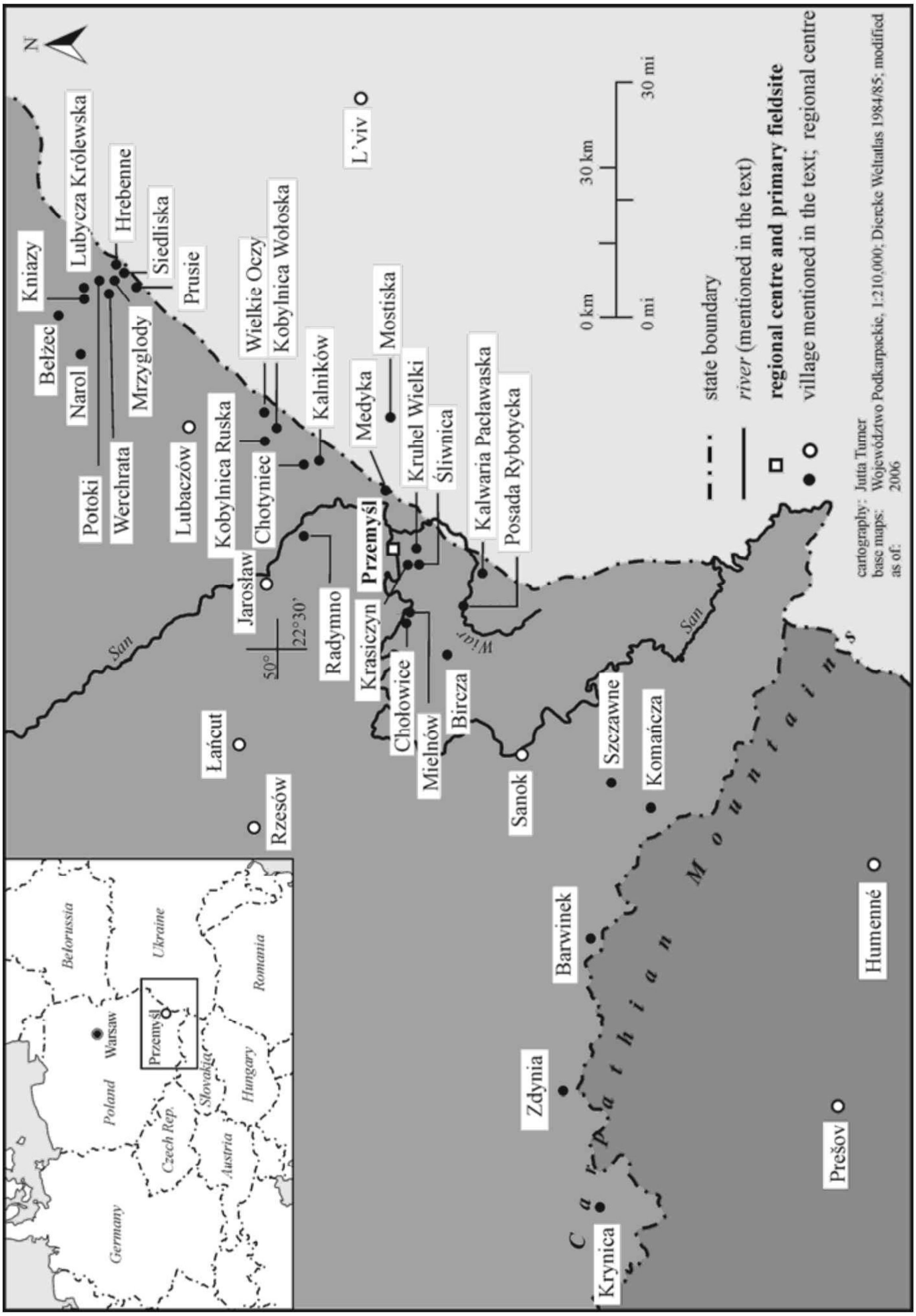
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Kobylnica Wołoska
Kobylnica Ruska
Chotyniec
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L'viv
Medyka
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Sanok
Szczawne
Komańcza
Barwinek
Zdynia
Krynica
Humenné
Prešov
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state boundary
river (mentioned in the text)
regional centre and primary fieldsite
village mentioned in the text; regional centre
cartography: Jutta Turner
base maps: Województwo Podkarpackie, 1:210,000; Diercke Weltatlas 1984/85; modified
as of: 2006
Germany
Poland
Warsaw
Przemyśl
Belorussia
Ukraine
Czech Rep.
Slovakia
Austria
Hungary
Romania

Map 1. South-east Poland

Chapter 1
Introduction: The Politics of Commemoration

> Nationalism, like any religion, calls into play not simply the will, but the intellect, the imagination, and the emotions. The intellect constructs a speculative theology or mythology of nationalism. The imagination builds an unseen world around the eternal past and the everlasting future of one's nationality. The emotions arouse a joy and ecstasy in the contemplation of the national god … For nationalism, again like any other religion, is social, and its chief rites are public rites performed in the name and for the salvation of a whole community.
>
> C. J. H. Hayes, *Nationalism: A Religion*

On 1 May 2004, the Third Polish Republic (Trzecia Rzeczpospolita), as Poland after 1989 was also known, became one of eight former socialist countries to join the European Union (EU). After elections held in the autumn of 2005, the politicians of the new coalition announced the Fourth Polish Republic. The newly elected president and the new prime minister of Poland expressed their thanks for the support of the Catholic, nationalist, and xenophobic Radio Maryja. In a country where more than 95 percent of inhabitants declare themselves to belong to the Roman Catholic Church, the new government announced a program of reforms in moral terms, called for historical and social justice, invoked patriotism, and proclaimed the moral recovery of Polish society.

Besides drawing on the past, the conservatives' political rhetoric showed a strong religious commitment. Catholicism legitimated their modernization program, most importantly through its appeal to continuity with moral times in the past, its historical safeguarding of an essentially Christian national tradition, and its support for socially sensitive policies. In the eyes of politicians as well as many ordinary Poles, Poland throughout the centuries had remained faithful to Latin Christianity, and Polish politics should count on this heritage. In December 2006, for example, forty-six members of the Polish parliament – 10 per cent of the lower house – submitted a bill seeking to proclaim Jesus Christ the king of Poland and to follow the path of the Virgin Mary, who was declared honorary queen of Poland in 1656.

Many analysts treat religion in Polish politics as a kind of Christian symbolism that does not influence the country's integration into the secular European Union. At best they see Catholicism as a part of the Polish national identity. But the religious beliefs, symbolism, and discourse underpinning Polish and European development do matter. The complex policies and ideas underlying this development reveal the necessity of looking at the role Catholicism plays in politics from a larger perspective.

Following earlier work in the anthropology of politics in Europe, I offer in this book an ethnographic account and an anthropological analysis of the interplay between religion, politics, and memory in the context of postsocialist transformations in south-east Poland. This interplay has implications for nationalism and the particular way in which Poland is being integrated into the European Union. Because the Catholic Church plays a crucial role as a guardian in politically driven commemorations resulting from postsocialist transformations, I also analyze the role of the church in postsocialist memories, along with the place of the past in present-day politics. I address the question of tolerance, focusing on religion to illuminate an alternative to the perspective inherent in urban, middle-class, secular-liberal definitions of civil society. Finally, I analyze what I call post-peasant populism in Eastern Europe, a type of modern populist political culture influenced by religion and based on rural social structures, ideologies, and narratives.

My ethnographic focus is a specific area of Poland. Formally united under one Catholic Church and holding Polish citizenship, people in Przemyśl, a city in south-east Poland, are divided according to nationality and religious rite. In contrast to the city's earlier multi-ethnic composition, a history of ethnic cleansing and state policies during and soon after World War II resulted in the overwhelming association of Przemyśl's seventy thousand inhabitants today with Polish Roman Catholicism. The only minorities are the Greek Catholic community and a tiny group of Orthodox believers, who together number two thousand ethnic Ukrainians. Although it was not legally banned, the Greek Catholic Church did not effectively function during the socialist years and regained its independence from the Roman Catholic Church, under whose umbrella it had existed during the socialist years, only in 1991. At that time Przemyśl became known across Poland and abroad for nationalist tensions that played out in national-religious battles over a church known to Roman Catholics as the Carmelite church. This church held enormous importance for Greek Catholics, for whom it had served as a cathedral until their church disappeared from public view in 1946.

The ‘community of memory’ I studied in 2003–2004 consisted predominantly of survivors of the state-led ethnic cleansing of 1947, who had been forced to leave their villages, and of their heirs, who have been migrating back to south-east Poland, especially Przemyśl, since the late 1950s as Ukrainians, most of them practicing Greek Catholicism. Today, state ideologies and policies of multiculturalism – resulting in part from conditions related to EU entry, the development of tourism, and the commodification of tradition – stress multicultural tolerance. Such tolerance is encouraged as a way of eliminating the prejudiced Polish Roman Catholic dominance of the city’s public sphere. Although conflicts have subsided, the revival of multicultural tradition sustains and promotes the construction of exclusive national ‘cultures’. This multinational multiculturalism, based on congruence between ethnic groups and institutional religions, is far from the plural, tolerant, everyday forms of conviviality that hark back to an agrarian era before World War II.

1.1 The Politics of Commemoration

Only a small part of politics involves the use of direct force; otherwise, politics is shaped through symbolic means (Kertzer 1988: 2). Especially in times of change, political leaders use symbolic and ideological tools to support and legitimate their power through images of continuity. Anthony P. Cohen (1975) saw legitimation as less important for directly increasing the power of leaders than for justifying the values expressed in their leadership. Legitimation, in this context, means ‘to persuade an “audience” that the empirical political order replicates the mythic order from which the values which structure the political relation are derived’ (Cohen 1975: 14).

The continuity with the past that counts in this legitimation often relies on people’s memories, which influence people’s identities. Memories and identities are not fixed things but representations or constructions of reality, subjective rather than objective (Gillis 1994). People continually revise their memories to suit their current identities within complex power relations that determine what is remembered (or forgotten), by whom, and to what end. At the same time, memory and identity ‘make’ their own politics (Gillis 1994: 3). In present-day south-east Poland, the politics of commemoration is determined by actual social-structural arrangements resulting from the social transformations of the twentieth century. These transformations resulted in the reproduction or re-invention of some characteristics of the agrarian world – the importance of the extended family, the importance of institutional religion, and the existence of rural nations nurtured by intellectuals and nation-states. Within this social structure, narratives of the politics of commemoration are catalysed through collective memory and are expressed and practised in commemorative rituals.

Obviously, the politics of commemoration is not static. To paraphrase John Gledhill (2000: 48), modern forms of politics have profoundly transformed the peripheries of Eastern Europe. The question is, what makes political modernity in this part of Europe – and other places outside the 'Western' core – different from that in idealized Western models? I believe an understanding of political symbolism, people's memories, and rituals in south-east Poland yields greater insights into this question than do the rational and interest-group explanations that are popular among non-anthropologists.

The key to understanding the politics of commemoration in south-east Poland lies in the peasant past and its contemporary structural and narrative residua. I call this 'post-peasantism', the most important and consistent institutional guardian of which is the Catholic Church.[1] Heeding Jack Goody's call for the reconsideration of religion as a primary element of identities, 'especially in places where ethnic cleansing motivated by religious factors has been fundamental to the establishment of nations' (Goody 2002: 11), and looking at religion and nation as influenced by the changes of modernization (van der Veer 1994a; van der Veer and Lehmann 1999), I argue that in south-east Poland the apparent exclusivity of nations has been substantially defined by religion, and it is again religion that can soften this exclusivity. The end of socialism made religion prominent in the public sphere, a phenomenon that further challenges simplifying theories of modernization that assume religion is confined to the private sphere.

Complementing my ethnography with findings from earlier research on rural south-east Poland (Hann 1985; Nagengast 1991; Lehmann 2001), and taking inspiration from the anthropology of political movements (Pratt 2003), I look especially at religious and national connections by combining a historical-structural account of the rise of nationalism (Gellner 1983) with recognition of the importance of experience, memory, and symbolism (Anderson 1983). Eric Wolf (1991) and others (Bax 1991; Swartz et al. 2005 [1966]) have suggested that religious and political institutions should not be studied separately, and although the analysis of meaning is important in the study of religion, the role of power should not be neglected.

Religion and politics come together in several interrelated domains. Although religion is often attributed to the intimate sphere, it is often very public as well, and thus is politically significant. Similarities between the agendas of religion and politics include an emphasis on group goals, a consciousness of desired ends, and the use of various forms of power (Swartz et al. 2005 [1966]: 107). Only if we look at religious ceremonies in terms of 'the processes by which the group goals are determined and implemented' and by which power is acquired are we studying politics (Swartz et al. 2005 [1966]: 107).

---

[1] 'Peasantism' was an ideology that emerged in Eastern Europe between the end of the nineteenth century and World War II. It focused on peasants (*chłopi* in Polish, *Bauern* in German), who were the electoral majorities in Eastern Europe (Ionescu 1969).

Relying on studies of European Catholicism, Mart Bax (1991) studied religious regimes in relation to state formation and observed that religious and state domains have much in common. Both have important functions in the spheres of social organization and cultural orientation; both develop policies towards nation-building and community-building; both contain structures for internal control and external defence; and both show significant internal cohesion, formal division of powers, and expansionist tendencies. The difference between them lies in the sources of their power: states have developed effective control over the means of violence and taxation, whereas most religious regimes have lost control over these power sources (Bax 1991: 11). In this book I focus more, to paraphrase Eric Wolf (1984: 1), on what religion does in terms of political outcomes and less on what it actually is.

Within interdisciplinary studies of memory (Olick and Robbins 1998), anthropological inquiry has concentrated on the collective and the social – on relations and practices that originate with the individual but 'are abstracted from the subject to the objectivized self and then to the collectivity of "social persons"' (Pine et al. 2004a: 9). Instead of focusing on cognitive and emotional mental processes, social anthropologists look at active social commemoration. They pay special attention to the role of commemoration in legitimating or delegitimating the social structure and to how, from a Durkheimian perspective, particular knowledge of the past is linked to the organization of a society (Devine-Wright 2003).

In this book I address memories initiated from two sources. The first anchors the past in relation to a place where a sense of historical continuity persists (Nora 1989). Historical cities such as Przemyśl, where I carried out most of my fieldwork, evoke what Michael Herzfeld (1991) characterized as 'monumental time' and what Jon Mitchell (2002) illuminated as monumental sites that nourish a particular sense of nostalgia. The second source of memory – on which I focus in greater detail – is past violence. Memories of violence are highly political and contested; they are recalled by individuals and groups especially when the memories are tied to national and religious policies and ideologies. Because the violence I look at was exercised on a people united by one criterion – religious-national belonging – it is appropriate to apply a view of memory as 'collective representation'. This perspective was developed by Maurice Halbwachs (1980 [1950]), who wrote about the 'collective memory' of a society, and extended by the memory studies of researchers such as Paul Connerton (1989), who included the human body as a site for recalling the past, and Jan Assmann (1995), who developed the concept of 'cultural memory'. Iwona Irwin-Zarecka (1994) used the expression 'community of memory', which corresponds well to the concept of memory used in this book. Because a violent past is commemorated in south-east Poland, and because the collective memory associated with that past is underpinned by traditional power structures and identities, any dissenting or disruptive individual memories are pushed into politically less significant realms or forms.

To date, scholars writing about the importance of the past after socialism have stressed that memories under socialism were kept in opposition to state history, and consequently these memories served as raw material for the legitimation or contestation of history after socialism (Watson 1994; Kaneff 2004; Pine et al. 2004b). In socialist Poland, however – more significantly than in any other communist country – the interpretation of an alternative, legitimate past has been safeguarded by the Catholic Church. Especially in regions such as south-east Poland, the development of a successful 'political religion' of the Soviet type (Lane 1981), alternative to traditional Catholicism, is difficult to imagine. It was the memory safeguarded by the Catholic Church that was able, as Rubie Watson (1994: 10) put it, 'to externalize communism'. This became even more apparent after 1989, when the church heavily influenced the new moral order and the ways in which the past was interpreted.

The memories I deal with often take forms observable in commemorative ceremonies. Anthropologists usually understand such ceremonies as rituals. Ritual can be characterized as a 'rule-governed activity of a symbolic character that draws the attention of its participants to objects of thought and feeling they hold to be of special significance' (Lukes 1975: 291). David Kertzer (1991: 87) saw ritual as having four political ends: organizational integration, legitimation, construction of solidarity, and inculcation of political beliefs. He also noted that ritual channels emotions, guides cognition, organizes social groups, and, by providing a sense of continuity, links the past with the present and the present with the future (Kertzer 1988: 9–10).

What is important to remember is that people are not just simple followers of symbols in ritual but are also creators of ritual. This makes ritual a powerful tool for political action (Kertzer 1988: 12). As Sherry Ortner commented (1984: 154), 'to study the reproduction of consciousness, mystified or otherwise, in the processes of ritual behaviour is to study at least one way in which practice reproduces the system'. Jon Mitchell (2002) saw ritual as expressing and accommodating ambivalence towards social changes. Because rituals are historical events and can evoke tradition and continuity, they can also lead to change (Kelly and Kaplan 1990: 141). Taking into account the omnipresent ritualistic and symbolic dimensions of politics (Kertzer 1988), ritual's reflection and expression of wider societal changes (Boissevain 1984, 1992), and the work of researchers who have pointed out the importance of the rites of rulers and opposition movements under socialism (Lane 1981; Kubik 1994;) and postsocialism (Holy 1996), I analyze political change in south-east Poland through an examination of ritual.

As Pine, Kaneff, and Haukanes (2004b) noticed, political and religious movements often involve the evocation of and appeal to the past: 'At particular times and in particular places, either religion or politics or both may determine the major focus of national identity, individual belief and commitment, and either or both may define the major fields of social and cultural practice' (Pine et al. 2004b: 2). Resulting from, depending on, and reflected by the politics of commemoration, the phenomenon operationalized as political culture (see Skalník 2000) or as a political movement (Pratt 2003), which I recognize as post-peasant populism, emerges from a strong sense of collective identities legitimated by ideologies perceived as being based on tradition. These ideologies are safeguarded predominantly by the Catholic Church in Poland.

In analyzing the politics of commemoration in everyday life, therefore, I aim to combine the structural, symbolic, and narrative qualities of power relations, their links to people's memories, and the way these structural, symbolic, and narrative aspects of politics result from major historical transformations. In the rest of this chapter, I first offer a brief historical-structural view of social transformations in Eastern Europe and south-east Poland – a more comprehensive account is provided in the following chapter – and then turn to post-peasant populism.

1.2 Social Change, Anthropology, History

In this book I apply an 'everyday' perspective on social change (Hann 1994b), a perspective that dates back to E. E. Evans-Pritchard's (1962) account of the need to include 'sociological' history in anthropology and to Eric Hobsbawm's (1971, 1972) remarks about the necessity of integrating general models of social structure and change as observed by historians with specific, actual phenomena as studied by anthropologists. An anthropological endeavour of this kind was well developed in the work of Eric Wolf, who stressed the importance of historical research, especially in his *Europe and the People without History* (1982; see also Wolf 2001).

In terms of social transformations in Eastern Europe, anthropology has seen two major areas of interest: peasant studies and studies of ethnicity (Halpern and Kideckel 1983). In the 1980s these two areas were united in anthropological analyses of socialism as a distinctive strategy for organizing social, economic, and political life (Wolfe 2000). With a few exceptions (Wedel 1986; 1992), the main focus remained on rural areas under state socialism and consequent political-economic themes after the collapse of socialism: decollectivization, marketization, consumption (Hann 2002b), and property relations (Hann 2003b). Stressing the social costs of transformations (Hann 1993), scholars especially critiqued the introduction of a capitalist free market and the automatic assumption of many experts that Eastern Europe would move through a transition from communism to Western liberal democracy.

Katherine Verdery (1991b: 432–433) indicated five major research areas in studies of postsocialism: the building of civil society; ethnic and national conflicts; decentralization of decision making; massive labour shortages; and the decline of the symbolic-ideological control known under socialism. Verdery also offered an analysis of nationalism, arguing that nationalist passions did not simply show up as the resurrection of precommunist nationalisms but had their roots in communist cultural politics (Verdery 1991a). Some aspects of her explanations of nationalism under socialism do not fully fit the case of Poland, where the communist state was unable to compete successfully for the nation with the independent Catholic Church, so that the effects of its cultural policies remained limited (see Hann 1994a).

The common feature of anthropological studies of socialism and postsocialism is their stress on the distinctive character of the socialist regime. I believe, however, that although the changes that took place under socialism were unprecedented, something was nevertheless reproduced from presocialist times and even reinforced by the socialist political-economic system. In Poland, for example, Frances Pine (1987) observed continuity in issues of land and inheritance, in social stratification and family structures, and in cultural practices and ideologies dating back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, all of which took only slightly different forms under socialism. The surviving peasantry, the role of the family, and the existence of an independent Catholic Church in Poland are the most important examples of this kind of continuity from the agrarian era. Indeed, the more profound changes emerged only after the introduction of capitalism in 1989. Only future research will show how much of the peasant past I describe will remain, nurtured by the EU Common Agricultural Policy, heritage preservation, minority policies, ethno-tourism, and so on.

I also rely in this book on an important field in postsocialist studies that emerged with the novel politicization of the public sphere after socialism, namely, the field of 'civil society'. The volume *Civil Society: Challenging Western Models,* edited by Chris Hann and Elizabeth Dunn (1996), serves as an entry point to this discussion. As Hann wrote in the introduction to that book, discussions of civil society in postsocialist politics have been narrowed to Western models of liberal individualism. And indeed the anthropological task requires careful investigation of informal, interpersonal practices that – to draw on Rudolf Bahro's (1978) term 'actually existing socialism' – influence the 'actually existing civil society'. Research on civil society should, therefore, include studies of social organizations, bureaucratic institutions, policy processes, and social movements in their actual local settings, studies that are usually missing in research on conventionally constructed, urban middle-class civil society (Hearn 2001).

To avoid Western-centric misuses of the term *civil society*, one should also study kinship, family businesses, and elite networks in churches, trades unions, non-governmental organizations, and political parties – all the social networks involving patron-client relationships (Hearn 2001) – as well as forms of decision-making in which 'anthropologists could challenge the urban monopoly of democracy' (Feuchtwang 2003: 94). Particularly essential for studies of civility – that is, inclusive practices and ideas of tolerance and peaceful co-existence – is to include religion, an approach Hann (1998b) has highlighted in relation to nationalism and which he recently developed into an elaboration of the concept of 'civil religion' (Hann 2006; see Bellah 2005 [1967]). Keeping in mind the theme of civil religion, I attempt to connect three major interests with the wider postsocialist anthropological literature: studies of the East European peasantry and its changes throughout the twentieth century, the nationalist side of postsocialist transformations, and the debates over civil society, political culture, and populism.

1.3 Nation-Building

Tom Nairn (1998: 121) remarked that it is the past of 'peasant existence' that gives 'sentimental incontrovertibility to all ethnonationalist belief-structure'. 'The curse of rurality', in Nairn's opinion, accompanies particularly the rapid transformation of peasants into nationals. This process requires the substantial assistance of intellectuals who seek to mobilize 'lost-world psychology' in order to built the new world of the modern nation-state (Nairn 1998: 108). The changes that took place in economic and political arrangements in twentieth-century Eastern Europe were articulated within the frame of contested national narratives and nation-building. And in reverse fashion, nation-building often enhanced structural changes in society.

The changes were rapid, taking place over two or three generations, so that a majority of the inhabitants of Eastern Europe have faced significant insecurity and crises of identity. For them, a return to tradition – widely represented by religion, extended family, and the collective of the nation in the peasant setting – in times of rapid transformations appeared automatic.

The first 'great transformation' (Polanyi 1985) in Eastern Europe was a national one. In most of Eastern Europe, peasants became Poles, Ukrainians, Lemkos, and so on under predominantly agrarian nation-states, thanks to agents of the national idea recruited from among the rural intelligentsia, such as priests and teachers. For the awakening intellectuals, the peasantry represented the core of the national collective. Peter Brock (1992: 2) noted that after the Polish state vanished in 1795, the patriotism of the nobles was incapable of generating sufficient strength to restore the country's lost independence; the peasants needed to be awakened by intellectuals.

Yet when researchers take a modernist structural-historical approach to the study of nationalism (Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1990), the selective maintenance of peasant features in national constructions remains substantially underestimated. Instead of direct pressure for a homogenized workforce suitable for industrialization, as the conventional structural-historical approach suggests, it was centralization in the form of the nation-state, the development of communication technologies, and the spread of bureaucracies and state-managed education systems that finally created modern nations in most of Eastern Europe. This view has been elaborated by several authors (Kieniewicz 1969; Davies 2005). Regarding Polish peasants in Austrian Galicia, part of which eventually became south-east Poland, Keely Stauter-Halsted (2001) showed that the view in which nations are constructed by the elites sometimes overlooks the independent contributions of peasant societies and of peasant elites who were able to think about themselves as members of a nation, especially towards the end of the nineteenth century.

Modernist accounts of the rise of nationalism also largely fail to explain the importance of religion in nation-building. The strength of religion during nationalization is demonstrated by the fact that the only people successfully able to mobilize peasant societies – not least because they spoke in the vernacular – were church employees. Because of the assimilation of the upper classes into the Polish idea, Ukrainian nationalism relied more directly on the peasantry, and the clergy of the Greek Catholic Church formed the only literate group, apart from a handful of lawyers and schoolteachers of clerical origin, who retained the Ukrainian mother tongue (Brock 1992: 22).

On the Polish side, as Norman Davies (2005: 152) pointed out, the Roman Catholic Church was one of the few threads of continuity in Poland's past and was always part of the world of Polish politics. The medieval motto *Polonia semper fidelis* (Poland always faithful) highlights the way in which Roman Catholicism and the Polish nation have long been closely intertwined. This congruence between nation and religion emerged from the religious wars of the seventeenth century, when Poland, situated between Protestant German lands and Orthodox Russia, came to be perceived as 'the Antemurales of Christianity-Catholicism in the war against Muslims, against schism and heresy' (Litak 1994: 28). It is the Catholic narrative of Polish history rather than the demography of contemporary Polish society that makes the exclusivist identity *Polak-katolik* so powerful today (Porter 2001).

After the Habsburg Danube monarchy fell apart, the Versailles Peace Treaty of 1919 created states with great regional disparities. Examples with nationalist consequences are the industrial Czech lands and agrarian Slovakia, as well as the nations that made up Yugoslavia, which were similarly distinct in their different degrees of modernization. The independent Second Polish Republic (1918–1939) showed extraordinary disparities as well. The western and central parts of the country, dominated by Poles and Germans, contrasted with the vast, rural south-eastern borderlands. There, eastern Christian Ukrainians formed a majority, and Jews and Poles shared leading positions in the few urban centres. In addition, Poland promoted post-independence nationalism (Brubaker 1996), an endeavour that included a more or less salient form of Roman Catholic ideology. Ethnic groups that found themselves in minority positions in the new nation-state were treated differently under the dominant Polish patriotism. Whereas Germans were taken for granted as an already established 'high' culture, usually viewed with suspicion, and Jews were often set apart as a religiously defined 'alien' group, people practising eastern forms of Christianity in south-east Poland were more likely to be perceived as subordinates.

After waves of ethnic cleansing and forced migrations during and after World War II, the communists, in order to continue the link with the peasant past, invented a new and seemingly internationalist ideology based on an alliance between workers and farmers. Through this alliance they strengthened the peasant imaginary, despite booming urbanization and a modernist, secular ideology. In contrast to the other socialist states, with the exception of Yugoslavia, in Poland collectivization was unsuccessful, and the subculture that nurtured images of a rural nation survived even more strongly outside of communist state policies. It survived among the peasants and especially within the independent Polish Roman Catholic Church, which enjoyed an exceptionally powerful position relative to other churches under socialist rule.

The socialist states established and financed professional folklore ensembles and festivals representing the folk cultures of their nations and national minorities – the culture of the 'people', the lower classes. Today, this is all incorporated into the tourist industry, and folklore serves as a reminder of people's closeness to nature and their peasant past.

In summary, the 'national' transformation in south-east Poland took place under the techniques of the nation-state in overwhelmingly agrarian conditions. Apart from peasants who were small landholders, institutional continuity with agrarian times in the Polish nation was represented by the Catholic Church, which during communism was the institution most dominant in opposing the communist power holders and which after 1989 significantly influenced the new moral order.

1.4 From Agrarian World to Postsocialism

In 1969, the historian Stefan Kieniewicz wrote that 'the emancipation of the Polish peasant is indeed a closed chapter of history. But this closed chapter has had its consequences, which are felt to this day' (1969: xviii). Because of the historical underdevelopment of Poland and Eastern Europe in general (Chirot 1989; Kochanowicz 1989), industrialization was applied as socialist modernization in a predominantly agricultural setting. As classic studies reveal (Thomas and Znaniecki 1958; Shanin 1966, 1971; Wolf 1966; Galeski 1972), peasant society and economy were characterized by the central importance of the family farm as the basic unit of social organization. The main source of livelihood, directly providing the major part of people's consumption needs, was a plot of land. A specific 'traditional culture' was related to the way of life of the small communities.

This changed under socialism when the state attempted to radically reform agrarian relations and practices (see Mitrany 1951). In many places this change can be characterized as the transition from an agrarian era to socialist modernity. As elsewhere in Eastern Europe, anti-peasant policies were applied in Poland in the 1950s. Peasants were considered relics of an agrarian age who did not fit into the modernist discourse of socialism (Wieruszewska 1994: 158). Frequently resisting collectivization, private farmers were in a disadvantageous position relative to those on state farms or to urban folk. The majority of farms remained small, based on family labour and using archaic technology (Hann 1985; Nagengast 1991; Pine 1995). Towards the end of socialism in Poland, a quarter of the inhabitants (2 million families) were still related to peasantry (Turowski 1994: 151), although 75 per cent of these earned livelihoods from factory work, state employment, private business, and so on, in addition to peasantry (Turowski 1994: 152). After 1989, a huge economic decline in the countryside accompanied postsocialist changes and brought social degradation to rural people (Turowski 1994: 155), especially peasants, who had widely resisted the socialist state and therefore contributed to its fall.

Focusing on elites, Eyal, Szelényi, and Townsley (1998) called what happened in Central Europe after 1989 'making capitalism without capitalists'. They characterized this process as a distinctive new strategy of transition adopted by an alliance of technocratic and intellectual elites in societies in which no class of private owners had existed before the introduction of the market. The most important mechanism for the installation of capitalism was the reproduction of various forms of capital based on status, prestige, skills, and social ties that the elites held and reproduced despite regime changes.

Like Gerald Creed (1998), who studied Bulgaria, Peter Skalník found that in the Slovak Tatra Mountains, each change of political regime at the state level 'demanded from the villagers, and especially their leadership, an ability to read these changes (or their promises) well, in order to reap benefits for the village community and the survival of the same leaders' (Skalník 1993: 221). Davide Torsello (2003) observed that people in southern Slovakia faced social transformations first through investments in social assets such as family, kin ties, and personal networks and second through what he called the 'management of ambiguity' – that is, adaptation to changing institutional structures.

In a study of a village in south-east Poland, Carole Nagengast (1991) argued that the reintroduction of capitalism in Poland after 1989 reflected continuities of earlier, class-based social relations that had masqueraded as socialist relations during the four and a half decades of communism. In Slovakia, where the collectivization of agriculture was far more successful and living standards under late socialism were generally higher than in Poland, Juraj Podoba (2000) saw practices similar to those Frances Pine (1987) observed on the northern slopes of the Carpathians, where collectivization had failed. Although many people moved from tiny peasant houses to large buildings with several rooms, a bathroom, and a modern kitchen, the core of the everyday lives of all generations remained concentrated around the little summer kitchen near the main house building, where grandmothers cooked for the whole family. In addition, family members who lived in the city came regularly on the weekends to visit their parents and grandparents. A particular phenomenon of socialist times was the peasant worker. With a rural identity but receiving a wage in a factory, a cooperative, or a state service sector, this worker represented the social prototype of post-peasant life during the socialist years.

As Pine (1995) observed in the Podhale region of Poland, the farm and farming remained ideologically, although not economically, central to the identity of highlanders (Górale) during and after socialism, regardless of societal changes. This centrality was reinforced by reciprocal labour between households and among kin; farming was as much a social as an economic practice, creating a strong sense of kinship and community in contrast to the impersonality of the socialist state. Family structure and the system of reciprocity allowed further wage migration after the borders were fully opened in 1989 (Pine 1995: 56).

As in Podhale, kinship, friendship, and patron-client networks remained strong in south-east Poland after 1989. Socialism elsewhere in Eastern Europe fostered practices and relations reminiscent of those in the agrarian world – moneyless gift exchanges, family and friendship ties under a shortage economy, and patron-client relations between people working in the state bureaucracy and those in local communities. Similarly, after 1989 a large family network remained important. The sustainability of extended families and understandings of their role in society – the almost ritual role of service exchanges and people's general distrust of formal politics – formed the structural basis of both socialist and postsocialist politics. At the same time, broad family relations softened the negative consequences of economic crisis and supplemented the collapsing state welfare system. Searching for employment, travelling to the city or abroad for a job, and getting help with social benefits were usually connected to a kin and community network.

Despite enormous changes initiated by the socialist state, south-east Poland remained largely rural and agricultural. The culture of villages and small towns dominated across the landscape and continues to do so. Many social scientists, in an 'evolutionary' manner, see in this rural social structure resistance to change. This perception leaves little room for political dynamism outside the ideal model of tradition versus modernity. Before moving to populism, which in my view shows both political dynamism and conservatism in politics, I want to describe the phenomenon I call 'post-peasantism'.

The common view of peasants concentrates on their opposition to urban life (Wolf 1966; Shanin 1971). My approach to post-peasantism moves from the peasant family as an economic and social-structural unit in the countryside towards the rural morality, imagery, and ideology that is ingrained in memories and expressed in narratives, rituals, and symbols, not necessarily in the context of hamlets, villages, and small towns but also in cities. Because all socialist countries saw massive influxes of country people into urban centres, any analysis of the urban sphere today must start with the remnants of village folk in the cities.[2]

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[2] This persistence of peasantism has also been studied in the Western European context, as in France (see, for example, Delbos 1982), and, more recently, in studies of 'transnationality'

One study of 'peasant urbanities' under socialism was that carried out by Andrei Simic (1973) for Yugoslavia. A special feature of communist modernization elsewhere was the 'ruralization' of the cities – that is, the maintenance in cities of rural practices, relations, ideas, and symbols, such as gift exchanges, the importance of the extended family, and the prominence of folklore artefacts. When villagers were resettled from their hamlets, they did not straightforwardly become urbanites. Whether workers, medical doctors, or university professors, they stayed closely in touch with the countryside, keeping their backyards, folk artefacts, and village identities.

Drawing on her observations of late socialist Poland, Pine (1993) described how peasant relations and practices such as gender relations were extended outside of the household economy, reaching into the second economy and entrepreneurship. Although the socialist state progressed in relativizing urban-rural divisions and changing the material nature of inequality in both the countryside and the towns, it was far less effective in shifting ideologies (Pine 2002: 162), not least the ideology linked to ways of life known from before socialism. Even inheritance ideologies, expressed through kinship, show that although the economic importance of land decreased in the countryside during the socialist and postsocialist years, the emotional, aesthetic, and social value of land persisted, passed across generations through family memories. For Pine (2003: 293), the land was 'a powerful metaphor of kinship'.

Andre Czegledy (2002) also analysed 'urban peasants', in this case in Hungary. Despite living in cities such as Budapest, many people retained their rural practices, identities, and memories through their leisure activities and through sociality around their hobby plot or allotment. The examples offered by Czegledy, Pine, and Simic show that boundaries between the rural and the urban have remained porous in Eastern Europe, as they were under state socialism. In the following section I show that this 'rurality' is also expressed in politics.

1.5 Populism in Eastern Europe

Inspired by Herderian romantic nationalism and aiming to modernize underdeveloped societies, East European populisms began to grow at the beginning of the twentieth century. They came to be embodied in ideologies of peasantism, which emerged intellectually as reactions to both Russian populism and Western socialism (Ionescu and Gellner 1969; Kitching 1989). Peasantism, first, took the peasant explicitly as its social prototype and

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(Glick-Schiller 2004), but I do not address it here. The theme of postpeasant identity in the global context has also been addressed by Michael Kearney (1996).

proposed moulding the society and its state according to the peasants' conceptions of work, property, and administration. Second, peasantism blended its social-economic doctrines with a strong nationalistic concern for the emancipation of the 'people' from foreign domination. Third, it claimed that the peasantry was entitled, as a class, to the leadership of political society, 'not only on account of its electoral preponderance but also because of its innate spiritual and national values' (Ionescu 1969: 99). More a movement than an organized, party-like collective, populists struggled against rootlessness – against the feeling ascribed to modernity. Stressing order, morality, and justice, they claimed an agrarian *Gemeinschaft* (MacRae 1969).

Keeping these characteristics in mind, it is difficult to define populism. As Jeff Pratt (2003) observed, it is neither an ideology nor a closed box of practices. It is a kind of discourse, a frame that can be combined with various ideological traditions, institutional settings, and symbolic imagery (Pratt 2003: 175–176). Nationalism, socialism, peasant tradition, and free-market 'newspeak' can fit equally well under the populist umbrella.

The central feature of populism is a real or discursively created friction between 'traditional' and 'non-traditional' structures and cultures (Stewart 1969). As Peter Wiles (1969: 166) defined it, populism is any creed or movement based on the premise that virtue resides in the simple people, who are the overwhelming majority, and in their collective traditions. Mobilized as nation, underdog, and everyman, the people represent the main source of populist legitimacy (Canovan 1984). Populists characterize the people as moral, hard-working producers living in traditional peasant households, although not necessarily in an agrarian era. The people's enemies, the 'others', are usually the modernizing state, big foreign businesses, metropolitan cities, and cosmopolitan life-styles (Pratt 2003: 176).

An important accelerator of populist mobilization is the tension between the metropolis and the provinces. The metropolis is perceived 'objectively' as the presence of central state power or cultural influence and 'subjectively' as a threat to the interests, status, and values of non-metropolitan people. In all cases, certain social groups become aware of being peripheral to the centres of power (Stewart 1969). Neither 'pull' factors, such as making industry attractive, nor 'push' factors, such as making peasant and artisan life unbearable in modernizing societies (Kitching 1989), developed without shocks in Eastern Europe – indeed, quite the opposite. People were sent back to the land for the first time because of the economic crises of the early 1930s, when, simultaneously, massive emigration from overpopulated land was taking place. Soon afterwards, land reforms followed by collectivization pushed people into industry and into cities. Significantly painful, too, was the move towards de-industrialization after 1989. Although people did not return to the land in great numbers, the countryside became the source of certainty, and the peasant tradition once again appeared to be natural.

A comparative framework for populism highlights some universal features of populist mobilization and its links with religion. *Narodniki* in tsarist Russia, for example, widely used religious rhetoric, and populists in the Canadian province of Alberta in the 1930s even used the imagery of religious conversion (Taggart 2000). From the times of Max Weber, charismatic leadership – so well exploited by populist politicians – has been generally explained as a kind of religious leadership, and the loyalty of followers to populist leaders has been explained as devotion based on faith (Taggart 2000: 101). Many populisms share with dogmatic religion a certain moral fundamentalism, including simple concepts of good and bad, right and wrong (Stavrakakis 2002).

Roughly three main social features link populism with the Catholic religion: the pre-eminence and defence of the patriarchal family and a rigid moral order, the complicated obsession with the nation, and beliefs about the role of 'the people' and their traditions. Holding universal aspirations, many churchmen like to address their appeals to 'the people'. 'Oppressed people' usually also represent the main source of populist legitimacy. The church often defines itself against the people, who want to radically modernize society. For some clergymen, as for populists, modernizers are perceived as being isolated from everyday ways of life and as promoting changes at the expense of 'the people' (Stavrakakis 2002).

Churchmen and populist leaders are particularly powerful during times of insecurity. In these situations, religious leaders and populists address their assistance predominantly to those who are in need, usually the losers in economic transformations. Many religious leaders and populists share the safeguarding of tradition, for fear arises from the loss of the traditional character of a people, their national identity, and their pre-industrial moral purity. Because the domain of tradition is, in many parts of Eastern Europe, heavily safeguarded by institutional religion, populism legitimates itself through an alliance with religion, and many religious leaders support populists especially for their care of tradition. Religious leaders and populists both build an organic solidarity and loyalty aiming to unite nations. Without directly implying that Roman Catholicism automatically supports populism, I point out that the East European religious revival and the increasing success of populism there have gone hand in hand since 1989.

1.6 Polish Populism

Basing his arguments on quantitative data – municipal and county election results in Slovakia – the sociologist Vladimír Krivý hypothesized that the success of national populist parties there in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1990s was the result of reproduction of long-term patterns of political behaviour (Krivý et al. 1996). I have hypothesized that it is the construction of national identities, as well as structural features selectively reproduced from an agrarian era and broadly linked to the peasant family and the Catholic religion, that creates the social basis for the success of populist mobilization in Eastern Europe today (Buzalka 2004). Beyond that, I have argued that populism also emerges as a result of postsocialist transitional ruptures that have increased calls for a return to the harmonious past, in contrast to the actual insecurity of postsocialism (Buzalka 2004). In this book I test these 'macro' hypotheses at the community level in south-east Poland, a region where features supportive of populist mobilization remain vital. But before moving to the community level there, I offer a brief social history of populism in the region.

Analyzing the failure of the Polish state to collectivize the peasantry, Hann (1985: 169) registered a 'contradictory persistence of peasantry' and of a 'peasant ethos' in rural, socialist south-east Poland, as well as a 'late flowering of peasant populism'. He also noticed similarities between the rural Solidarity movement of the 1980s and populist protests from before World War II. Hann was unsure what sort of populism could be preserved by modernized family farmers, but he noticed in his 'village without solidarity' that the only functioning community institution was the Roman Catholic Church. He wrote that 'certainly the ethos has survived and peasants are united in their profound suspicion of the authorities', and 'peasant religiosity remains at a high level, ensuring that the Catholic Church remains the major solidifying force in local communities and in the nation' (Hann 1985: 176).

Nagengast's (1991) description of the reproduction of class relations in Poland during the socialist years offers perhaps a more direct view of the reproduction of some elements of pre-war populism. Although she did not analyze the role of the Catholic Church in supporting populist politics, she anticipated the emergence of a new populism in postsocialist Poland. After the political left had been discredited, there was 'now the danger of right demagoguery, possibly in the form of right populism, the seeds of which [had] actually lain dormant for many years' (Nagengast 1991: 23). In this book I illuminate what kind of populism this might be. Unlike Hann and Nagengast, who did not primarily address the reproduction of narratives or consciousness and did not concentrate particularly on religion, I focus on both topics, chiefly with regard to people who are not peasants; they are post-peasant Catholics who create and are influenced by the politics of commemoration.

Stressing parallels between Poland and the whole of Central and Eastern Europe, Stefan Kieniewicz (1969: 5) described the role of the gentry and the intelligentsia as exclusive bearers of the Polish national idea. This role was inseparable from that of convincing peasants that Polish national independence would solve their problems. The solution appeared to be populism, a predominantly conservative movement expressing economic, social, and political interests and, to a large extent, the national consciousness and social emancipation of this group (Narkiewicz 1976: 16). Norman Davies has written that nationalism and populism were the only two movements with any chance of success in Austrian Galicia (Davies 2005: 113). While the Prussian part of Poland developed economically, most significantly through the modernization of agriculture, and the Congress Kingdom (a part of historical Poland under Russia) showed high levels of industrialization from the end of the nineteenth century, in Galicia small landholding, overpopulation, and emigration prevailed (Kochanowicz 1989; Magocsi 2002b; Davies 2005). In the late Habsburg period, Galicia accounted for 25 per cent of the land of the Austrian Empire but only 9.3 per cent of the empire's industrial enterprises (Magocsi 2002b: 22). In 1890, almost 80 per cent of the Galician population was employed in agriculture, forestry, and allied occupations (Narkiewicz 1976: 72). The emancipation of the peasants, introduced in 1848 (in Prussia, serfdom ended in 1848, and in the Russian partition, emancipation began in 1863), and full male suffrage (1907) – part of the gradual liberalization of Austria – guaranteed peasants in Galicia greater political freedom than those in other partitions enjoyed (Narkiewicz 1976: 19; Stauter-Halsted 2001: 11; Davies 2005: 115).

The first peasant party – the People's or Peasant Party (Stronnictwo Ludowe) – was founded in 1895 in Rzesów. In the course of two decades it became a party that would remain a major factor in Polish politics for fifty years (Davies 2005: 221). After 1918, this 'liberal' situation made Little Poland politically the most developed part of independent Poland. Parliamentarians from Galicia held high positions in the parliament (Sejm), and Poland inherited much from the Austrian educational system, bureaucracy, and judicial system (Buszko 1994; Zarycki and Nowak 2000). Most populist leaders, including Wicenty Witos, leader of the united Polish Peasant Party and prime minister until removed in May 1926 by the coup d'etat of the political coalition Sanacja, also came from this region.[3]

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[3] Sanacja was created by Józef Piłsudski, who aimed to support the 'moral sanitation' of society and politics in Poland through a semi-dictatorial regime introduced by the May 1926 coup d'etat.

Polish populism never reached the level of Russian *narodnichestvo* in its apotheosis of the people and never fully became an alternative to Western socialism, as the populist movement in Russia did, not least because socialist thought was already developing in Poland (Narkiewicz 1976: 25). Excluding revolution from their political repertoire, Polish populist leaders nevertheless aimed to improve the economic and social conditions of the peasants. Because of the exclusive position of the Roman Catholic Church in educating and emancipating the peasants, this move away from radicalism might also have been related to changes in the church, which itself moved into party politics (see Davies 2005: 162). Originating in the Poznań region, in western Poland, the Christian Democratic Movement (Chadecja), founded in 1902 to counter the popularity of socialism and to moderate the influence of Roman Dmowski's National Democracy, had its counterpart in Galicia in the populist movement. The lower clergy frequently shared the radical ideas of national and social reformers and were involved as activists or recruits in the political movements of their day (Davies 2005: 158). The best-known representative of politically engaged clergymen of his period was Father Stanisław Stojałowski (1845–1911), who aimed to introduce legislation based on the Christian spirit of truth and justice (Struve 2005: 104–105).

The interwar period was marked in Poland by competition between two leading figures with opposing views on the development of Polish society. Józef Piłsudski, originally the leader of the Polish Socialist Party and an advocate of the separation of church and state, favoured compulsory secular education and equal rights for all citizens, regardless of ethnicity. Roman Dmowski, leader of the National Democrats, who urged cultural unification – that is, the polonization of Kresy, the heavily Ukrainian south-eastern borderlands – saw the church as the protector of the nation's moral life and cultural consolidation (Zarycki 2000: 858).[4]

As Olga Narkiewicz (1976: 143) observed, the remnants of a pro–National Democratic orientation could have been distinguished in Polish populism during the socialist years. After 1948, some populist streams were formally incorporated into the national front led by the Polish communist party (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza), which developed a program that was part socialist, part nationalist. Continuity with older streams of populism remained represented by the dogma of private ownership of land and commitment to religious practice (Narkiewicz 1976: 283). A fascist in the 1930s and a pro-regime Catholic activist after the war, Bołesław Piasecki was the leading proponent of the mutual reinforcement of nationalism and communism (Kunicki 2005). As Mikołaj Kunicki argued, not only did the communists utilize nationalism, but they also prolonged the existence of the nationalist radical right. Much of the populist agenda was preserved in the official policy of socialist Poland. There were, therefore, two sources of Polish populism: an intellectual one influenced by the *narodnik* movement in Russia and by the socialists, and a clerical one that propagated the idea of Christian agrarian parties in Central Europe (Narkiewicz 1976: 277).

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[4] *Kresy południowo-wschodnie* (south-eastern borderlands) was inter-war south-eastern Poland. It was populated largely by non-Poles, especially Ukrainians practicing eastern Christianity and Jews. Much of it is now part of western Ukraine.

Despite the many parallels between Polish and other East European peasant societies, some specifics make contemporary south-east Poland particularly suitable for the analysis of populism. As Michał Buchowski (1997: 13) pointed out in criticizing regionally unbalanced anthropological analyses of the Polish countryside in English, it is hard to write a representative account of Polish rural transformations from the perspective of a particular region of once partitioned and therefore diverse Poland. Nevertheless, I believe an analysis of Polish populism should begin with the social and political history of Galicia, or Little Poland. Because of its backwardness and the political importance of its organized peasantry, south-east Poland became the cradle of one of the strongest populist movements in Eastern Europe (Narkiewicz 1976). I believe that despite the rest of Poland's having been structurally different – with, for instance, impartible inheritance and industrialization in the Russian partition and larger, more modern farms and infrastructure in the Prussian partition – the political expression of populism there was taken from Galicia and its peasantry. Moreover, people in south-east Poland nowadays predominantly support the conservative right, owing to their traditional religiosity and the fact that peasant parties have deep roots in the region (Zarycki 2000: 865). Any historically grounded analysis of Polish populism today must begin in south-east Poland and must discover the role of Catholic religion in the political culture of the region.

From a wider perspective, this populism has drawn on a development project alternative to capitalist transformations as well as to socialism. This project is morally driven and based firmly in Catholic social thought, which can be traced in Catholic teaching as far back as the end of the nineteenth century. It addressed issues of social justice in relation to problems created by the industrial revolution and modernity. Infused by a strong national sentiment and opposed to capitalist, cosmopolitan, and secular worldviews and life-styles, this populism remains conservative, socially emancipating, and overwhelmingly democratic.

Populist politics in south-east Poland, reflected by and depending on the politics of commemoration, shows significant commonalities with pre-war ideals. Nevertheless, many new features reflect the current state of late capitalism. These features could, as has happened several times in the past, lead this relatively moderate populism towards less inclusive, more intolerant, nationalist and xenophobic forms. Populism's relative moderation might be significantly challenged by the growth of transnational migration, especially because seemingly old populism and apparently new multiculturalism are influenced by what I define as the politics of commemoration.

In sum, the politics of commemoration is based on two constitutive elements: a traditional social structure surviving from an agrarian era and what might be seen as a combination of identity narratives, collective memories, and rural ideologies. In everyday life the politics of commemoration reflects and is in part a driving force behind what I call post-peasant populism, politics operating on the level of post-peasant society as a whole. This populism is not about the peasantry; rather, it can be seen as a type of modern, populist political culture based on a non-urban social structure and imagined rurality. It is opposed to capitalist, cosmopolitan, and secular worldviews and life-styles, and it offers an alternative 'moral' model for economic development. This model is gaining new significance in light of EU-related policies of multiculturalism, media influence, heritage preservation, and the tourist industry. Although at first sight this East European populism would be recognized as national – conventionally understood as the typical populism of the region – I believe it is religion, often blended with nationalism, that offers an ideology alternative to currently dominant policies and discourses of capitalist modernity.

1.7 About This Book

I conducted fieldwork in Przemyśl and south-east Poland from the summer of 2003 to the summer of 2004 and made three additional visits, in January 2003 and in May and July 2005. My focus on populism came from my earlier interest in social transformations in my native Slovakia. There, peasants as a social stratum vanished during the course of socialism, but populism showed great vitality in the 1990s. I wondered how populism worked in Poland, especially in its underdeveloped south-east, where many people still live as peasants and virtually the whole population considers itself Roman Catholic. Moreover, the Roman Catholic Church is a much stronger and more consolidated political force in Poland than it is in religiously and ethnically more heterogeneous Slovakia.

I had many informants among Roman Catholic Poles but spent most of my time with Greek Catholic Ukrainians. Except for public figures, their names are fictitious in this book. I not only accompanied my friends during their everyday lives and life-cycle rituals in Przemyśl but also travelled frequently across rural areas of south-east Poland. In this way I became familiar with the part of the region reaching as far west of Przemyśl as

Krynica in the Carpathians and up to the area north-east of Lubaczów, 150 kilometres north of Przemyśl, which has a Ukrainian, eastern Christian past. Although my Greek Catholic informants generally spoke Polish better than Ukrainian, they used Ukrainian as well (it was also the new liturgical language), and I managed to communicate with them in both Polish and Ukrainian during my stay. All the translations and transcriptions in the following chapters are my own.

The historic city of Przemyśl is important for both Roman Catholic Poles and Greek Catholic Ukrainians. In chapter 2 I introduce the history and present situation of this place and its people. Despite the heavy presence of Polish Roman Catholic symbolism in Przemyśl's public sphere, Greek Catholic Ukrainians re-established themselves there publicly after 1989. Although Przemyśl has a strong urban heritage, substantial numbers of its inhabitants are former peasants and their heirs who moved to the city during the communist years. Residents of Przemyśl continue to keep their backyards and gardens and to remain connected with the countryside through kin networks and other means. The culture of the village and small town, with its considerable religious conservatism, prevails in the region. The conservative and populist right has had a stable electoral base in south-east Poland since the end of the nineteenth century.

In chapter 3 I introduce the role of the past, especially World War II, in the present-day life of the Ukrainian community. I investigate the roots and effects of ethnic violence in south-east Poland, especially the effects of the guerrilla war and expulsion of Ukrainians from south-east Poland known as Action Vistula. Many descendants of peasants and small-town dwellers today represent the past as featuring sharp religious-national antagonisms between Roman Catholic Poles and Greek Catholic Ukrainians. To illuminate the fuzzy borderline between collective memory and national history, I deal with private forms of commemoration, showing how history is relevant in the daily life of the Ukrainian community, how nationalist history is played out through religion and collective memory, and how memories are transmitted over generations through a 'community of memory'.

In chapter 4 I look at the increase in ritual commemoration practices in the public sphere after socialism, as well as the role of nation-state patriotism and 'official' memory (history) in public commemorations. I describe two religiously supervised commemorative ceremonies that nurture the mutual exclusivity of national collectives. The example of Polish nationalists defending Polish patrimony against a supposed Ukrainian takeover highlights the importance of religious symbolism in Polish and Ukrainian nationalism. The memories of religious nations may be successfully nurtured in families and clandestine churches, but only when those memories become politicized through ritual action in the public sphere and thus clash with the nationalist symbolism of an opposed group do tensions appear unavoidable. After communist control of the public sphere ended, the politicization of symbols strengthened nationalist passions, which were necessarily linked to the role of the state in nurturing patriotic practices and narratives.

Leaving the politics of commemoration for a moment, I examine in chapter 5 the consolidation of the churches in south-east Poland after socialism. I introduce the ambiguous relations that exist between popular devotion and the orthodoxy of the institutional church and address the authority of the church in relation to its members. Anti-clericalism, observable mostly in the private domain, contrasts with acceptance of Catholicism's leading role in the public sphere and indicates the need to incorporate class relations into the analysis. Analysis of the annual Corpus Christi ritual serves as a window into the socially sensitive religious populism that is being offered as an alternative to secular capitalism.

In chapter 6 I return to the politics of commemoration. Again I focus on the past, but having dealt in chapters 3 and 4 with the dividing role of the past, I now show that by recalling another version of the past, religion also creates a basis for the formation of a tolerant public sphere. The reconciliation of nations is achieved through church-supervised or church-assisted rituals. Reconciliation attempts made outside the religious domain – by the state, by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and by intellectuals – lead to a discussion of the concepts of 'artificial tolerance' and 'ordinary tolerance'.

In chapter 7 I further explore what constitutes group differences in south-east Poland and how they are maintained and contested. I ask what it is to be a Ukrainian Greek Catholic in Przemyśl. Ukrainian religious identification – in both its Orthodox and its Greek Catholic forms, and in contrast to Polish Roman Catholicism – is considered eastern Christian, but people's religious practices, beliefs, and identity narratives sometimes appear ambiguous in terms of an east-west differentiation. A syncretism arises from the parallel existence of two neighbouring traditions of Christianity. After proposing a theoretical approach to syncretism, I offer an historical perspective on the making of the Greek Catholic Church. The argument is that because of changes in the religious and societal landscape, Greek Catholicism has become more bounded in its institutionally defined tradition.

In chapter 8 I point out wider social processes in Poland and Eastern Europe that lie behind the maintenance of boundaries between religious-national groups. Analyzing one ethno-revivalist ritual, I investigate the way a once proscribed religious-national group can become a commoditized national minority valued by outsiders for its 'authentic tradition', 'distinctive culture', and 'closeness to nature'. This analysis introduces a narrative complementary to that of the religious-driven essentialism presented in the previous chapter. I argue that the organic narrative nurtured by the politics of commemoration fits well with Europe-wide and nation-state policies and discourses on national minorities, as well as with the demands of ethno-business and tourism. More generally, I illuminate the relationship between ritual revivalism and social change and the ambivalence it creates among ordinary Catholics.

In the concluding chapter I return to my central theme, the persistence of post-peasant populism as nurtured and reflected by the politics of commemoration. On the basis of two constitutive elements – an agrarian social structure and an amalgam of identity narratives, collective memories, and rural ideologies – two kinds of populisms are developing. One represents possible danger for tolerant politics; the other can be seen as tolerant and even multicultural. Finally, a comparison of Poland and Slovakia shows that despite their sharing a European integration project, each retains a strong agrarian heritage. This heritage, however, shows some differences in post-peasant Poland and Slovakia, especially because of the different roles religion plays in the two countries and because of the different outcomes of socialist modernization there.

What I hope to contribute to the anthropology of politics in Europe is a view of the mechanisms of doing and ways of thinking about politics in local communities – mechanisms and ideas related to larger policies of, and narratives about, societal development. This perspective calls into question the master narratives predicted by modernization theories, in which religion is confined to the private sphere. It undermines the accounts of some national historians and other social scientists who fail to take into consideration people's everyday perspectives on and understandings of the past and social change.

Chapter 2
Nation and Religion in Przemyśl

> In Poland there has never been communism. It is a Catholic state.
> An Orthodox clergyman in Sanok, south-east Poland, January 2004

A narrative by a cosmopolitan historian about Przemyśl's past would certainly evoke both an open gate and a crossroads – between East and West, between eastern and western Christianity, between eastern and western Slavs, and, since 1 May 2004, between the European Union and what lies beyond its eastern border. Yet some patriotic Poles see the city as being nowadays on the 'eastern wall' (*ściana wschodnia*) of Poland and Latin Christianity. Poland's state boundaries and national histories have been drawn according the logic of east-west confrontation, and Przemyśl's position at the crossroads has helped shape its very landscape.

Walking up from the Bridge of the Przemyśl Eagles (Orląt Przemyskich), named after the young Polish defenders of the city during the Polish-Ukrainian war of 1918–1919, leaving behind the monument commemorating them (originally built between the two world wars and re-erected in the 1990s), passing Piłsudski's Embankment, and walking along Kościuszko Street towards Przemyśl's main square (*rynek*), one finds a statue of the Polish king Jan III Sobieski, erected in 1883.[5] This defender of Christianity, victor over the Ottomans at Vienna in 1683, stands in front of a statue of the Polish national poet Adam Miczkiewicz (1798–1855), erected in 1898. The king and the poet represent the two important elements of Polish national pride: the glorious times of the historical Polish kingdom and the struggle for independence led by revolutionary intellectuals when Poland as an independent state ceased to exist between the end of the eighteenth century and 1918.

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[5] Tadeusz Kościuszko (1746–1817) was a Polish national hero, a leader of the Polish uprising against Russia in 1794, who also fought in the American War of Independence on the side of George Washington. Józef Piłsudski (1867–1935) was a Polish statesman in the inter-war period. Jan III Sobieski (1624–1696) helped expel the Swedes from Poland. One of Sobieski's ambitions was to unify Christian Europe in a crusade to drive the Ottoman Turks out of Europe.

Entering the main square, one sees two churches behind a row of Renaissance buildings. The tower of the Roman Catholic cathedral appears on the horizon to the south, and the Franciscan church stands to the south-east. Moving up along the walls of the Franciscan church, the viewer spies two other churches – the Greek Catholic Cathedral of St John the Baptist, formerly the Roman Catholic Church of the Heart of Jesus, which was given to the Greek Catholics in 1991, and, farther up the hill, the Carmelite church, which was a Greek Catholic cathedral from 1784 to 1946 and a source of nationalist tensions in the 1990s when Greek Catholics claimed it back. Together with the royal castle and a large Latin cross on top of Tatar Hill, erected in the 1990s by a devout Przemyśl mayor, the Carmelite church dominates the city panorama.

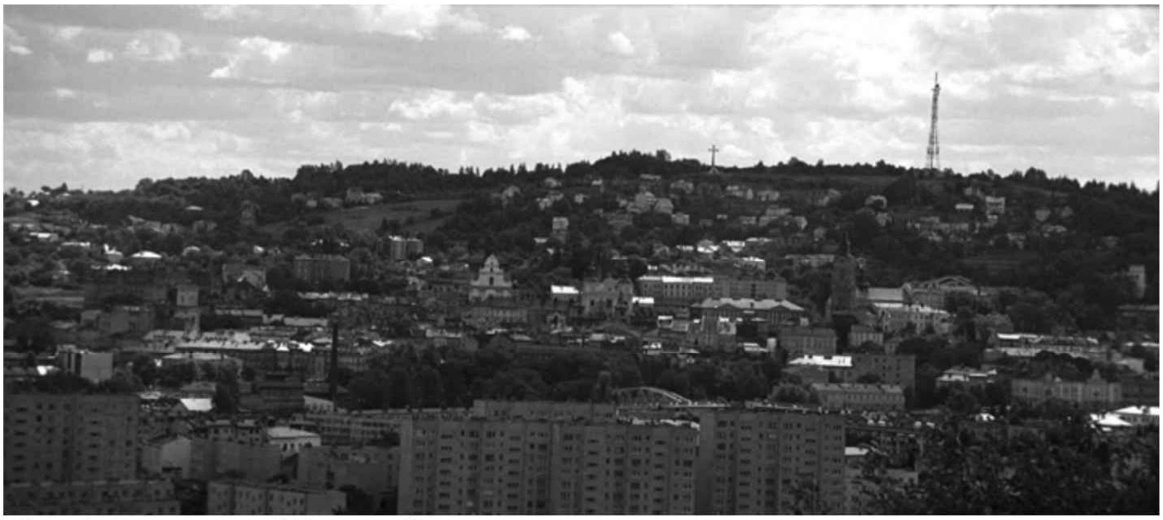

Plate 1. Panorama of Przemyśl.

Other sites on the streets of Przemyśl commemorate the Polish past as well. A plaque on the wall of the Roman Catholic cathedral, installed in 1910, reminds people of King Jagiełło's arrival in Przemyśl, with Queen Jadwiga, in 1387.[6] Crossing Independence Square (Plac Niepodległości), one passes a monument bearing the Polish coat of arms, the Polish eagle. In the neighbouring square, Plac na Bramie, on the wall of a monastery, is a reminder erected in 1887 of the battle led by the Reformat monk Szykowski against Tatars near Przemyśl in 1672. These monuments from the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, many of them renovated in the 1990s, show the continuous preservation of Polish 'monumental time' (Herzfeld 1991) in the city's public space and remind an observer of Przemyśl's links with Roman Catholicism and Polish statehood. Although Jews and Ukrainians together made up more than half the city's inhabitants before World War II, sites commemorating those communities have not been seen in the city until recently.[7]

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[6] Władysław II Jagiełło, grand duke of Lithuania from 1377, became king of Poland in 1386 after converting to Christianity and marrying Jadwiga, queen of Poland. He is well-known for battles with the Knights of the Teutonic Order and especially for defeating them at Grunwald in 1410.

One of my Ukrainian friends, having grown up in the west of Poland, expressed his nostalgia for Przemyśl this way: 'Can Wrocław really be inspiring for a Ukrainian? No, it cannot! I needed to come to Przemyśl, to the old, ancient Ukrainian place with its *genius loci.*' The walk of a patriotic Ukrainian through the city would start next to the renovated Basilian *tserkva* in Zasanie, built in the 1930s, which during the socialist period served as a state archive.[8] After crossing the bridge, the observer would pass the Ukrainian National House building (Narodnyi Dim). As patriotic friends, parents, teachers, or priests might recount, a credit union, the Narodnyi Dim, was established in 1900, and in 1904 its two-storey building was opened and blessed by the Greek Catholic bishop. Between the end of World War I and 1947, when it was confiscated by the Polish state, the building hosted several associations of the Ukrainian community.[9]

After crossing the main square, just some tens of metres behind the Franciscan church, the Ukrainian would find the current Greek Catholic Cathedral of St John the Baptist, with the former palace of the Greek Catholic bishops next to it. Beginning in the late 1940s this building hosted the National Museum of Przemyśl Land (Muzeum Narodowe Ziemi Przemyskiej), but in 2005 it was about to become once again the seat of the Przemyśl Greek Catholic bishops. Behind the Carmelite church, which served as a cathedral for Greek Catholics until the 1940s, the observer would notice a large, solid building from Austrian times (1772–1918), a former Greek Catholic seminary.

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[7] Of three former synagogues, only two still stand in Przemyśl. One is empty and partly destroyed; the other is a public library.

[8] A *tserkva* (plural *tserkvy; cerkiew* in Polish) is a building of worship of eastern-rite churches.

[9] After 1956, Ukrainians again gathered in the state-owned house as members of the association established by the socialist state. In 1990 an independent association, the Ukrainskyi Narodnyi Dim, was founded. It sees itself as the successor of the pre-war co-operative. Representatives of this association have asked for the return of the building, but without success. In 1997 the house was handed over to the Przemyśl municipality, and at this writing, the association's legal ownership of the building remains in question.

Plate 2. After a service in front of the Greek Catholic Cathedral of St John the Baptist.

Arriving at the royal castle, he or she might feel proud of its supposed founders, the Rus dukes, and perhaps learn about the first *tserkva,* which in the fourteenth century served as building material for the new Roman Catholic cathedral after its stones were supposedly washed in the river San to cleanse them of schismatic Orthodox residua.[10] At Independence Square the walker would be reminded by the tower clock of attempts to build a Greek Catholic cathedral there towards the end of eighteenth century and of how the Austrian emperor decided to make a *tserkva* (and later a cathedral) for Greek Catholics out of the Carmelite church instead. All these narratives would remind the conscious Ukrainian of the historical presence of his or her nation in the city, of its attachments to eastern Christianity, and especially of the harsh suppression of any signs of this past after World War II.

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[10] I am grateful to the historian August Fenczak for information about the uncertain origin of this act.

2.1 Between Eastern and Western Christianity

Located roughly midway between Kraków and L'viv, at the crossroads of old trade routes and on the banks of the river San, Przemyśl is considered the third most historically important centre of the region.[11] The earliest written source on the region, dating to 981, mentions Kievan Rus's taking control of the place known as Peremyshl. Before the seat of the Rus principality was moved to Halych in 1147, Przemyśl was its centre. For some time the city was controlled by the Polish king Boleslaus the Brave (reigned 992–1025), but in 1031 it again became part of Kievan Rus. Until 1345, when Casimir the Great (1310–1370) included the area in the Polish state – where it remained for more than four centuries – it was an object of rivalry between Kievan Rus, the Polish state, and the Hungarian kingdom. One of the Hungarian kings accepted the title 'King of Galicia and Vlodomeria' (*rex Galiciae et Lodomeriae*).

From 1233 Galicia was ruled by the dukes of Rus, the Romanoviches. The best known are Daniel, or Danylo (reigned 1238–1262), and his son Lev (reigned 1264–1301). Danylo, who founded Galicia's later capital, L'viv, became an emblematic figure in the Ukrainian national pantheon in the nineteenth century. The only brief threat to Polish rule over Galicia, which spanned the years 1340 to 1772 – a threat also incorporated into Ukrainian national mythology – came with the Zaporozhian Cossack revolt of 1648, led by Bohdan Khmel'nyts'kyi.

Przemyśl obtained its freedom on the basis of the Magdeburg Law in 1353 (Magocsi 2002a: 41), confirmed in 1389 by King Władisław Jagiełło. Freedom promoted the development of self-government, and a flourishing trade made Przemyśl one of the largest cities of the First Rzeczpospolita, the Polish 'nobles' democracy', before 1795. The Magdeburg Law legitimated the ascendancy of Latin Christians over both Orthodox Christians and Jews in the cities. Guilds dominated urban crafts and restricted membership for non-Catholics, and Orthodox believers could join only a selected few guilds (Himka 2005: 25).

The first eastern Christian missionaries presumably came to Przemyśl from Great Moravia around one hundred years before the Baptism of Rus in 988, and an eastern Christian eparchy was founded in the city before 1218 (Fenczak 1996: 21). Franciscan and Dominican monks were active there during the thirteenth century (Fenczak and Stępień 1993). The Roman Catholic diocese was established after 1340 and was later subordinated to the archdiocese of Halych (established 1365), which was moved to the new provincial capital, L'viv, in 1414. The first Jewish settlers appeared in Przemyśl as early as 1034, and Germans from the Rhine area were present from the beginning of the thirteenth century. Przemyśl's coat of arms – the bear, symbol of St Ursula – dates to this period. From German lands also came numerous monks, as well as the first Roman Catholic bishop, who arrived in 1379.

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[11] The following three works from the historical literature about Przemyśl served as sources of information for this chapter: *Tysiąc lat Przemyśla* 1974, *Tysiąc lat Przemyśla* 1976, and Hauser 1991.

The impulse for Jewish settlers to come to Przemyśl stemmed from the privilege granted by Casimir the Great in 1367, which allowed them to settle in the cities of Little Poland and Red Ruthenia.[12] The first Jewish street within the city walls dated to the fifteenth century. The big Renaissance synagogue, begun in the mid-sixteenth century, became an important centre for Galician Jews. At that time the proportion of Jews in the population reached 8 per cent, and by the mid-eighteenth century they had become one-quarter of the inhabitants (Stępień 2005: 53). Jews dominated in crafts and trade. Przemyśl's location on the trade routes between Kievan Rus and the Black Sea, on the one hand, and Silesian and German lands, on the other, as well as between Hungary and the Baltic Sea – especially via the San and Vistula Rivers – offered an excellent opportunity for the development of trade. Trade was also able to flourish because for most of the medieval period no known conflicts based on religious grounds erupted, either between the two Christian communities or in relation to the Jews.[13]

2.2 Catholics in Austrian Galicia

During the Counter-Reformation, many Orthodox bishops of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, as medieval Poland was also known, accepted the Union of Brest (1596), which involved administrative and jurisdictional subordination to the Vatican by Orthodox Christians, who nonetheless retained their eastern Christian practices.[14] The Orthodox eparchy of Przemyśl finally accepted the union in 1692. Nevertheless, the actual union with Rome was a long process that ended only at the beginning of the eighteenth century (Magocsi 2002b: 10–11). While the petty gentry and the peasant serfs kept their eastern Christian religious practices, the feudal system under Polish rule favoured the Roman Catholic religion, especially among the magnates and upper nobility.

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[12] Red Ruthenia (Ruthenia Rubra or Russia Rubra) was the name used since medieval times to designate the area that, prior to World War I, was known as eastern Galicia.

[13] Stanisław Stępień, personal communication.

[14] A union similar to the Union of Brest was accepted in Uzhorod in the Hungarian Kingdom (1646) and in Alba Iulia in Transylvania (1700).

During the first partition of Poland, in 1772, the Austrian Habsburg empress, Maria Theresa (reigned 1740–1780), laid claim as sovereign of Hungary to the land of the medieval Galician-Volhynian kingdom, and Galicia became one of the crown lands of the Austrian Empire (Magocsi 2002b: 12–13). Maria Theresa introduced what became known as enlightened absolutism, which included bureaucratic centralization of the state as well as school and religious reforms. This policy was further developed by her son, Joseph II (reigned 1780–1790). Despite substantial secularization, including the state's confiscation of church property, the Catholic churches under Austrian rule enjoyed substantial independence, a situation in sharp contrast to that in the Prussian and Russian parts of partitioned Poland.

On 'Christianity's internal frontier' (Hann 1988), the Habsburgs attempted especially to counterbalance the strong position of the Roman Catholic Church, the stronghold of the Polish national idea, by supporting the Greek Catholic Church (renamed from the Uniate Church in 1774), the cradle of the Ukrainian national revival. At this time the Greek Catholic Church gained legal status equal to that of its Roman Catholic counterpart (Himka 2005: 27). Apart from the founding of new schools and seminaries for Greek Catholic clergy – no other eastern church outside Austria possessed a clergy every member of which had received a university education (Pospishil 1989: 211) – the position of the Greek Catholic Church was strengthened by the establishment in 1808 of the Galician Metropolitanate, with its seat in L'viv.

The Austrian absolutist enlightened modernization brought the social and political emancipation of certain groups such as peasants and the intelligentsia. These changes initiated an intellectual movement towards national awakening among non-German-speaking peoples. Besides the 'awakening' of Polish 'culture', the consequent intellectual movement also brought a renaissance of Ruthenian-Ukrainian consciousness in Austrian Galicia.[15] Przemyśl was its main bastion until the mid-nineteenth century, when the leading role was taken by L'viv (Hrycak 2000: 60). Nevertheless, only after the 'spring of nations' in 1848, and especially after constitutional rule began with the establishment of the imperial parliament in Vienna and the Galician Diet in L'viv, both in 1861, did the work of intellectuals materialize into a surge of national consciousness among the peasants (Magocsi 2002b: 16). This was a time of increasing battles between representatives of the Ukrainian national idea and the Galician administration, dominated by Poles. Despite these complications, Galicia became the 'Piedmont' from which a future, independent Ukrainian state in a much larger territory would grow

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[15] Not until the 1890s did the Ukrainian intelligentsia adopted 'Ukrainian' instead of 'Rusyn' or 'Ruthenian' to designate their national community (Magocsi 1998: 440).

(Magocsi 2002b: x; see Davies 2005: 115) and where a Ukrainian 'high' culture flourished alongside the Polish one. This high culture included national and educational associations such as Rus'ka Besida (1861), the Prosvita Society (1868), and the Shevchenko Scientific Society (1873), Ukrainian secondary schools, and Ukrainian departments at the University of L'viv (Magocsi 1998: 442–443).

Because of Przemyśl's central location and good communication links, the Austrian authorities at first considered making it the capital of the new province, but instead they chose L'viv, one hundred kilometres away (Stępień 2005: 53). Nevertheless, a large fortress was built in Przemyśl during the last third of the nineteenth century. It hosted a military base with thirty thousand soldiers in times of peace. During 1914–1915 the fortress was besieged by troops of the Russian tsar's army. In 1859, railway connections were established with Kraków, and in 1874, rail connections were made with Hungary through the Łupków mountain pass. State investment created unprecedented progress for the city in terms of infrastructure and employment. This golden age in the late Habsburg era is still visible in Przemyśl's architecture and has become important for contemporary narratives of the multicultural past. The last Austrian census, in 1910, registered Przemyśl's religious communities. Among 54,078 inhabitants (excluding soldiers at the military base), 25,306 (46.8 per cent) were Roman Catholics, 12,018 (22.2 per cent) were Greek Catholics, 16,062 (29.7 per cent) were Jews, and 692 (1.3 per cent) were 'others' (Kramarz 1930: 108–110).

The clergy, thanks to its services in church administration and monasteries and its role in the schooling system, remained an important social group in the city during the entire Habsburg period. The Roman Catholic bishop created a Jesuit college in Przemyśl in 1617, a Roman Catholic seminary in 1678, and a public library – the second public library in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth – and print shop in 1754 (Stępień 2005: 52). This concentration of clerical intelligentsia made the city one of the most important centres of education, and consequently of national movements, in the late nineteenth century for all three religiously defined collectives: Poles, Ukrainians, and Jews.

2.3 The Second Rzeczpospolita

After the Austro-Hungarian monarchy collapsed, the independent Second Polish Republic (Druga Rzeczpospolita) was established. It included all the former territory of Austrian Galicia, which was renamed Little Poland (Małopolska). While the fate of the Polish state, especially its eastern borders, was still being discussed, a West Ukrainian National Republic (also translated as West Ukrainian People's Republic) was declared in L'viv.

Local Poles saw the entire area of Galicia as historical Polish territory and did not want to subordinate themselves to this newly declared state. War broke out in 1918–1919 between the local Polish militia and the Ukrainian Galician Army, which had evolved from the battalions of Sich Riflemen after World War I, and the Poles drove the Ukrainians out of L'viv (Magocsi 2002b: 27). Later, Polish troops defeated the entire Ukrainian Galician Army and drove it from Galicia altogether. In 1919, the Paris Peace Conference granted Galicia to Poland.

Like other 'new' national minorities in East European 'nationalizing nation-states' (Brubaker 1996), the Ukrainians found themselves, after Polish troops subjugated the region, in a more disadvantageous position than they had been in under Austria. Ukrainian intellectuals, mostly Greek Catholic priests and teachers, could less easily find jobs in the state sector. Whereas Poles experienced significant stratification between peasants and non-peasants, the largest part of the Ukrainian intelligentsia, if it did not assimilate, remained locked in the peasantry. In contrast to the Polish clergy, which became a strong agent of the state in the countryside and formed the upper stratum of rural society, the most common personage among the Ukrainian rural intelligentsia was the Greek Catholic priest, who often worked on the land, remained poor, and did not become celibate. Nevertheless, the success of rural cooperatives in the villages, led by the Ukrainian intelligentsia, strengthened the social and consequently the intellectual basis of the Ukrainian national movement in the Second Polish Republic.

In the inter-war years, around 5 million Ukrainians (16 per cent of the population) lived in Poland. The Polish state introduced and nurtured a cult of military action as the means of commemorating its existence and building loyalty among the citizens. That military action included the Polish victory over the army of the West Ukrainian National Republic in 1919. Independence Day (11 November), commemorating Poles who died in the service of their country, became the day marking the Ukrainian defeat; one nation's heroes became the other's enemies. Among the most important Polish commemorations was that for the young Polish men known as the L'viv Eagles (Orlęta lwowskie), who had defended the streets of L'viv against the Ukrainian Galician Army. After the death of the chief of state Józef Piłsudski in 1935, state policy moved towards greater polonization (Motyka 2003: 43).

On the Ukrainian side there was a cult of military heroes. On tombs (*mohyla*) across the countryside, such as the one in Pikulice, near Przemyśl, nationally committed Ukrainians commemorated battles for the freedom of their nation as far back as the revolt against the Polish state in 1648–1654, led by Bohdan Khmel'nyts'kyi, a Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth noble and leader of the Zaporozhian Cossack hetmanate whose image is currently used in the 'banal nationalism' (Billig 1995) of the five-hryvnia Ukrainian banknote. After the defeat of the West Ukrainian National Republic, the former soldiers of the Ukrainian Galician Army organized themselves into an underground resistance against the Polish state. In 1929 the remains of the military and young student radicals established the illegal Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, or OUN (Orhanizatsiya Ukrayins'kykh Natsionalistiv).[16] Its purpose was to protect the Ukrainian population from repression and exploitation by the governing authorities; its ultimate goal was an independent and unified Ukrainian state. This was to be achieved by a national revolution, led by a dictatorship, that would drive out the occupying powers (Magocsi 1998: 596–597).

Apart from radical youths, it was members of these Ukrainian clandestine groups who carried out anti-state activities such as attacks on police stations, the pulling down of Polish symbols, acts of sabotage, boycotts of state schools and Polish tobacco and liquor monopolies, and assassinations (Magocsi 1998: 587).[17] Both Poles and Ukrainians started to bring 'their' church to the fore, and the lower clergy became particularly radicalized. Although the uppermost hierarchs sometimes expressed fear of the growing nationalism – best known was the position of the Greek Catholic metropolitan, Andrei Sheptyts'kyi (Magocsi 1998: 597) – the majority of bishops, Roman and Greek Catholic alike, remained silent.[18]

During the entire inter-war period, national groups dominated Przemyśl's politics. Piłsudski's followers, who aimed to build a secular state, competed for positions in local government with the National Democrats of the ardent nationalist Roman Dmowski, who enjoyed strong support among Polish youths. The Zionist movement was developing among the Jews, and the national movement among the Ukrainians (Tluczek 2001).

Although nationalist narratives might imply the opposite, most cities and towns in Little Poland remained peaceful until World War II. The high level of intermarriage between Greek and Roman Catholics until the late 1930s confirms the pattern of 'agrarian tolerance' that I discuss in chapter 6. According to a rule dating from 1863, based on canon law, in mixed marriages the groom and bride each remained in his or her own rite. Sons inherited their father's rite, and daughters, their mother's. Even during the Polish-Ukrainian war of 1918–1919, intermarriage remained common. In the Greek Catholic cathedral, more mixed marriages were performed than single-rite marriages (Table 1).

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[16] Other Ukrainian political parties functioned officially in Poland, including the important Ukrainian National Democratic Alliance (established in 1925), the Ukrainian Socialist-Radical party, and the Communist party (which became illegal in 1924), all of which supported cooperation with the Polish state (Magocsi 1998: 593).

[17] The best known assassination was that of Sydir Tverdokhlib, a Ukrainian leader who favoured co-operation with the Poles in 1922. Among the unsuccessful attempts, the best known was an attempt to assassinate the Polish chief of state, Józef Piłsudski, in 1921 (Magocsi 1998: 587).

[18] Stanisław Stępień, personal communication.

Table 1. Mixed Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic Marriages in Przemyśl, 1918–1939

	Roman Catholic Cathedral			Greek Catholic Cathedral		
Year	Mixed Marriages	Total Marriages	% Mixed	Mixed Marriages	Total Marriages	% Mixed
1918	64	265	24.1	65	122	53.2
1919	119	498	23.8	104	184	56.5
1928	No data	No data	No data	77	138	55.7
1929	55	208	26.4	71	143	49.6
1938	19	149	12.7	52	159	32.7
1939	29	188	15.4	61	176	34.6

Sources: Archiwum Archidiecezjalne w Przemyślu: Księgi zapowiedzi przedślubnych parafii katedralnej obrządku łacińskiego, 1918–1939, signature 12–14 *passim*; Archiwum Państwowe w Przemyślu: Parafie greckokatolickie w Przemyślu, Księgi zapowiedzi parafii katedralnej, 1918–1939, signature 26–28 *passim*.

The great degree of intermarriage between Roman and Greek Catholics in the aftermath of the Polish-Ukrainian war suggests that local people were less engaged in struggles between religious-national camps than the national history books lead one to expect. Although more historical data are needed to fully explain this phenomenon, there appears to be some validity to the hypothesis that religion crucially influenced a tolerant 'agrarian' attitude towards co-existence and civility that predominated in south-east Poland, especially before ethnic cleansing began during World War II.[19] Religious identity predominated and was less congruent with nationality during the inter-war period than it was during and after World War II. There were also ethnic Poles who practiced an eastern Christianity in Poland before World War II (Stępień 1987: 141–142). Another explanation takes into account the tolerant, multi-ethnic, multi-confessional heritage of the city in the years after the collapse of the Habsburg Empire. The unprecedented ethnic violence that followed the inter-war period, however, changed the city dramatically.

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[19] The historian Stanisław Stępień (personal communication), whom I thank for directing my attention to the numbers in Table 1, sees in the high level of intermarriage a sign that the people of Przemyśl were actively showing their dissatisfaction with the Polish-Ukrainian war.

2.4 World War II and Its Aftermath

Writing about World War II and the first wave of ethnic cleansing in Yugoslavia, Ger Duijzings (2000) saw the war as an important force in nation-building. In other words, violence can be central to changing local understandings of the abstract, modern category 'nation' (Sorabji 1995: 80–81), and this change happens as a result of the passionate 'project of transforming neighbours into enemies' (Bowman 1994: 149). Rogers Brubaker (2004: 92) has noted that political violence can be obviously 'ethnic', but the question remains how 'violence can take on ethnic hues'. Tom Nairn (1998: 107) addressed the issue of violent ethno-nationalist conflicts in predominantly rural situations, where 'rural' tends to mean 'peasant' – that is, where small landholdings, rigid morality, and village culture prevail or have recently prevailed. David Laitin (1995) argued that the violent outcomes of some nationalist movements were based not only upon macro-structural changes and ideologies but also upon certain features of the social organization of rural and small-town life – for example, the existence of an opportunity for political recruitment among young males with a culture of secrecy and a code of honour different from that of the dominant culture of the state. Jeff Pratt (2003: 155) observed that extreme forms of ethnic cleansing are not about nation but about dense local patterns of kinship and neighbourhood that push families and residents of localities to close ranks in self-defence.

In rural Hercegovina, Mart Bax (1995) showed that although community peace was initially disrupted by outside forces, structural-historical conditions linked to competition for power between state, diocesan, and monastic ecclesiastical regimes, together with family structure, made village war during World War II and again in the 1990s particularly bloody. As Helen Watson (1995: 166–167) explained, narratives of war and religion combine expressions of religious ideals and values with secular notions of patriotism, nationalism, and territoriality. What she called a 'sacralizing' process of legitimating violence is a way 'to transform a secular concern, such as ethnic identity or territorial sovereignty, into a quasi-religious article of faith' (Watson 1995: 167). In times of war, a kind of 'holy violence' can emerge when secular war propaganda borrows a demonizing tendency from religious iconographers (Watson 1995: 169). It is not that religion makes violence an acceptable way of resolving conflict, Watson concluded (1995:

177), but that believers justify their actions as part of some morally superior, transcendent plan.

As Watson also noted, apart from sometimes fuelling violence, religion contributes to the personal comprehension and public expression of the costs of war. This may happen many years after an actual loss takes place. Religious institutions may foster narratives commemorating events of violence, and these narratives may cause subsequent generations to experience the pain of loss in a virtual way and enable 'memories' of the events to endure (Watson 1995: 167). Because I am primarily concerned in this book with the importance of the past in contemporary politics in south-east Poland and the way in which the past, often mediated through institutional religion, is important for maintaining both national divisions and tolerance, I must first point out the role that violence plays in the politics of commemoration.

As a result of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, independent Poland vanished from the map in 1939. Until the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union in 1941, Przemyśl was divided into German and Soviet areas, with the river San as part of the border. The Nazi administration supported the Ukrainian case while suppressing Polish public life.[20] Whereas a certain amount of autonomy was guaranteed for Ukrainians, and secondary schools for Ukrainians were established, Polish schools were banned and Polish political structures were made illegal.

Once German troops attacked the Soviet Union in 1941, ambitions for Ukrainian independence were raised. However, after an independent Ukrainian state was proclaimed in L'viv, the Nazis imprisoned the Ukrainian leaders. The OUN, the most important political group, split between the predominantly young followers of Stepan Bandera (1909–1959) and the older members, who followed Andrii Mel'nyk (1890–1964), a former colonel in the Ukrainian Galician Army. Under Nazi occupation, the Bandera faction opposed cooperation with the Germans and appealed to Ukrainian police forces under the Nazis to join them in fighting Ukrainians' enemies. They declared war against the Germans, Soviets, and Poles, a move that earned them additional support, especially among Ukrainian youths.

Other partisan troops existed besides the OUN, particularly those of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (Ukrayins'ka Povstans'ka Armiya, or UPA). The radical Bandera followers subordinated themselves to the UPA in 1942 and began ideologically to dominate the Ukrainian underground from that time forward. This created the political-military connection OUN-UPA. After World War II, UPA partisan units continued fighting the Soviet Union and communist Poland until the early 1950s, especially in the Carpathian

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[20] Ukrainians formed their own policy corps. In 1943, the Galician Division, formed of Ukrainian volunteers, entered the ranks of the SS (Magocsi 2002b: 33).

Mountains. The UPA strove to remove Poles from areas it regarded as indigenously Ukrainian through what is now known as ethnic cleansing.

Throughout Poland, the Polish partisan Home Army (Armija Krajowa, or AK) fought the Nazis during the war, but later some of its members continued to kill Ukrainian villagers. The largest number of a total of fifteen thousand to twenty thousand Ukrainian civilians killed in Poland was recorded in 1945 (Motyka 2003: 47), after the front had already moved westwards. The UPA had begun action against Polish civilians in 1943 in Volhynia, the region east of Galicia, which was only sparsely populated by Poles. After the provisional border between Poland and Soviet Ukraine – the Curzon line, proposed in 1918 – was formalized by the Soviet Union in 1945, UPA fighters moved westwards from the USSR.[21] In 1947, some fifteen hundred remaining UPA soldiers operated in south-east Poland. The number of Poles killed by the UPA between 1943 and 1947 in Galicia, Volhynia, and other areas is estimated to have been between eighty thousand and one hundred thousand (Motyka 2003: 47).

On the basis of an agreement between the Soviet Union and Poland in 1944, and provoked by the continuing ethnic war, the two countries announced 'repatriation' plans for Poland's Ukrainian minority and for Poles in Soviet Ukraine. As a consequence, the resistance of the Ukrainian population inside Poland increased. The defenders of Ukrainian villagers appear to have been UPA soldiers fighting not only against 'regular' repatriations organized by the Polish army but also against Polish partisans and bandits who were plundering Ukrainian villages. The tactics of the guerrilla fighters allowed no compromise. Churches, *tserkvy,* and entire villages were burned, and priests and peasants were killed. To prevent Ukrainian property from passing into Polish hands, UPA guerrillas burned villages left empty after Ukrainians were deported. The violence spiralled.

Andryi, a pensioner living in Przemyśl, experienced these times and described them in the late 1990s as follows (Hann and Stępień 2000: 54):

> Before the war there already were OUN propagandists in our village … during the German occupation … consciousness somehow rose, and home defence troops appeared in our village, among others ... Some people had weapons, but in secrecy … When the front passed through in 1945, the Polish bands appeared … From the neighbouring Polish villages … they were attacking our village … It was not an army at all, just inhabitants of the nearby villages; they attacked our village and … behaved very cruelly, collected the better items

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[21] Named after the British foreign minister Lord Curzon, the demarcation line between Poland and Soviet Russia was proposed during the Russian-Polish War of 1919–1920 but became the Soviet-Polish border (with a few alterations) only after World War II.

> from homes, and destroyed, destroyed in a barbarian way everything what was impossible to take away … at Easter 1946, the first of the inhabitants of the village died … the first victim of Poles … the village at that time was more susceptible, guarded; it created home defence, organized itself. It lasted a week or two and then these Polish bands were ridden down after *enkawudziści* [the popular name for officers in the NKVD, the Soviet Secret police, the predecessor of the KGB] showed up with tanks.

When repatriations between Poland and the Soviet Union ended in 1946, around 150,000 Ukrainians remained in Poland. Because the cities had already been 'cleaned' – the Jews had vanished into the concentration camps and urban Ukrainians were the first targets for repatriation – the only remaining non-Polish people in post-war Poland were Greek Catholic peasants. At this time the Polish state devised the plan called Action Vistula (Akcja Wisła) with the aim of forcefully dispersing Ukrainian villagers from south-eastern Poland to the areas known as Ziemie Odzyskane in the north and west, which Poland had acquired from Germany after the Yalta Conference in exchange for losses in the east (see Misiło 1993). The 'action', carried out by 'Operational Group Wisła', began at four o'clock on the morning of 28 April 1947. Several hundred 'suspicious' persons were sent to prisons or the central work camp in Jaworzno, part of the former Nazi concentration camp in Oświęcim (Auschwitz).[22] Action Vistula was officially closed with a ceremony in which the most deserving soldiers were decorated, an event held on the Polish-Czechoslovak border. Activities such as Action Vistula were among the final steps in establishing a homogeneous nation-state in Poland after the war.[23]

In Przemyśl the situation was similar to that in the country. The Jewish population was gone; just a few persons survived, and most of them, together with those who were forced to leave Soviet Ukraine, left Poland after the war. In 1946 Przemyśl had 36,900 inhabitants (Konieczny 2002: 162). In 1950, after the Ukrainians had been expelled, it numbered 35,000 inhabitants (Mleczak 1988: 270). As Zdisław Konieczny (2002: 155) noted, between 1945 and 1949, 9,517 Poles and a few Jews from the areas that became Soviet Ukraine were resettled in the city. This meant that one-third of Przemyśl's inhabitants after World War II were probably Poles who had experienced forced repatriation.

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[22] In the 1940s, 3,873 people went through the Jaworzno work camp (Hann and Stępień 2000: 56).

[23] Officially, the central committee of the Polish communist party declared Poland the state of one nation only in 1976 (Berdychowska 1998: 149). As late as in 1977 it was decided to rename some 120 settlements, especially in Beskid Niski and the Bieszczady Mountains, which had been heavily populated by eastern Christians before World War II. After several protests from Polish intellectual and associational circles in the 1980s, most of these settlements reverted to their original names (Berdychowska 1998: 164–165).

In the late 1950s, Ukrainians and Lemkos began to return to their native region, and by the 1980s, some ten thousand had established themselves in south-east Poland. Many of them did not return to their native villages but moved to Przemyśl, partly because their villages were either occupied by Polish settlers or had simply ceased to exist, but also because the city offered greater anonymity in a nationalistically reminiscent country. Historical memory linked to Przemyśl also played its role (Hann and Stępień 2000). These people returned to south-east Poland as self-conscious Ukrainians, no matter what their original collective identification had been (Hann 1985: 35).

The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was restored after 1956, operating under the umbrella of the Roman Catholic Church. Przemyśl was one of the first Greek Catholic parishes re-established in Poland after World War II. The Greek Catholic Church formally regained its independent status only after the fall of communism. The pope made the former Roman Catholic Church of the Holiest Heart of Jesus the Greek Catholic Cathedral of St John the Baptist in 1991. Although undergoing substantial renovation and 'Byzantinization', this cathedral has never fully satisfied the older generations of Greek Catholics.

Paradoxically, the survival of the Greek Catholic Church in Poland during communism was made possible by the independent position the Roman Catholic Church enjoyed there. The alliance between the Roman Catholic Church and the opposition Solidarity movement remained strong during the entire period of the Polish People's Republic. Tomasz Zarycki (2000) noted the lack of church-state conflict in Polish history and also observed that social and national questions continued to merge with one another during the socialist years. Even the most massive protests during socialism, those of the Solidarity trade union movement in the 1980s, were both pro-independence (anti-Soviet) and social protests (Zarycki 2000: 863).

The church under socialism enjoyed enormous popularity among both intellectuals and the masses, and popular Catholicism flourished. People visited churches frequently, and the clergy enjoyed high prestige. Religious classes were taught, even if they were not always held in schools, and the chaplaincy was kept in the Polish army. The only Catholic university in the socialist world, Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski, founded in 1918, survived independent of the state budget. As we are reminded by Norman Davies (2005: 164), the church found itself with a monopoly over religious belief unparalleled in Polish history; it became the chief moral arbiter of the nation, opposing the communist regime, prosperous, confident, and more secure than ever before.

2.5 Church and State after 1989

From the perspective of the 1990s, the Roman Catholic Church won the legitimacy competition over the nation against the communist state in Poland and strongly influenced the establishment of a new political order. A concordat between Poland and the Holy See was signed in 1993 without serious political debate. Accepted by the overwhelming majority of the Sejm, it was signed by the president in 1998 (Eberts 1998: 832). As a consequence, the church not only secured its position and autonomy but also gained the ability to influence state policies. The concordat was based on the principle of mutual respect for the autonomy and independence of each entity in its own sphere. The exclusive role of Catholicism in Poland is illustrated by the *Invocatio Dei* in the preamble of the Polish Constitution of 1997 (Eberts 1998; Zubrzycki 2001). The Constitution of Poland respects religious freedom; churches and other religious organizations are guaranteed equal rights, and the state is to remain impartial in matters of personal conviction.

After the fall of communism, proselytizing groups such as the Hare Krishnas and Jehovah's Witnesses increased their activities in the Polish religious 'market'. In comparison with other Eastern European countries, Poland has seen new religious movements acquire more adherents (Froese and Pfaff 2001: 490). Not all the denominations enjoy the same institutional position in the state; the Polish parliament has passed laws securing the state's relations with some denominations. These agreements do not threaten the dominant position of the Roman Catholic Church.

Apart from the Constitution and the concordat, the Roman Catholic Church influenced state policies in several other areas: the institutionalization of religious education in public schools, the passage of a 1992 law regulating radio and television with a vague defence of Christian values, and an anti-abortion law just slightly less restrictive than that of Ireland, passed in 1993 (Korbonski 2000). The church also established influential media channels, of which the nationalist and xenophobic Radio Maryja, transmitted from the city of Toruń and headed by the Redemptorist monk Father Tadeusz Rydzyk, is the best known. Radio Maryja attracted some 5 million listeners (17 per cent of Polish citizens), ranked fifth in the national ratings, and received a license for a television channel, TV Trwam (Korbonski 2000: 131; Luxmoore 2001: 322). Although the Polish episcopate has become concerned from time to time with the controversial content of its broadcasts and several times has intervened against its tone, Radio Maryja retains a stable group of listeners, mostly retired women nicknamed by journalists 'mohair berets' (*moherowe berety*) after the hats they wear. Independent of the church but aiming to inform people about its activities, a Catholic Information Agency was established in 1993. Although voluntary contributions from the faithful declined after 1989, the life-style of the clergy was considered well above the country's average, and the mushrooming of new church buildings across the country denied the impoverishment of the church that its high representatives complained about (Korbonski 2000: 133). The church's revenues also remained untaxed.

As widely publicized in the press, the Polish episcopate is divided roughly into three groups: conservatives, pragmatics, and liberals (Korbonski 2000: 142). The head of the episcopate elected in 2004, the archbishop and metropolitan of Przemyśl, Józef Michalik, was considered to belong to the fundamentalist camp; he was known for his 1993 statement that "the Catholics should vote for the Catholics, the Jews for the Jews", as well as for his attacks on Freemasons (Eberts 1998: 827). Looking at the social composition of the episcopate, in 1995 one-half of the bishops came from peasant families, and one-quarter had working-class origins (Korbonski 2000: 142). The church as a whole supported Poland's entry into the European Union, as did an overwhelming majority of its clergy (Eberts 1998: 141). An active, tolerant, open Catholicism – a stream Davies (2005: 162) traced back to Catholic intellectuals who positioned themselves politically between the socialists and the nationalists (Piłsudski and Dmowski, respectively) in inter-war Poland and who represented the strongest and most independent element of the Polish intelligentsia during communism – also plays an important role in strengthening civility in Poland today. Nevertheless, unlike during the communist years and despite the fact that more than 95 per cent of citizens (34 million) have been baptized Catholic and one-third of them attend church regularly (Luxmoore 2001: 315), public support for the church has been waning since 1989 (Korbonski 2000).

In south and south-east Poland, this decline in public support has been less dramatic than in the rest of the country (Mariański 2004: 194). As the archives of the communist secret police show, during the socialist years these parts of the country demanded 'particularly hard work, especially because of the traditional ties locals had to the Catholic faith, which had strong support in well-organized church structures' (Arcybiskup 1997: 3). The then Roman Catholic archbishop of Przemyśl, Ignacy Tokarczuk, was considered by the secret police to be a 'decidedly dangerous enemy of the People's Republic of Poland' (Arcybiskup 1997: 4). One of my informants, a Roman Catholic priest, identified him as the 'second most prominent enemy of communism in Poland after Cardinal Wyszynski, the Polish Primate'. Under the leadership of Bishop Tokarczuk from 1966 to 1993, 430 new churches and chapels were built in the Przemyśl diocese (Arcybiskup 1997: 5). Because of these conditions, it is no accident that south-east Poland showed a conservative preference after 1989 (Zarycki and Nowak 2000;

Luxmoore 2001: 308). Since 1989 the Przemyśl city council has been dominated by right-wing politicians with close links to the Roman Catholic Church.

Plate 3. Popular Catholicism in south-east Poland: A Roman Catholic procession to Kopystańka Hill, near the former Ukrainian village of Kopysno.

There are five Roman Catholic parishes within the boundaries of the city, and nine in the whole decanate. There are thirteen male monastic orders in the archdiocese, six of which have branches in the city. Of twenty-nine female Roman Catholic orders in the archdiocese, Przemyśl hosts twelve.[24] There is also a Roman Catholic seminary in Przemyśl. Three major Marian shrines lie in or close to the city: the Sanctuary of the Mother of God of Jackowa (Sanktuarium Matki Boskej Jackowej) in Przemyśl cathedral (consecrated in 1766), the Sanctuary of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady Maria (Sanktuarium Niepokalanego Poczęcia Naszej Maryi Panny) in the Franciscan church (consecrated in 1777), and the Sanctuary of the Mother of God of Calvary (Saktuarium Matki Boskej Kalwaryjskiej) in Kalwaria Pacławska (consecrated in 1882). Kalwaria and the Franciscan monastery located there are also among the major regional pilgrimage places, and before World War II, Greek Catholics worshipped there as well. Two Roman Catholic saints came directly from Przemyśl: József Sebastian Pelczar (1842–1924), a former bishop of Przemyśl, whose remains are in the Przemyśl Roman Catholic cathedral, and August Czartoryski (1858–1893), a

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[24] Source: http://www.przemysl.opoka.org.pl/html/zgromadzenia_zakony.php, accessed December 2005.

Salesian monk who died in Italy but whose body was removed first to Sieniawa, where his family had owned large estates, and in 1964 to the Przemyśl Salesian church. The two were canonized in 2003 and 2004, respectively, by Pope John Paul II.

In 2002 there were 1,067 priests and monastic priests registered in the Przemyśl diocese, and 814,000 believers (the Przemyśl archdiocese includes the dioceses of Zamość, Rzesów, and Przemyśl). Whereas in the west and northwest of Poland in 2004, one Roman Catholic priest served 1,211 believers, the Przemyśl diocese had one priest for every 763 believers.[25] In Tarnów diocese, 75 believers attend services every Sunday, and in Rzesów diocese, 71, but in the Warsaw and Łódż dioceses, which are mostly urban and industrial, the figures are only 35 and 32, respectively.[26] Chris Hann estimated that around 500 clergy lived in Przemyśl in the mid-1990s (Hann 1998c: 248), which made one member of the clergy for every 140 people.

The ratio of marriages approved by the church to so-called civil marriages from 1999 to 2004 seems to have been stable, and around two-thirds of all marriages in the city were concordat marriages.[27] The relatively high proportion of civil marriages might be explained by the presence of an independent 'liberal' subculture in the city. Apart from its reputation for devotion, Przemyśl is also known as a city of artists and intellectuals. Owing to its size, it offers considerable anonymity and the opportunity for individualism in religious practice, which, together with larger changes in marriage patterns towards greater independence from the church, might account for the relatively large proportion of civil marriages. In contrast to marriage ceremonies, 600 funerals were held in Przemyśl's Main Cemetery in 2003, of which 596 were Roman and Greek Catholic funerals.[28]

In comparison with the Roman Catholic Church, the Greek Catholic Church, with eighty-two thousand adherents in 2002, is the minority church in contemporary Poland.[29] In Przemyśl the situation is slightly different, but even there, approximately two thousand Greek Catholics form a relatively small minority among almost seventy thousand inhabitants. Przemyśl is the historical and contemporary seat of bishops of both Catholic rites. In 1991

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[25] I compared the south-eastern dioceses (Przemyśl, Rzesów, and Tarnów) with those in the north-west (Szczecin, Koszalin, and Zielona Góra). Source: http://www.stat.gov.pl/serwis/polska/2004/dzial4/obrazy4/rys30.htm, accessed October 2004.

[26] Source: http://serwisy.gazeta.pl/kosciol/2029020,64807,3024135.html, accessed November 2005.

[27] Of 405 weddings in Przemyśl in 2003, 264 were so-called concordat, or church approved, and 141 were civil marriages. Data are from the Civil Office of Przemyśl.

[28] Source: Main Cemetery statistics.

[29] Source: http://www.stat.gov.pl/serwis/polska/2004/dzial4/obrazy4/rys29.htm, accessed November 2004.

Pope John Paul II appointed a bishop of Przemyśl of the Byzantine-Ukrainian rite, thus providing Greek Catholics in Poland with their first diocesan bishop since the war. In 1993 the Greek Catholic Church in Poland was taken from the administration of the Polish Primate, under which it had functioned during the communist years, and was made directly subordinate to the Holy See. In 1996, the four-hundredth anniversary of the Union of Brest, the church was reorganized into two dioceses, Przemyśl-Warsaw and Wrocław-Gdańsk. Przemyśl became the seat of the metropolitanate, with an archbishop, Ivan (Jan) Martyniak, as its head. Besides Roman and Greek Catholics, a small Orthodox community and a few Protestant denominations complete the city's religious landscape.

Greek Catholic believers, dispersed into 136 parishes across Poland, were served by 65 priests in 2002 – one priest for every 1,262 believers.[30] In Podkarpackie County, in which the city of Przemyśl lies, thirty-two thousand people belonged to the Greek Catholic Church in 2004.[31] As part of the Roman Catholic seminary, Greek Catholic priests are educated at Catholic University in Lublin. There are two male Greek Catholic monastic orders in Poland – Basilians and Studites – and three female orders – Basilians, Sisters Servants, and Josephites. For the entire country this makes around two hundred people in Greek Catholic orders (Berdychowska 1998: 171). Except for the Studites, all the orders have branches in Przemyśl. There is also a lay association, the Christian Brotherhood of St Volodymyr.

The Greek Catholic Church publishes its own monthly magazine, *Blahovist,* and, since 1987, the Greek Catholic calendar. The church's liturgical language is Ukrainian, and it follows the Julian calendar. Two canonized Greek Catholic personalities came from Przemyśl: the bishop Iosafat Kotsylovs'kyi (1876–1947), who died in a Soviet prison, and his auxiliary, Hryhoryi Lakota (1883–1950), who died in the Siberian gulag. Both canonized in 2001, they are nowadays the greatest martyrs of the whole Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, which, apart from western Ukraine, has dioceses concentrated among ethnic Ukrainians in Canada and the United States.

Concerning religious statistics, in 2003 there were three mixed marriages out of a total of four marriages in the Przemyśl Greek Catholic parish. In 2004 there was none, and in 2005 the majority were again mixed marriages. More than one-third of all marriages in 2000–2005 were mixed Roman and Greek Catholic.[32] In contrast to these figures and pre-war statistics, during my stay I recorded substantial exclusivity based on rite. Just two sixteen-year-old students from among twenty-two I interviewed in the Ukrainian secondary school, which was particularly popular among highly conscious Ukrainian families, declared that they came from mixed Roman-Greek Catholic families.

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[30] Source: http://www.stat.gov.pl/serwis/polska/2004/dzial4/obrazy4/rys29.htm, accessed November 2004.

[31] Rocznik statystyczny Województwa Podkarpackiego, Rzesów, 2004, p. 117.

[32] Information obtained from the Przemyśl Greek Catholic parish.

Although the majority of Ukrainians now live in the north and north-west of Poland, the major part of the former property of the Greek Catholic Church is found in Przemyśl and south-east Poland (Berdychowska 1998: 171). Ukrainian activists in Przemyśl estimate people of Ukrainian origin there to be up to one-quarter of all inhabitants. Although people of possible Ukrainian origin may choose Polish nationality in opinion polls, and many attend the Roman Catholic Church, and although the number of 'unknown' or 'hidden' Ukrainians is certainly higher than that declared in the census, the figure of one-quarter seems to be an exaggeration.

For more than thirty years during the socialist period, only one secondary school in Poland offered some classes in Ukrainian, and Ukrainian philology was taught at Warsaw University. The conditions for establishing minority schools in Poland are favourable nowadays, and because of their higher costs, minority schools receive a 20 per cent larger budget than majority schools. If the parents of at least seven pupils in an elementary school request it, or the parents of fourteen students in a secondary school, a minority class can be opened. The minority schools offer limited teaching in the Ukrainian language in addition to Polish – for example, lectures on Ukrainian language and literature, history, and geography. In the 1990s there were sixty-nine such elementary schools and six secondary ones in Poland, and the number of pupils in them rose (Berdychowska 1998: 166).

In Przemyśl, a Ukrainian primary school was established in 1991, and a secondary school followed in 1995.[33] In contrast, there were ten Polish secondary schools in the city. In 2000, 266 pupils studied at the two minority schools. At my last visit, in the summer of 2005, preparations had been made for offering a bachelor's degree in Ukrainian studies at the high school, the state-established institution of higher education, which worked alongside a private one, a business and administration high school established in the 1990s. Statistics show less university education in south-east Poland than in the rest of the country. In the city of Przemyśl itself, however, university education reached more than 14 per cent of the inhabitants, one-third higher than the Polish average.[34]

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[33] The Ukrainian-language primary and secondary school, named after Markiian Shashkevych (Szkoła Podstawowa i Liceum Ogólnokształcące z ukraińskim językiem nauczania im. Markijana Szaszkiewicza), drew on the inter-war tradition of naming primary schools after Ukrainian national leaders.

2.6 Contemporary South-East Poland

People living in villages in Podkarpackie County in 2002 made up 59.5 per cent of the county's population; the comparable figure for all of Poland was 38.4 per cent.[35] In May 2004, unemployment in Przemyśl was 21.5 per cent, and outside the city it was 24.9 per cent.[36] Both figures were not only above the national average but also above the average of 20.6 per cent for the county, considered one of the poorest in the country.[37] The largest of the few employers were the state and the municipality, although the church also formed an important part of the local economy. It gave jobs to a variety of professionals, from restoration artists to janitors, construction workers, and drivers for old-age homes.

Heavy industry appeared in south-east Poland in the 1930s, increasing especially in the 1960s, and was situated north and north-west of Rzesów, some 150 kilometres north-west of Przemyśl, in cities such as Stalowa Wola, Mielec, and Tarnobrzeg. Some smaller industrial plants have appeared near the towns of Sanok, Jasło, and Krosno, in the foothills of the Carpathians, but the entire region remains predominantly agricultural. During socialism, small building-material, textile, and chemical factories functioned in the city, but more jobs were offered by food-processing plants and craft workshops. Few of these survived in the postsocialist years.

As Annegret Haase (2002) mentioned, south-east Poland was one of the least developed areas of the country, and its countryside especially showed a lack of state investment during the communist years. As Haase also noted, the lack of investment continued in the first postsocialist decade, the outflow of the work force was significant, and seasonal work and informal labour relations based on kinship and friendship ties predominated. Although the number of people working in agriculture has fallen since 1989, such work still represents between one-fifth and one-fourth of total employment in Poland.[38] The number of people working in agriculture is 15 per cent higher in south-east Poland than in the country as a whole, and the majority of farms are small – less than ten hectares – and privately owned (Haase 2002: 54).[39] Low productivity and a lack of mechanization in agriculture had already been reported during the socialist years (Hann 1985; Turowski 1994; Wieruszewska 1994). Although the situation has changed somewhat and is expected to change more substantially with the country's integration into the European Union, up to the mid-2000s structural changes in south-east Poland had materialized slowly.

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[34] Glówny Urząd Statystyczny. Ludność: stan i struktura demograficzno-społeczna. Rok 2002, Warszawa 2003, tab. 19, p. 178 and tab. 20, p. 184.

[35] Source: http://www.stat.gov.pl/demografia/index.html, accessed December 2005.

[36] *Życie Podkarpackie,* 12 May 2004.

[37] For people between 18 and 24, the unemployment rate was 28 per cent. Among all the unemployed, 48 per cent were women, and 58 per cent had been unemployed for more than a year (*Życie podkarpackie,* 14 April 2004).

[38] Source: http://www.stat.gov.pl/opracowania_zbiorcze/duzy_rocznik_stat/2006/ drs2006-dane_o_wojewodztwach.pdf, pp. 66–67, accessed January 2007.

Plate 4. The countryside around Przemyśl.

According to a questionnaire I administered in the summer of 2004 to ninety-six people in Przemyśl, almost one-fifth of those surveyed lived in three-generational households. A quarter of them said that one or more members of their family worked in agriculture, and more than three-quarters indicated that they were at least partially self-sufficient in food. Although labour migration also contributed to family income during the socialist years (North America has always been a popular destination), it has reached much greater numbers since the opening of the borders. Nowadays migrants' destinations are all over western Europe in addition to the large cities of central and western Poland. Podkarpackie County shows negative net migration for permanent residence.[40] In 2004, direct coach connections linked Przemyśl with London twice a week and with other major European cities.

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[39] In 1995, 87 per cent of all agricultural enterprises in south-east Poland were private farms. In 1997, 35.4 per cent of private farms in south-east Poland were 1–2 ha, 47.4 per cent were 2–5 ha, and 14.8 were 5–10 ha. Only 2.3 per cent of all farms were larger than 10 ha (Haase 2002: 54).

Not only is westwards labour migration high, but so is trade tourism with Ukraine. Although on the decline in 2004, trade tourism still brought profit to people on both sides of the border. In 1996, more than 1.5 million Ukrainians crossed the border in Medyka, the most frequent border crossing with Ukraine and the closest to Przemyśl, for both transit and shopping (Haase 2002: 117).[41] Many former inhabitants of the San Valley and their heirs come to visit the memory sites of their nation in south-east Poland – *tserkvy*, graves, and war memorials – and a small number of well-off Ukrainians have become regular tourists in the Bieszczady Mountains.

miniMAL
miniMAL
APTEKA CORDA

Plate 5. The remains of the bazaar in front of the new shopping mall in Przemyśl.

Perhaps the most visible everyday presence of Ukrainians in Przemyśl is at the bazaar, not far from the city centre. In the mid-1990s the Przemyśl bazaar was the second largest in Poland, after Stadion Dziesięciolecia in Warsaw. Nowadays it is significantly smaller and divided into Ukrainian (*ruski*) and Polish (*polski*) sections. It nevertheless remains a substantial source of the city's income. As a result of Poland's entry into the EU, a visa requirement for Ukrainian citizens was introduced in 2004. Although the numbers of visitors initially fell, they soon returned to previous levels.[42]

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[40] Source: http://www.stat.gov.pl/opracowania_zbiorcze/duzy_rocznik_stat/2006/ drs2006-dane_o_wojewodztwach.pdf, p. 66, accessed January 2007.

[41] Of people crossing the border from Ukraine, 85.2 per cent in 1997 and 77.6 per cent in 1998 indicated an interest in shopping in south-east Poland (Haase 2002: 117).

Despite the region's opening towards the wider world, Przemyśl's inhabitants subjectively perceive it as conservative. Their perceptions stand in strong contrast to the dynamics of religious processions, the bazaar, the border crossing, discothèques, and the two new shopping malls in the city. Nevertheless, a former local politician, age forty-nine, told me that 'nothing takes place here, nothing can be done here, everybody hates everybody, there is jealousy, and it is the "last resort", our little Polish hell [*piekelko polske*]'. A friend of mine, a forty-year-old journalist, was even more explicit about the conservatism of people in Przemyśl: 'When I moved to Przemyśl fifteen years ago, people kept saying to me, "Do not try to change anything, because you are not going to be able to change anything here!"'

A twenty-five-year-old student pondered the city's social life: 'I cannot explain it. Perhaps it is the fog from the San that causes lethargy here. Fifteen years is not enough for a change in local mentality.' When I asked a young unemployed woman about her view of the future, she replied: 'The San will flow in twenty years the same way it is flowing now. Nothing will really change here.' One of my friends, referring to the local conservatism, said ironically that the 'mentality of a peasant who became a lord' (*mentalność spańszczyźnianego chlopa*) prevailed in Przemyśl. Most of the people I talked to characterized the city as having the 'culture of a little town' (*kultura malomiasteczkowa*).

In contrast, for younger people with higher education whom I questioned, the city's prospects seemed brighter. A thirty-three-year-old man working for the city council told me: 'Przemyśl is a magic and special city, something like Kraków. In ten, fifteen years I would like to see a renovated Przemyśl where people will earn money and will not complain that nothing changes and nothing they do succeeds.' The proximity of the border with economically growing Ukraine and the city of L'viv, with almost 1 million inhabitants, offers some opportunities to fulfil this optimistic scenario. Together with EU funds directed towards tourism, commerce with Ukraine is expected to save the region from poverty – an expectation held especially by local elites and Polish development agencies.[43]

The opinions of open-minded inhabitants and city intellectuals, artists, and university students balance the dominant conservative view of prospects for south-east Poland. They also offer an alternative view of regional and national history. I remember a passionate discussion among my Polish friends about the role of Poles in the World War II killings of Jews, a topic that was opened up in Polish public discourse by Jan Tomasz Grosz's account (Gross 2001) of the Jedwabne massacre and by the apology Poland's President Kwaśniewski made later in the name of the Poles.[44] These trends and subcultures in the city demand additional fieldwork, and I touch upon them only briefly in this book. But even if changes are under way and many young and better-off people see the way out of decline – after EU entry in May 2004, positive changes were expected in all the East European member states – conservatism is likely to remain an important characteristic of the local setting.

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[42] *Życie Podkarpackie,* 31 March 2004.

[43] It is expected that financial support for Podkarpackie County from the European Union will reach 1.6 billion euros in five years. See http://miasta.gazeta.pl/rzeszow/2029020,34962,3205662.html, accessed March 2006.

2.7 Conclusion

In both its ancient history and its modern ethnic conflicts, Przemyśl is equally important to the Roman Catholic Polish majority and the Greek Catholic Ukrainian minority. After forty years of clandestine existence, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church has been gradually restored to the city's public sphere since 1989. Although Przemyśl has a strong urban heritage, many of its inhabitants came from the countryside during socialism. The city is surrounded by purely agricultural settlements with a prevalence of small landholding. Przemyśl and south-east Poland are a historically marginalized, underdeveloped part of the country and of Eastern Europe, and the institutions of the Catholic Church are exceptionally strong there.

To approach the phenomenon of political mobilization in south-east Poland on the basis of nationalism is insufficient. Instead, one must look at the politics of commemoration, in which a 'traditional' social structure is combined with narratives ingrained in people's memories that evoke the agrarian era. A consistent bearer of this post-peasantism in south-east Poland is the Catholic religion. Neither economic changes related to Poland's entry into the European Union nor changes in the direction of currently fashionable multiculturalism can be explained without considering the politics of commemoration. In the following chapters I introduce the sources of this politics.

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[44] The Jedwabne pogrom was a massacre of Jews living in the town of Jedwabne, in north-east Poland, that took place in July 1941. Although long assumed to have been a Nazi operation, it is now known to have been carried out mostly by non-Jewish Poles in the area.

Chapter 3
From Guerrilla Warfare to Commemorations of Violence

> Action Vistula took place more than fifty years ago, but in my opinion it is still going on.
>
> A senior Greek Catholic priest in Przemyśl, March 2004

Several times during 2003 and 2004 I joined a group of young friends, both men and women, in their trips across Zakerzonie, as they called the historically ethnic Ukrainian part of contemporary Poland.[45] We travelled to the mountains of Bieszczady and Beskid Niski, as far west as Krynica, considered to be the Lemko border, as well as north of Przemyśl beyond Lubaczów.[46] We visited places in the hills of Pogórze Dynowskie, north-west of the city, and Pogórze Przemyskie, in the south. We explored my friends' historical homeland, the area they nostalgically imagined as having a Ukrainian past – the same way it had been imagined by their student predecessors who had begun visiting the region in the 1980s and had mapped the disappearing wooden church architecture.[47]

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[45] The term *Zakerzonie,* or *Zakerzonski kraj,* appeared in the 1920s in the L'viv Ukrainian press, referring to the Ukrainian 'lands' on the 'Polish' side of the Curzon line. Especially after the border between the USSR and Poland was established in 1944, Ukrainian nationalist propaganda abroad began to use this term more precisely. The surviving UPA fighters from Zakerzonie made up an influential part of the Ukrainian nationalist exiles in the west and kept the term alive up to the late 1980s and early 1990s, when it again became popular in the nationalist press in Ukraine. In Poland, the term reappeared in the Ukrainian student press in the 1980s (personal communication with Stanisław Stępień and Bogdan Huk).

[46] Lemkos/Rusyns/Ruthenians are an eastern Christian group living across the north-east Carpathians, mostly in Slovakia, Poland, Ukraine, and Romania. Many of them see themselves as part of a Ukrainian nation. From among the recent accounts on Lemkos, see Nowak 2000.

[47] Of the former Greek Catholic *tserkvy* that still exist, 240 belong to the Roman Catholic Church, 28 are Orthodox, and 60 are formally owned by municipalities or the state. After World War II, 300 former Greek Catholic *tserkvy* were destroyed or left to be destroyed in Poland (Berdychowska 1998; Iwanusiw 1998).

We searched for the remains of these religious structures, which for my friends were the last few visible signs of the Ukrainian past in contemporary Poland. Wherever we passed by a place important for the Ukrainian 'community of memory', they told me what had happened there and when it had happened. It seemed to me bizarre to be walking in forested land where there had once been a village and where the only remains hidden in the undergrowth were a cemetery or the foundations of a *tserkva.* Such places were particularly numerous in the Bieszczady Mountains, and I was always told which of the villages had been burned and when and how people had been killed there. I was also told where there had been a field hospital for the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) and how the fighters had defended it.

We frequently made searches of a less military nature, looking for the eastern Christian signs of churches that had previously been *tserkvy.* There the stories were accusations against intolerant Polish Roman Catholics with a passion for demolition, which Greek Catholics considered to be a desecration. Sometimes we looked for the grave of a Greek Catholic priest, and sometimes for a tomb commemorating Ukrainian hero soldiers. My friends recorded the remains of buildings and cemeteries, noting their current condition. They took pictures and interviewed people who remembered what had happened when the eastern Christian populations were expelled from south-east Poland after World War II. Because they interviewed people in Polish and did not say they were Ukrainians, they sometimes found themselves talking to actual participants in those acts of desecration, who, proud of what they had done, explained how they had helped to cut the iconostasis to pieces, thrown away the icons, and taken stones from the *tserkva* and used them to build houses. In these kinds of searches my friends were looking for Ukrainian heritage, which was embodied in the remains of religious buildings, buried in cemeteries, and hidden under the façades of Roman Catholic churches that once served as *tserkvy.*

Among the images the search evoked for my friends were marching armies, inter-village war, and state repression. Like many other descendants of the peasants and small-town dwellers who lived in south-east Poland during the inter-war years, they projected onto the peaceful, pre–World War II past the religious-national antagonisms between Roman Catholic Poles and Greek Catholic Ukrainians of the post-war years, as if those antagonisms had always existed. Focusing on members of the present-day Ukrainian community, I want in the rest of this chapter to illuminate the contradiction between the peaceful past and contemporary projections of violence onto it. I look at the way history is relevant in the everyday life of the Ukrainian community and at how nationalist history is played out through family, religion, and collective memory.

3.1 Memory in the Landscape

I took part in journeys across south-east Poland with several Ukrainians, especially with the friends Maryjka, age twenty-four, Oleg, forty, and Orest, twenty-nine. All three were conscious Ukrainians and Greek Catholics. Maryjka's immediate family had not suffered repatriation, but she remembered the disgrace her family had faced in the postsocialist years. Both her parents came from peasant families in the village of Hrebenne. One of her grandmothers escaped repatriation because she had, by accident, been baptized in the Roman Catholic church in the nearby village of Siedliska, although she attended Greek Catholic services all her life. Maryjka's other grandparents, like several other people in Hrebenne, were allowed to remain in the village because of their work on the railway.

Following a common pattern among contemporary Ukrainians in south-east Poland, Maryjka's parents obtained higher education and became teachers. Although they retained close ties with Hrebenne, they moved to Przemyśl and built a large house in one of the most prestigious parts of the city. Maryjka had one sister, who had married a Pole and lived in Kraków. One of Maryjka's aunts, who also lived in Przemyśl, had built a new house in Hrebenne, replacing the grandparents' wooden *khata,* and hoped to retire there in a few years. Before beginning her studies in pedagogy in the regional capital, Rzesów, Maryjka was among the first students at the new Ukrainian school in Przemyśl. One of her teachers had been Oleg.

In the late 1980s Oleg studied Ukrainian philology in Warsaw. He was known among his colleagues for wearing sandals and a Ukrainian folk shirt and for carrying in a fabric bag the books of the Ukrainian poet Shevchenko. After moving to Przemyśl and spending several years teaching at the Ukrainian school, he became a full-time journalist at the Poland-wide Ukrainian weekly published in Warsaw. He also gathered a large number of oral histories from people who had survived Action Vistula and was known for having published several books of interviews with victims of Action Vistula and some UPA soldiers. Many of his students remembered him as a charismatic personality who promoted to them the glorious past of their nation. He often travelled to L'viv, where he bought Ukrainian books and collected the news from his nation's motherland. In addition to practising journalism, he continued to explore the remains of the Ukrainian past in Zakerzonie.

Oleg was born in the north of Poland, to which his parents had been expelled in 1947 from a village in the Sanok area. After the political situation relaxed, his parents moved back to their native village and built a large house. His father had worked as a bus driver and his mother as a teacher, but both were now retired. As a child in his native village Oleg attended the only continuously functioning Greek Catholic *tserkva* in Poland. Although accepting both Greek Catholicism and Orthodoxy as his close faiths, he considered Orthodoxy the more appropriate shelter for the Ukrainian nation, seeing Greek Catholicism as too much under the influence of Rome and the Polish Roman Catholic clergy.

Orest, the third of the friends, came from Lubicza Królewska, a village near Hrebenne. His family had been unaffected by Action Vistula, and both of his parents had worked in the village cooperative. While renting a cooperative flat in the socialist block building, they kept their parents' wooden *khata* and garden in Hrebenne. Orest had studied political science in Kraków and planned to begin PhD studies, but for the time being he was unemployed and worked only occasionally. He also planned to travel to work in Canada, the usual emigration destination for Ukrainians, or to Italy, where his sister had previously worked during summer holidays. When 'preaching' to his fellow nationals, Orest was particularly passionate about his nation's military history. He and Oleg were known for collecting Ukrainian military artefacts and singing songs from the UPA military repertoire.

Because of the unavailability of a Greek Catholic clergyman, Orest and Oleg had both been baptized in the Roman Catholic Church, but they nevertheless had grown up as conscious Greek Catholics. Maryjka had been baptized Greek Catholic in the Jesuit church in Przemyśl, where Greek Catholic services were held during the socialist years under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church. The three had more friends among local Ukrainians than among Poles. Some Poles, especially the partners of some of their fellow nationals, joined them occasionally when they sat in their favourite pub in Przemyśl, but they were considered to be a group of Ukrainian youths. Their attitude towards the Polish state was ambivalent. While claiming full loyalty and enjoying minority rights, they disliked the patriotic elements so visible in Polish national commemorations, and they expressed a certain distance and even a feeling of moral superiority when comparing their nation's suffering with that of the Poles.

During a three-day trip in January 2004, Maryjka, Oleg, Orest, and I visited Hrebenne, on the Polish-Ukrainian border. Passing the town of Radymno, we stopped near the *tserkva* in Chotyniec. Then we drove north along the border and stopped in the village of Mlyny. Next to the wooden *tserkva* we bowed at the grave of Mykhailo Verbytsky, author of 'Ukraine's Glory Has Not Perished' (*Shche ne vmerla Ukraina*), the Ukrainian national anthem. We visited the *tserkva* in Kobylnica Woloska and the remains of *tserkvy* in Wielkie Oczy and Opaka, a few kilometres north of Mlyny, the last just recently burned. One of my friends mentioned that it had been burned by the local 'Lakhy' – the derogative name Ukrainians use for Poles. They said it was not the first time they had tried to burn it. Driving through

Lubaczów, Narol, and Bełżec – where a death camp operated during World War II – and passing Lubycza Królewska, we approached our final destination.

Like many other villages of the region, with the exception of those where a manor house belonging to Polish gentry was located, Hrebenne was a Greek Catholic parish. It numbered more than one thousand parishioners before 1947. The cultural association Prosvita had been seeding Ukrainian consciousness quite early before World War I, in the village and in the region. If Roman Catholics married into the village, they automatically became Greek Catholics.

In 2004, roughly one-third of Hrebenne's 250 inhabitants were Ukrainians, and some of their fellow nationals with family ties in the village enlarged the crowd in the *tserkva* at the weekends. The *tserkva,* built in 1685, was one of the architectural jewels of this part of Poland, de facto serving Greek Catholics with only a brief interruption after 1947. Exceptionally, during the entire socialist period it remained in state hands and was neither appropriated for the Roman Catholics nor given to the Orthodox Church. Unlike in many other cases, the Greek Catholic Church did not need to negotiate over the restitution of the *tserkva* in Hrebenne when claiming it back in 1990. Since 1956, Greek Catholics had shared it with Roman Catholics, as they still did. In 2004, the Greek Catholic priest took care of several dispersed parishes in the region, travelling hundreds of kilometres by car every week. He arrived in Hrebenne every Sunday from the town of Lubaczów. The Roman Catholic parish seat was in nearby Siedliska.

The day we arrived in Hrebenne was the first day of the eastern Christian Christmas (following the Julian calendar), and Orest suggested we join his family in singing Christmas carols. On a freezing evening we drove six kilometres through the snowy pine forest and approached the hamlet of Mrzyglody, a few dwellings dispersed around the valley and surrounded by woods. Before 1947 there had been many more houses and much less forest, but many houses had been burned after people were expelled, and as in other parts of south-east Poland, new forest was seeded. Unlike other villages nearby – Werchrata, Prusie, and Siedliska – Mrzyglody was supposed to have vanished from the map, not least because of its proximity to the state border, which was closely surveilled during socialist years. However, a few Ukrainians returned, despite poor prospects for the future. Even in 2004, no proper road reached the hamlet, and the nearest shop was five kilometres away in Werchrata. The only newcomer to this Ukrainian microcosm of five or so households was a Polish townsman who had recently rebuilt a cottage in the vicinity.

Plate 6. The *tserkva* in Hrebenne, Christmas 2003.

Before World War II, the remains of a Greek Catholic Basilian monastery had been located near Mrzyglody. During the war it had served as a base for the UPA. Not long before our visit, a monument (*mohyla*) commemorating those times had been erected on the remains of the monastery, and the place had become a national pilgrimage site for many Ukrainians from across the border. My male Ukrainian friends, including Oleg and Orest, used to have New Year's drinks there. Nostalgic about the heroic past embodied by the place and impressed by the beautiful countryside, some years earlier they had purchased, inexpensively, an old wooden house for the Association of Ukrainian Youth in Poland. Since the mid-1990s they had been organizing summer gatherings there. Although these gatherings were far less popular in 2004 than they had been in the 1990s, some Ukrainians continued to attend them.

The first stop in our carol singing was at the house of an old peasant couple. As a small boy, Mr Moroz had served as a messenger for the UPA brigades. Later he was imprisoned and spent ten years in Jaworzno work camp. Mrs Moroz was resettled to the north of Poland, where her husband found her after he was released from prison. They had two sons, both living in Toronto, Canada, who also visited them at Christmas. It was crowded inside the house, but a pleasant atmosphere dominated. In the old-fashioned peasant *khata* with a stove in the middle of the room I noticed several blue and yellow artefacts. The napkin holder, the tablecloths, and even glasses were in the Ukrainian national colours. We were served food and drinks. After two shots of vodka had been drunk and two or three carols sung, the gathered crowd, young and old, began to sing mournful Ukrainian ballads about the expulsion from their homeland.

Ukrainian was also the language people spoke at the party. I was asked to speak in Slovak instead of Polish if I could not say something in Ukrainian. As my host said, because we were Slavs educated by Saints Cyril and Methodius in the 'old Slavonic faith, which came naturally from Christ', we would easily understand each other. (Several times in Przemyśl, especially in male company, I was asked to switch to Slovak in order to avoid using Polish.) The only man who spoke Polish at the party was a distant cousin of the Morozes' sons, a policeman from Lubaczów who was accompanying his mother. The crowd largely ignored him and referred to him derogatively as a 'renegade' (*perekintshik*), someone who betrayed his own nation. Throughout the evening he kept explaining to me, in Polish, the advantages of the state pension he enjoyed as a state employee, in contrast to the poorer economic situation of the peasants.

The mourning of Action Vistula ended quickly, and people switched to folksongs and even danced. After two hours or so, we visited another house some hundred metres away. As at the Morozes' house, we first went through the ritual refusal of refreshments, followed by numerous greetings (*tost*), each with a new shot of vodka. The women, who were drinking more moderately, tried to slow the tempo of the men's drinking, but it was impossible for a man to refuse this socializing. As one woman commented, not very persuasively, 'the men like to drink very much, and they should have their wives come and say, "Do not drink!"'

After singing Christmas carols, the men began to sing nationalist and military songs about mothers and lovers at home, partisans in the forests, and shooting for the freedom of Ukraine – songs once sung by UPA fighters. The women had already begun to leave and were waiting on the veranda, to pressure the men to follow them home. Back in Hrebenne we joined a local group, mostly middle-age women, who were singing carols around the village. We visited both Polish and Ukrainian households, and I was told that this practice went back to the socialist years in Hrebenne. The local Poles sang at Ukrainian houses during their Christmas.

The next day, 9 January, was the day of St Stephen the Martyr. While Oleg and Orest slept off their drinking, Maryjka and I went to the *tserkva.* During the sermon, the young priest compared the suffering of St Stephen to the suffering of the Ukrainian nation. After the mass (*nabozhenstvo*) we went for a walk to the border crossing and stopped for tea in one of the restaurants that catered to lorry drivers. Because it was Christmas in Ukraine, the border crossing was empty. On workdays, police regulate hundreds of lorries waiting on the village road for goods to clear. As Maryjka explained to me, unlike during the quiet socialist years, when movement between Poland and Soviet Union was greatly restricted, the pollution, noise, and movement of large numbers of 'alien' people since 1990 has annoyed many locals. Their annoyance has been somewhat tempered by profits made from petty trade and by the inflow of cheap labour from Ukraine, but it was clear at first sight that only a few wealthier locals could have afforded to hire Ukrainians from across the border to work in their fields or help with house building.

In the café Maryjka told me about her life plans. She said that when she became a mother, she would raise her children 'in their own culture, their own nationality and religion, to avoid mixing'. She would certainly like to have a Ukrainian boyfriend: 'It is not so important, but certainly I will be missing something if I do not have one ... My uncle told me he would not come to my wedding if I marry a Pole!' She added: 'To me, nationalism is not bad; it is the basis for finding direction. Even if I marry a Pole, I will send my children to the Ukrainian school and to the Ukrainian church.' It would be good for the child, she believed, because she remembered from her childhood that the *tserkva* had a special spiritual dimension.

In the evening we joined the same group of carollers with whom we had sung the previous night. Almost all were Ukrainian women; one young man was expected to drive them in his *maluch,* a little Polish Fiat from the socialist years. In our car and the *maluch* we went to nearby Potoki, a much bigger village consisting of ten or so hamlets dispersed over the sandy terrain, many in the pine forest. Unlike in Hrebenne the night before, this time we visited only Ukrainian houses. The singing went as it had the previous evening. After singing we were invited for a small refreshment and vodka, and people exchanged news and gossiped about their friends and families.

At a few houses we were refused at the door, especially by younger men. I was told by fellow singers that the parents of these men were Ukrainians, which was why we had stopped at their houses, but the younger generation no longer wanted to show its Ukrainian roots. On one of our last stops we sang in a pub where the local fire brigade gathered. Unlike in the majority of private houses, none of the men joined us in singing. As my brave female fellow singers glossed it, the majority of men in the pub were Poles, for whom Christmas was already over, but some were Ukrainians who hesitated to show it openly.

After returning to Hrebenne we went to Orest's aunt's home for dinner. She had three daughters, one of them married with a child and another working seasonally in Italy. Only the youngest was staying with her parents for Christmas. While the aunt's husband took a rest after the carol drinking, the rest of us continued singing, looked at the family album, and had some more vodka. My friends again turned to singing UPA songs. During these military songs they frequently held up their three central fingers to make the 'trident' (*tryzub*), the Ukrainian national coat of arms.[48] The woman of the house seemed uncomfortable with this and wished to see us sing carols instead.

We left Hrebenne the next morning, 10 January. In Lubycza we stopped at the small cooperative flat where Orest lived with his parents and sister. Just at that time the Roman Catholic priest was making his annual visit among the parishioners. My friends quietly made some ironic comments about Lakhy, and it was obvious that the priest was not coming to their flat. Driving through the main village square in Lubycza we passed a Polish national monument. A large, impressive statue of the Polish eagle about to take off with outstretched wings, it commemorated the heroism of Polish soldiers during World War II in fighting Ukrainian 'bands'. My friends characterized the statue as the 'shitting eagle' (*orzel sracz*).

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[48] The official coat of arms of Ukraine is a gold trident on an azure background. As a state emblem, the trident dates back to Kievan Rus, when it was the coat of arms of the Riuryk dynasty. On the recommendation of Mykhailo Hrushevsky (1866–1934), the trident was adopted as Ukraine's coat of arms in 1918.

Plate 7. The monument commemorating Polish heroes who fought against UPA partisans in Lubycza Królewska.

On the way back to Przemyśl we visited the remains of a destroyed *tserkva* in Kniazy and later took a break in the city of Jarosław. As we sat in a pub near the Jarosław *tserkva,* which dates from the beginning of the eighteenth century and is known for its mixed Latin-Byzantine art, including the miraculous icon of the Mother of God 'Miloserdia Dweri', another discussion of nationality, language, and identity arose. Maryjka emphasized that 'people must have their land, the basis from which they come'. Orest stressed that nationalism was a positive idea, especially for Ukraine, where further development under the autocratic president was uncertain.[49]

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[49] Our trip took place more than a year before the Orange Revolution in Ukraine swept away the regime of president Leonid Kutchma, who was disliked by my informants in Przemyśl not only for being close to Moscow and not speaking Ukrainian but also for his communist record.

Plate 8. Ukrainians visiting a destroyed *tserkva* in the village of Kniazy, near Lubycza Królewska, winter 2004.

Back in Przemyśl that evening we attended the Second Malanka of Ukrainian Youth in Poland, organized in the Ukrainian National House.[50] Among the young Ukrainians there from all over Poland, my friends were the few who wore folk shirts. When we entered the theatre hall, a band was already playing a classical dance repertoire. During the breaks the young men, members of choirs, sang national and folk songs about Cossacks and rural life. People danced, sang, and drank until early morning.

The search for memory in the landscape that we undertook in Zakerzonie represents one of the ways in which Ukrainian families and circles of friends commemorate the national past. For my friends, the turning point in this past was Action Vistula, a violent event in 1947 that turned Greek Catholic peasants into a suffering Ukrainian 'community of memory'. Action Vistula is ingrained 'in their Zakerzonian heads', as Oleg put it. A Greek Catholic theology alumnus from north-western Poland stressed that this commemoration of suffering made Ukrainian existence into 'a kind of "jihad"'.

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[50] Malanka is the female saint whose name day in the Ukrainian calendar is 31 December. Ukrainians organize parties that day marking the farewell to the old year.

3.2 Memories of Action Vistula

One gentleman who was ten when Action Vistula took place remembered the beginning of the repatriations in the following way (Hann and Stępień 2000: 59):

> It was an early morning in May … spring had arrived, the fields had already dried, people began to do the spring chores. In the morning we children were still sleeping. Our mum woke up, had a look through the window … and screamed, 'The army is coming!' In ten minutes a soldier knocked on our door and asked … 'all the adults go to the gathering!' … we were not alone in our house, there was our family whose house was burned … Next to the door stood a soldier taking care that no one left the house. After roughly two hours the adults came home, crying and screaming that we would be repatriated.

Especially among older people, fear of attack and displacement was still common in 2003–2004. As a remnant of the hostile socialist years, many older Ukrainians were still afraid to speak Ukrainian on the streets. One of my neighbours, an older man who had come from Gdańsk to spend his retirement in Przemyśl, was cautious about speaking Ukrainian even on the telephone. When the doorbell rang, he became frightened, and he always closed the door before speaking Ukrainian to me. Another man, age forty-seven, generalized the experiences of Action Vistula by referring to 'the fear and fright the older people have experienced … I went through it as a child as well, and it is constantly attacking me. I always have in mind that something like that might come back, it has not passed away; the threat remains.'

Apart from the semi-clandestine church, the most important bearer of these fears, and consequently the most important agent in the transmission of memories across generations, is the family. An example is Anka, thirty-five, a journalist at a local Polish weekly, and her Ukrainian family. Anka's father had been a lorry driver and part-time farmer; her mother had worked as a teacher in a special school until her retirement. The parents had returned to south-east Poland in the 1960s, after having been forced out during Action Vistula. They choose Przemyśl because it was known for attracting other Ukrainians, and they wanted to live with 'ours' (*swoji*). Anka's father originally came from Komańcza, and her mother from a small village near Jarosław. Anka's mother and youngest sister still lived in the family home. She had two brothers who had left for Canada and another sister living with her Polish husband and daughter in a new house built nearby. In 2002, when Anka moved to her parents' house after a divorce, her father was still alive, but he died in 2004.

Anka explained the perseverance of Ukrainian consciousness in her family this way:

> In our house it was a must to speak Ukrainian. If we spoke Polish among ourselves, our parents were very angry, especially our father. Speaking in Ukrainian was particularly important when other Ukrainians were present. For my parents it was important to show that they were rearing their children right, that is, 'in the patriotic Ukrainian spirit'. In addition, we were not allowed to play too much with Polish kids. Instead of Polish friends, our father sometimes used to drive us to Ukrainian families, to play with the children of his Ukrainian friends.
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> Our parents spoke about Action Vistula very little, almost nothing, only when we asked them. They did not hide it from us, but it was a topic they did not like to speak about. Perhaps they were also afraid that we would talk about it outside of home, in the school, etc. Obviously, at that time the official version of the event was different. I was learning in school about 'Ukrainian nationalist bands', but when I asked my parents, they said it was not like they were teaching us in school. Of course we also had a duty to go to *tserkva* and to the Ukrainian club, to attend choir training and *bandura* band gatherings.[51] I attended them, although I am not musical at all. In choir they said to stand in the back and do not sing loudly. We used to go there in order to get educated in patriotic spirit, not because of music …
>
> We also used to talk about these things [Action Vistula] very little at home because our parents used to work hard: house building, husbandry – cows, fowl, and sheep, a garden – plus Mum's work in the city on Sundays. We were brought up through work, not through talk. From time to time Dad used to take us to [visit] his family and explained some things, but very little. He was unable to speak to children. He spoke to us like adults. I myself did not understand anything for a long time. The only things I was told openly at home – and which made me angry – was that Poles were bad and they did a great wrong against us and we should not trust them. For me as a growing girl this was unacceptable, not least because I also grew up in the Polish environment – the school, the neighbours, etc. How could I accept that they were bad if they were normal: some were

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[51] The *bandura* is a folk instrument with several strings on a resonant wooden body. The band Anka referred to, made up of pupils trained by a local cantor from the Greek Catholic Church, was well known across Poland during the socialist period.

> good, some were bad? Besides, our neighbours didn't take part in Action Vistula, but some other Poles did – I was thinking to myself. The clergy and tserkva were important for Mum, much less for Father. But we had to go to tserkva, especially because it bolstered Ukrainianness. I stopped going when I was fifteen years old or so. Our parents were angry at the beginning but then left me in peace … For Ukrainians it is a kind of collective existence: the church plus the school plus the Ukrainian Association. It comes from 'in unity is power'. It means in this way the community survives.

After the Greek Catholic Church had been banished in Poland for almost ten years, it was partly re-established in 1956, when it began to function as a clandestine organization of the Roman Catholic Church. The secular Ukrainian Social-Cultural Association (Ukraińskie towarzystwo społeczno-kulturalne [UTSK]) was established that year as well. In this way the family and the church – but also the socialist state, by allowing 'folklore' gatherings – helped to preserve the collective memory of Ukrainians within the walls of their cultural clubs.

The situation of the Ukrainian minority progressed enormously after 1989. The Greek Catholic Church regained independent legal status, the first bishops since the war were appointed, and Ukrainian primary and secondary schools were established, as was a new independent, secular minority association. Nevertheless, local Ukrainians shared a general feeling that their national collective was dying away. Many of my Ukrainian friends felt the threat from polonization. Representing widespread opinion among local Ukrainians, Anka thought the members of her community were double victims of communism: first for being Greek Catholics and second for being Ukrainians. Although she was one of the most liberal, open-minded people I met in the city – she criticized the politics of her 'tribe' and called Przemyśl Ukrainians 'very retro and conservative' – she could not escape her community of memory either. In order not to exclude her daughter from having a group of friends, she raised her in the 'Ukrainian spirit' as well.

Nevertheless, Anka criticized what might be called ethnic bribery among Ukrainians. One example involved her father, who could imagine no other doctor helping him except one of Ukrainian origin. Even when he went to the hospital he always asked for the Ukrainian doctor and did not trust the Polish ones. Once Anka was angry about a surgeon of Ukrainian nationality who came to see her father at home and did not want to take money from him, arguing that he would take nothing from one of 'ours', that is, from a Ukrainian. She considered bribing (*lapówka*) a pathology of the socialist and postsocialist years, although it was understandable to her that members of her father's generation were accustomed to making payments for services outside the official system. She would have understood if the doctor had accepted the bribe and perhaps have admired him if he had not been like that, but she was angry because the doctor refused a bribe for ethnic reasons.

Anka also mentioned a fellow Ukrainian who visited her at her office and asked, as a favour, for something that she could arrange (*załatwić*) better because she was a journalist. Because she had barely met the person before, she became angry. More annoying was a demand by a rich Ukrainian businessman that she write a positive article about him in the weekly newspaper, which she refused. For Anka this ethnic nepotism was odd and ought to be overcome. She disliked the way Ukrainians of her age, who could hardly have experienced oppression except perhaps that of being derogatively named while they were pupils at school, subscribed to the collective suffering. She made a revealing joke about Action Vistula when she referred to one of her friends as still having 'an unpacked suitcase inherited from his parents in the wardrobe ready to leave [to be repatriated]'. To be a Ukrainian in Przemyśl was certainly not 'martyrdom', she said. In her opinion, the only thing one risked when openly claiming Ukrainian nationality was that some older Poles might not say 'good morning'.

Maryjka, whose family was not directly affected by Action Vistula, stressed the victimization of the entire group and represented this as the major pattern among Przemyśl Ukrainians. Remembering the broken windows at her Ukrainian school, she also mentioned the derogatory graffiti on the walls in the early 1990s – 'Poland for Poles!' 'Ukrainians go to Ukraine!' 'Fucking Ukrainians!' – and the way the Polish pupils nicknamed her *banderówka, upówka,* and *bandytka* – literally 'Bandera woman', 'UPA woman', bandit.[52] She also remembered her uncle's stories about how he had to walk to school through the forest to avoid being beaten up by Poles. Her uncle, at sixty, was a radical Ukrainian who forgave the Poles nothing. Maryjka learned the most about Action Vistula at the Ukrainian school, at gatherings of Ukrainian youths, and through 'memory' trips such as the one I described earlier.

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[52] As mentioned in chapter 2, Stepan Bandera was the leader of the Ukrainian insurgence during World War II. For his place in contemporary national discussions in Ukraine, see Marples 2006.

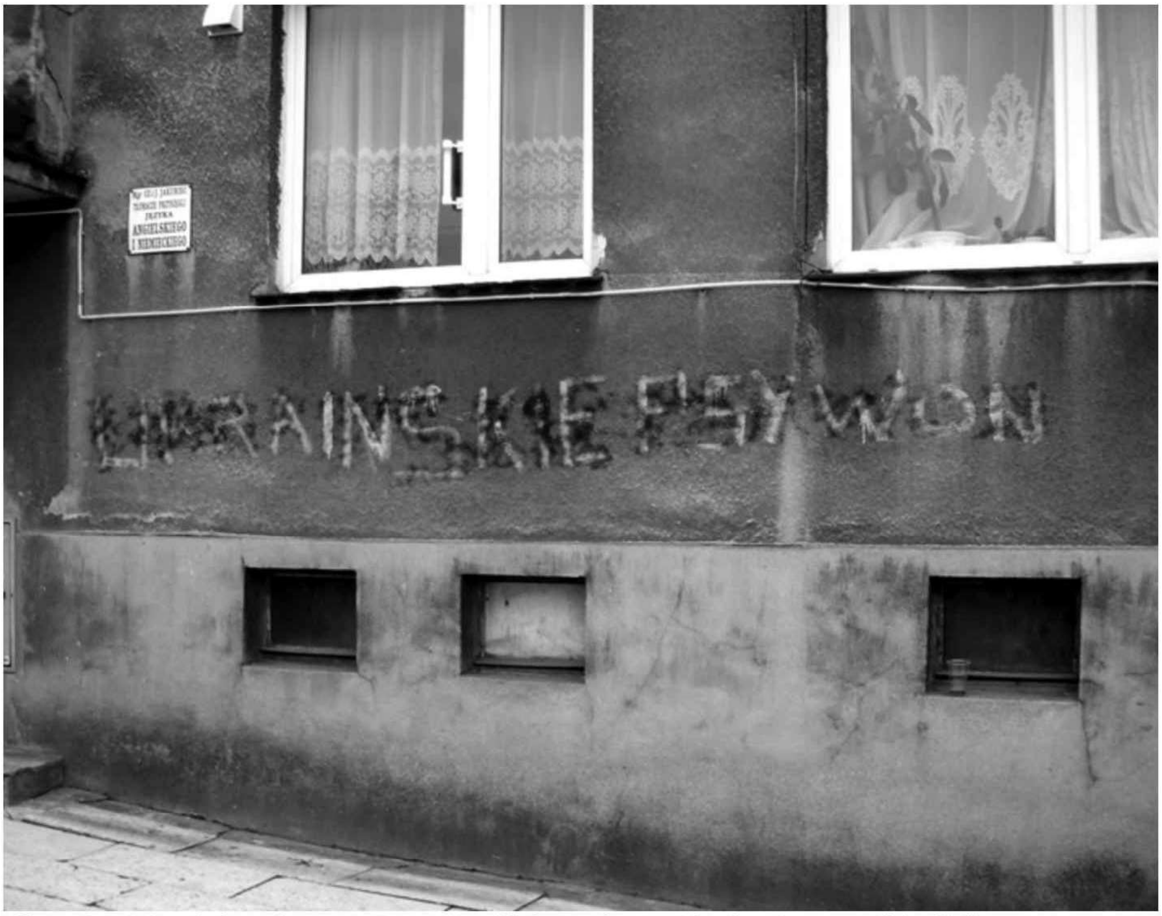

Plate 9. 'Ukrainian dogs out!' – Graffiti on the wall of a Przemyśl building.

The cases of Oleg and Orest, both university educated, followed a similar pattern. Whereas Oleg's family experienced the expulsion, Orest's parents and grandparents, despite facing certain injustices, had not been forced to leave their native village. Nevertheless, both men became promoters of the memory of their nation's suffering and used every opportunity to participate in commemorative ceremonies. Although no one in either man's close family fought in the UPA, and to the best of my knowledge no one in either family personally remembered any guerrilla activities (in Komańcza, where Oleg came from, for example, military clashes between UPA and Polish troops were almost nonexistent), the two nevertheless subscribed to a much broader nationalist narrative. Oleg's and Orest's nationalism demonstrates the need to differentiate direct memories of oppression as experienced by individuals and transmitted through families from what has been invented, accepted, and accommodated by patriotic Ukrainians – including those who did not themselves experience ethnic cleansing – especially since 1989, when Ukrainian nationalism grew out of the collapse of the Soviet state.

During the same time, official Polish patriotism, taught in the schools and spread through the media, was inventing Ukrainian patriotism as well.

As a sixty-three-year-old retired chemist remembered: 'One grew up on Polish literature, which all the time underlined the necessity of taking care of national tradition; regardless of the situation, it was necessary to be a Pole … If a Pole should have remained a Pole regardless of the situation, then by the same logic I should have remained Ukrainian' (Hann and Stępień 2000: 53). Another man, age forty-five, confirmed this pattern:

> At the Polish lectures we were taught that everybody should take care of his language and nation. Therefore, I automatically understood that I should follow the same rule in Ukrainian matters as the Poles did in Polish ones … I came in contact with Ukrainian circles only during my studies in Kraków … One of the fellow tenants of my colleagues told me that the Greek Catholic church was located at Augustiańska Street. I went there and later contacted the Ukrainians … after *nabozhenstvo* and then in the Ukrainian club. We used to talk a lot, and twice a year we rented a room and organized concerts in honour of Taras Shevchenko or the traditional Malanka … During studies at secondary school I listened to radio broadcasts in the Ukrainian language … I received the foundations of my national consciousness from the church and the school (Hann and Stępień 2000: 75–76).

A young teacher at a Ukrainian school once mentioned to me that although her parents had taught her to pray in Ukrainian, only her university studies had had a decisive influence on her Ukrainian identity. One elderly Greek Catholic priest told me that after Action Vistula the church had become the only institution to emphasize people's Ukrainianness. 'Without the church', he said, 'even the illegal one, we would have not survived.' Another older man confirmed this opinion: 'I thank most of all the church and my family. These two saved my national consciousness, and without them I would not be a Ukrainian today.' An engineer in her early forties remembered her youth in the following way:

> I learned Ukrainian from the first year at elementary school, actually at the religious classes. Later my mum enrolled me in the *bandura* band gatherings … There I faced 'Ukrainianness' … all the information from history. My mother spoke about these things only rarely … There [at the gatherings] I felt strongly who I was … But perhaps it was earlier … when a colleague of my mum's, she was Ukrainian, too … took me to the tomb of the Sich Riflemen in Przemyśl and told me about Ukrainian history.[53] Later my mother filled out that

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[53] The tomb of the Sich Riflemen is in the Ukrainian military cemetery in Pikulice, near Przemyśl (see chapter 4).

> history with stories of how she used to take part in processions to the *mohyla* before the war … I was five or six when she told me that …
> I started to take part in performances at the National House; at the time it was the club of the UTSK … my mother signed me up for dance lessons, [and] I used to present poetry there. She worked in a bank at that time and her director asked her not to send me there any more. I do not know how he got to know I was attending the gatherings, but he frightened my mother that she would be released from work. I stopped going to the House …
> For me it was obvious that I am Ukrainian … My grandparents were repatriated to Siberia; my father used to be in prison. I knew he was not imprisoned as a thief but for his idea, the Ukrainian idea, to which he remained faithful … During one's studies … comes a moment when one is expected to declare [his or her identity]; it is a moment when one must fill out the form for the personal document, and there is a line for nationality … The fear was still working at that time; it is not like now, when I speak openly at my workplace that I am Ukrainian (Hann and Stępień 2000: 80–83).

A man in his fifties who had grown up in Wrocław had been baptized Bohdan, which is considered a Ukrainian name, by a Greek Catholic priest. In the Civil Office, however, a clerk had written 'Marian', a Polish name, on his documents. He remembered that during socialist years, his parents

> used to take me and my brothers on holiday every summer to the village our mother came from. They wanted us to know a bit about our family's past. Living in a big city, we had been taken away from our tradition … There [in the city] we had no ancestors, there were no places where one might have said, 'Here my father used to do something …' [This village] was the place that I later understood was my little fatherland; my entire family and all my ancestors had come from there … Because a majority of them were Ukrainians, I realized that there is a certain value that should not be lost, that it is worth it to take care of it and come back to it … and restore my own tradition (Hann and Stępień 2000: 71).

Certainly, many Ukrainians in Poland became successful professionals during the socialist years and lived their private lives as the majority of Poles did – in resignation and sometimes in opposition to state ideologies and policies, practicing their faith and taking advantage of as many opportunities as were available at the time. A Polish friend of mine who could in no way be accused of bias towards Ukrainians said of the most successful of them, 'They made a career then, and they do so now as well.' Many Ukrainians during the socialist years felt no need to be Ukrainian and opted for assimilation, a process my conscious Ukrainian friends disliked and which they saw as unnatural de-nationalization. Considering the role of national ideology under socialism (Verdery 1991a), and particularly the alien picture of Ukrainians presented in Polish national propaganda – my Ukrainian friends frequently mentioned history classes, literature, and media in which Ukrainians were described as terrorists and killers of Poles – assimilation might have been the safest option for Ukrainian families who remained in the People's Republic of Poland.[54] As time passed, however, and especially once institutionalized commemorative techniques began to be employed in the public sphere after 1989, the majority of Greek Catholics, regardless of whether or not they had been affected by ethnic cleansing, began to subscribe to the national community of memory. As a librarian at the Greek Catholic Cathedral once put it, summarizing the connections between the nation and its past: 'There must be a certain memory! Every nation needs memory. If there is no memory, there is no nation, and there is nothing to talk about. There is only an uncultivated mass then!' But what version of the past is it worthwhile for Greek Catholics in south-east Poland to remember and commemorate?

3.3 Peasant Nostalgia

In the summer of 2004 I attended a barbeque hosted by Anka in her large garden. Resting under the apple tree with friends, Poles and Ukrainians alike, next to an arbour built by Anka's father, I enjoyed sausages from a popular butchery in Rudawka, *percówka* (Ukrainian vodka, flavoured with pepperoni and honey) from the Ukrainian bazaar, and 'Galician' beer. I was told that there were a few brands of true Galician beer, such as Żywiec and Leżajsk, all founded in former Austrian territory in Austrian times. Among the friends present were Gustek, forty-five, and Ivan, thirty-nine, both university-educated in the humanities and working in that field. Part of Gustek's family, expelled from Ukraine after World War II for being Polish, had moved to Przemyśl and taken over a former Ukrainian farm. Ivan had been born in the north of Poland to parents from the Bieszczady Mountains, from which they had been expelled during Action Vistula for being Ukrainian. In the 1970s they bought a house and a piece of land near Przemyśl, and they remained peasants.

After several drinks, Gustek started a discussion. He said that many Poles believed that leaving the 'wild and barbaric' mountains was a blessing for the Ukrainians who were removed to the fertile fields left by the civilized Germans in the north and west of Poland. The Ukrainians who eventually came back to south-east Poland, he continued, returned as well-off, experienced people who had made money on German property. Looking at Ivan, he said, 'It was a civilizing move for you [Ukrainians], but you were so desperately nostalgic that you nevertheless came back.' The discussion went further, and Ivan, usually a silent man, expressed no objection to Gustek's interpretation of Ukrainian nostalgia for the homeland. But in the end he made a radical statement: 'We were here originally, and then came the Poles. This is a Ukrainian land, and Ukrainians do not need to prove it. We were the first ones here!'

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[54] Particularly well known and popular during the socialist years was Jan Gerhard's anti-Ukrainian book *Łuny w Bieszczadach,* which was dedicated to the fight against the activities of the UPA.

Gustek's provocative words showed a lack of empathy for or knowledge about the often difficult conditions the late-arriving Ukrainians experienced in the former German areas, which had already been occupied by Poles from across the country and from areas Poland had lost to the Soviet Union. But the important point of this discussion is that it reveals a kind of memory that pushed thousands of Ukrainians to return to their homeland in south-east Poland, even if they paid a high price for doing so. As many older informants remembered, property such as housing and land was more expensive for returning Ukrainians than for Poles, and the anti-Ukrainian atmosphere was far more hostile in south-east Poland than in the north and west of the country, where virtually everyone was an immigrant after World War II.[55]

Some of my Ukrainian friends expressed their nostalgia for south-east Poland in terms of the landscape. The fresh, dynamic, peaceful, 'Ukrainian' mountains contrasted with the boring, hostile, alien, 'Polish' fields to the north, where the big Polish cities were located. Behind this nostalgia lay not only the construction of the Ukrainian nation but also the memories of peasant parents and grandparents. In contrast to the rest of Poland, the landscape of the south-east – the pine woods around Lubaczów, the Bieszczady Mountains, and the Beskid Niski (the 'Lemko Carpathians') as far westwards as Krynica – is full of eastern Christian wooden architecture (*tserkvy*), and many Ukrainians see this landscape as their national patrimony. The *tserkvy* and the countryside revealed the eastern Christian and peasant past for my friends. Nurtured by this kind of nostalgia, older Ukrainians from the west and north of Poland came to spend their retirement years in south-east Poland. Many who still lived outside the region, and some of their heirs, wished for burial in their homeland. Many Ukrainians from around the country came to die in south-east Poland, and their children then came to bow over the graves of their parents. Ukrainian pupils from cities in north-west of Poland took trips organized by their minority schools and participated in summer camps in the countryside of south-east Poland.

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[55] The collection of oral histories edited by Hann and Stępień (2000) consists of many testimonies confirming these patterns.

The immediate source of nostalgia for south-east Poland in the Ukrainian community is the religious-national history of Przemyśl and the adjacent countryside, which I discuss in chapter 4. Here I stress another source: memories not of the heroism of fighters but of a lost peasant world, memories that are transmitted across generations, from peasant grandparents to their university-educated grandchildren. This type of memory is observable in everyday life, in people's worldviews as expressed in narratives that nourish a kind of peasant nostalgia. It is symbolized in notions of homeland and kinship and is metaphorically embodied in religious buildings and objects dispersed across south-east Poland.

This kind of nostalgia for the past is illustrated by a statement made by a former electrical engineer, retired in Przemyśl after decades of working on the Baltic coast. He often said what many of his fellow Ukrainians declared about their nation: 'We are all peasants!' This is not to say that national history does not matter. It does, very much, and is part of public commemorations and the material for political appropriations described elsewhere in this book. But one must also keep in mind the peasant foundations and nostalgia of religious nations in south-east Poland and other parts of Eastern Europe, which are reproduced through family memories.

3.4 Conclusion

Before World War II, the countryside in south-east Poland remained relatively immune to nationalist policies, but in the late stage of the war the idyll ended with harsh ethnic cleansings. This not only caused nostalgia for the lost peasant world to flourish but also firmly defined the expelled villagers as nationals. The Ukrainian community of memory became inward-looking, based on family memories and clandestine, church-driven commemorations. Peasant nostalgia remains important, even for Ukrainians who are no longer peasants. The violence of the past and its commemoration have reinforced Ukrainians' emphasis on kin ties and desire for a village-like belonging to a religious-national group.

Commemorations of UPA national heroism, which play a role especially in the socialization of young males, exemplify both the 'invention of tradition' and the value placed on a particular violent masculinity. In contrast, commemorations of Action Vistula show more the imprint of traumatic memory. Although in the view of most Ukrainians in south-east Poland, UPA heroism and Action Vistula are inseparable in memories of the suffering of the Ukrainian nation, Action Vistula led Ukrainians in Poland to commemorate a suffering of their own that was neither known about nor commemorated by their fellow nationals in Ukraine. An understanding of the politics of commemoration in south-east Poland – of which the commemoration of oppression and violence is an inseparable part – lies equally in the micro level of everyday commemoration and in the macro level of nationalist narratives of history. As I show in the next chapter, what has mattered most since 1990 is ritual commemoration and religious-national symbolism as politicized in the public sphere.

Chapter 4
Religious Commemorations of War

> The fatherland is extremely rich. It is the land, the language, the white and red flag. It is the music, painting, the belief of our fathers, the national anthem, and the war cemeteries in east and west.
>
> From a sermon by the Przemyśl Roman Catholic bishop, June 2004

People of Ukrainian ethnicity are not alone in Poland in keeping alive memories of war and oppression. Their Polish neighbours do so as well. And among both groups, such memories are transmitted not only in family circles, churches, schools, and civic associations but also, with increasing intensity since the collapse of socialism, by means of religious-national commemorations held in the public sphere.

Both branches of the Catholic Church, Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic, play crucial roles in organizing and promoting politically driven commemorations. In 2004, for example, Roman Catholic clergy organized a commemoration of the murders of forty Poles by Ukrainian nationalists in the village of Rumno in what is now Ukraine. The same year I observed a ceremony held annually in the village of Pikulice, commemorating fighters for Ukrainian independence who fell in battle in 1918–1919. It was supervised largely by Greek Catholic clergy. Both ceremonies fostered the mutual exclusivity of the respective national collectives.

As Paul Connerton (1989: 7) pointed out, the recollection of the past is visible in two areas of social activity: in commemorative ceremonies and in bodily practices. In the previous chapter I mentioned some bodily practices of this sort, such as people's use of national symbolism by dressing in folk costumes and by making the trident, the Ukrainian coat of arms, with their fingers. Here I concentrate on the ceremonies of public significance that anthropologists understand as rituals.

The socialist state organized many rituals that helped structure and maintain power relations (Lane 1981). In the Soviet case these ranged from mass political rituals and rituals of initiation into social and political collectives such as the Young Pioneers and the army to individual rites of passage such as the 'Festive Registration of the Newborn Child', socialist weddings and funerals, and calendrical rituals such as summer festivals and winter carnivals (Lane 1981: 4). Because of the powerful position of the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, the socialist state did not penetrate into people's individual lives there on the scale to which it did in the Soviet Union. In Poland, mass public rituals also took place that were organized under the supervision of the church. Millions of the faithful gathered during the pope's visits, for example, signalling the moral superiority of the church over the socialist state.

Since the end of socialism, most public ceremonies in Poland have been organized by religious specialists who supervise them or at least assist in legitimating them. Many of my friends in Przemyśl remembered military parades and patriotic commemorations, which have been parts of the ritual repertoire continuously under both socialism and postsocialism. Poland's military tradition, based on the ideals of protecting the country's territory, preserving national independence, and cultivating professionalism, never left the public sphere (Epstein 2006). Postsocialist patriotic occasions such as the two I describe next unite military and religious commemorations of twentieth-century events that are significant to Roman Catholics and Greek Catholics, respectively. They could not have been organized before 1990, and they show, among other things, that since the reappearance of the Greek Catholic Church in Przemyśl, Ukrainian patriots have questioned the Polish Roman Catholic dominance of the public sphere.

4.1 The Rumno Commemoration

On the nights of 2 and 3 June 1944, Ukrainian guerrilla fighters killed forty unarmed Polish peasants in Rumno, L'viv County, contemporary Ukraine. On 4 June 2004, the Salesian and Holy Trinity churches in Przemyśl held a commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the killings. Although the event was held under the auspices of secular authorities, it was organized under the supervision of the Roman Catholic clergy. It began with a 'scientific' session in the large parish house of the Salesian Fathers. Attended by seventy to eighty mostly elderly people, several clergymen, and some journalists, including reporters from the national-populist Radio Maryja, the session was guided by Father Tadeusz, a Salesian monk born in the south-eastern borderlands (*Kresy południowo-wschodnie*). Thirty people from the city of Wrocław in south-western Poland, where the monk had lived since the end of World War II, joined him. The Przemyśl commemoration was the first stop in a pilgrimage the group was making to the 'fatherland', which after World War II had become Soviet Ukraine. The pilgrims continued on their way to Ukraine the next morning.

Father Tadeusz also invited to the session the head of the Association for Commemorating Crimes Committed by Ukrainian Nationalists against the Polish Nation, who explained that the association's aim was 'to collect and make known the truth'. According to him, in 2003 the association had initiated more than forty commemorative ceremonies, built fourteen memorials, and installed eighteen commemoration tablets in churches, schools, and public places across Poland. He stressed that the commemorated victims were 'our brothers and sisters who lie in scattered furrows, their remains in wells or spread across the land after they died in burning buildings … They are martyrs, because they were Christians and Poles'.

After two lectures elaborating the numbers of victims and the forms of the killings in Rumno, as well as a discussion, the participants in the session moved to the nearby Holy Trinity church, where mass was celebrated. The hundreds of believers who attended, many of them in uniform, including young scouts and old combatants from the Home Army (Armija Krajowa), heard Father Tadeusz remind them of the tragedy.[56] Earlier, in 1994, Father Tadeusz and his pilgrims had erected a cross in the village bearing the inscription 'He loved you to the end'. On the foundation of the cross they placed a list of the victims, at the end of which they wrote: 'We erect this cross to represent an uninterrupted prayer for our murdered sisters and brothers, the Poles of Rumno. In order to express our deep attachment to the natal house and to the fatherland and our respect for the greatest Christian and patriotic values, we erect this cross as a symbol of thanks to God and the Mother of our savoir, Maria, the supporter of the faithful, for saving our lives in hard times of occupation and for all the mercy we have received during our stay in western lands.'[57] Now, speaking at the mass, Father Tadeusz continued: 'We would like to commemorate the martyrdom of Poles in Rumno and all of Kresy … Our memory is inscribed in this bag containing soil from the Polish cemetery in Rumno – soil full of the blood of those who were tortured.'

Then he welcomed his fellow priests, the order sisters, and numerous political and military dignitaries – the mayor and city council of Przemyśl, the president of the Przemyśl district, the deputy to the Polish parliament from the Law and Justice Party (Prawo i Sprawiedliwość), the general of the

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[56] The Armija Krajowa was a Polish home defence group that operated in the territories of mid-war Poland under Nazi occupation and also fought against the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA).

[57] The 'western lands' were *zemie zachodnie,* the former part of Germany attached to Poland after World War II, where many Poles from Kresy found their new homes.

Przemyśl border guard, the commandant of the Przemyśl garrison and other soldiers, the head of the city police, and village mayors from around the region. He also welcomed activists representing associations dedicated to commemorating war suffering. The several hundred participants also included the young scouts, the pilgrims from Wrocław, people from Kresy, schoolchildren, and journalists. Father Tadeusz's welcome was followed by a series of prayers for the pope and the Przemyśl archbishop, for those killed in Kresy and others who had died in war, for the freedom and sovereignty of the fatherland, for deceased parents and other relatives, for mercy on those who had killed innocent people, and for those who were ill and lonely.

Although originally the sermon was to have been delivered by the archbishop emeritus of Przemyśl, Archbishop Tokarczuk, in the end one of the older priests, an auxiliary bishop, delivered the sermon instead. Later that week I heard rumours from local people who were well informed about the city's religious scene, saying that the current archbishop did not like to see his predecessor supporting local nationalist commemorations. According to this interpretation, the archbishop 'advised' Tokarczuk not to take part in the ceremony. In the sermon, the auxiliary bishop called for open hearts and sincerity and urged that in order to become better, people should look to Jesus and be inspired by his forgiveness, love, and goodness. At this point the preaching was addressed to the entire Polish nation:

> Let's work … for the good of our fatherland … Let's pay respect to our fatherland, defend its values, work for it and pray for it, suffer for it and even die for it! The fatherland is everything that Poland contains. As the holy father says, this all makes our national identity, our difference; it speaks of our pride throughout generations. The fatherland is not the same as the state. We were in serfdom and there was no state, but there was the fatherland. Systems, parties, and states change, but the fatherland remains the same.

After the sermon, prayers for all the bishops, the yet unborn children, and Kresy continued. They were followed by a greeting by an Armenian priest from Kraków, who compared the suffering of the Polish and Armenian nations. At the end of the mass, the soil from Rumno in the fabric bag was blessed. Then the participants moved to the churchyard, where Father Tadeusz had organized an outdoor ceremony. A brass band played funeral and military songs and was followed by a belletristic dramatization of the killings and the reading of poems. 'It was a martyr's death these people underwent', said another speaker. When the soil in the bag was placed in the churchyard wall, this speaker reminded the audience, 'This is the holy soil under the cross that we should never forget.' A plaque on the churchyard wall listing the victims of 1944 was uncovered by one of the survivors of the

Rumno attack, himself a priest, together with the little granddaughter of another survivor and a Pole from Volhynia, in contemporary Ukraine. This was followed by prayers for the martyrs. Afterwards, children read poems about innocent families, the houses in the countryside, the soil that feeds the people, and the only mother – wonderful Poland and how beautiful it is on the banks of the Vistula, 'under blue sky and under the white eagle on the white and red flag'.[58]

Plate 10. The garden of Holy Trinity Church, Przemyśl, during the climax of the commemoration of the Rumno massacre, 4 June 2004.

Next came a speech by the Sejm deputy, who attacked the then leftist government for ignoring the needs of war veterans. The following speaker was the city mayor, also a member of the Law and Justice Party, who was known for his sympathy towards the church. 'We should know the truth and pass it to the younger generations,' he said. 'In order to have no more bloodshed, no more suffering, no more nationalisms, there is a strong need for reconciliation among nations. It is difficult to forgive, but keeping ourselves in Christ, and through prayer, we are able to … receive the gift of forgiving.'

The next speaker's reminder of the role of the church as a guardian of memory was followed by expressions of thanksgiving and mourning by the priests: 'Oh, our beloved eastern Kresy, where our dearest lie without Catholic funerals ...' Then came additional singing and the placing of garlands and flowers, and at sunset the ritual was over.

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[58] The white eagle and white-and-red flag are the national symbols of Poland.

This Polish commemoration of civilian martyrs was a unique event, but similar activities are organized regularly in Przemyśl – not least in the Carmelite church, the source of the greatest nationalist tensions in the city in the 1990s, as I discuss later in this chapter. Because this commemoration of the Rumno killings took place just two days before the annual Ukrainian patriotic march to Pikulice, my Greek Catholic informants saw it as a provocation.

4.2 The Pikulice March

Przemyśl was an important site where intense battles were fought over the strategic Austro-Hungarian fortress during World War I. Monuments commemorating war sacrifices have been erected for Poles, Ukrainians, and members of other nationalities who fought in the region during that war. The war cemeteries and monuments in the city and in adjacent rural areas, as well as stories told about the war, remind local people of the extreme losses suffered by residents of the area they live in today. The kind of memory anchored in the monuments is visible in many other parts of Europe as well (Filippucci 2004; Winter 2004). But apart from these memory sites, which remind people of what for them is now relatively distant violence, other sites have recently become highly controversial.

One such site is what was originally a World War I cemetery in the village of Pikulice, near Przemyśl, with its monument commemorating soldiers of the Ukrainian Galician Army who fought in the Polish-Ukrainian war of 1918–1919. In 2000 the cemetery took on new meaning when the remains of some Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) soldiers who died in the fighting after World War II were moved there from graves in the town of Bircza, thirty kilometres to the west, where particularly bloody battles took place in 1946 between the UPA and Polish troops. In December 2003, tension arose over the removal of the plaques on these graves, which had been installed by the local Association of Ukrainians. It came to light that the removal had been directed by the state Office for the Care of Military Graveyards. Most Ukrainians perceived this act as a desecration of their national mourning site, and in 2004 the case was headed for court. Through the bodies of the dead UPA fighters, the old cemetery from World War I was reshaped in terms of later and much more controversial memories of the ethnic war between Ukrainians and Poles in south-east Poland from 1943 to 1947.

The tradition of mourning over the graves of fighters for Ukrainian independence in Przemyśl goes back to 1921. After a long interruption during World War II and the communist years, the annual commemoration re-emerged with great vitality in 1990. In 2004 it was organized on Sunday, 6 June, and Greek Catholic clergy played an essential role in supervising the ritual. It began in the morning with the liturgy in the Greek Catholic Cathedral of St John the Baptist, continued with a procession through the city, and climaxed with a funeral ceremony at the Ukrainian war cemetery in Pikulice, where a tomb (*mohyla*) with a double cross on top marked the burial place of the national heroes.[59]

Plate 11. The march of Ukrainians through Przemyśl to the war cemetery in nearby Pikulice, 6 June 2004.

In front of the cathedral gathered people wearing folk costumes, surrounded by garlands of flowers and ribbons in blue and yellow, the Ukrainian national colours. In addition to local Ukrainians, several hundred former inhabitants of the San Valley and their heirs, who had been forced to leave their home villages for Soviet Ukraine after World War II, attended the liturgy.[60] At the end of the service the people joined in a procession. Behind the trident (*tryzub*), students from the Przemyśl Ukrainian school marched with the church and national flags, followed by a brass band that gave rhythm to the whole procession. The band played military songs, and during its breaks, the marchers sang them themselves. Next came the priests, followed by the nuns and former UPA soldiers in their uniforms. At the end walked the mass of believers.

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[59] *Mohyla* graves take the form of little hills and date back to Cossack burial practices.

[60] The San River was often seen as the ethnographic border between Roman Catholic Poles and Greek Catholic Ukrainians. Particularly for Ukrainian nationalists it symbolized the westernmost border of 'Greater' Ukraine.

Later, Father Bogdan, the young head of the Greek Catholic cathedral office, surrounded by some ten fellow priests, gave the sermon at the war cemetery. He underlined the importance of the day for 'Przemyśl and every individual Ukrainian'. He asked rhetorically why the people buried in the tombs should have died. His answer was clear: they wanted 'free space under the sun for our beloved Ukraine!' Next to the priest stood an old UPA combatant from Sambir, in contemporary Ukraine. When his grandfather had been about to leave his home village as a soldier in the Austrian army in World War I, he had predicted that even if he never came home, his children would have a wonderful life in an independent Ukrainian state. He did not return, and his children did not enjoy that freedom either, said Father Bogdan, but his grandson, who had fought in the UPA, enjoyed this independence today. As the priest told this story, the veteran started to cry, and Father Bogdan became increasingly emotional. 'This land is wet from blood and tears,' he said, 'and we will pay homage to those hero soldiers who made the greatest sacrifice for this land and for us.'

Father Bogdan also recited the words of the UPA oath:

> I, a soldier of the UPA, taking arms into my hands, with all my awe and reputation vow to fight for the liberation of all Ukrainian lands and the Ukrainian nation from those who have taken possession of our Ukrainian united independent state. In this battle I will regret losing neither blood nor life, and I will fight to the final defeat of all murderers of Ukraine.

He continued by saying that war had ended and communism, too, had failed, but nevertheless, much work lay ahead. 'There is a free, independent Ukraine that needs every Ukrainian heart.' Afterwards he rhetorically turned to the dead: 'You spilled a lot of your blood; you poured your tears over the land! Before heaven and the entire earth your martyr blood attests to your indisputable belonging to God! You are among the greatest ones standing in front of the altar of God almighty, and we bow our heads before your tomb! Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory forever! Glory to Ukraine! Glory to the heroes!'[61]

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[61] *'Slava Iesusu Christu! Slava na viky! Slava Ukrainy! Heroiam slava!'*

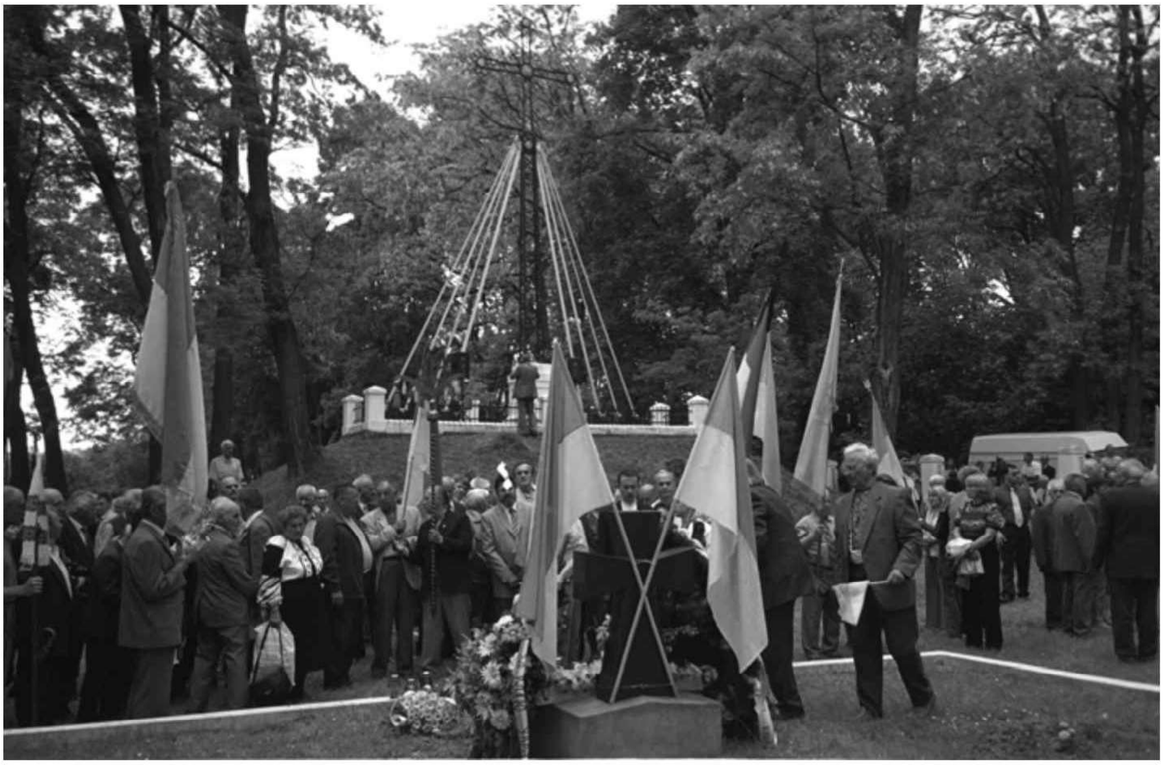

Plate 12. UPA graves behind the war monument in Pikulice, 6 June 2004.

The ritual continued with a funeral liturgy, and then the head of the local Association of Ukrainians took the podium. To the strains of funeral music, students wearing folk costumes laid on the World War I tomb the ‘thorny garland’ of the Ukrainian nation, which had ‘suffered so much’, symbolizing Christ’s sacrifice. This was followed by the placing of garlands by the consul of Ukraine in Poland, the representative of the L’viv county administration, the members of the L’viv county assembly, the mayor of the city of Tarnopil, Ukraine, a deputy in the Ukrainian parliament, the vice-mayor of the city of Drohobycz, Ukraine, and a representative of the district assembly from Mostiska, the first town across the Polish-Ukrainian border. Representatives of various commemorative associations were also present, among them activists in the ‘L’viv Association of the Deported from the San Valley’ (Tovaristvo Nadsania), whose ancestors had been expelled from the area in 1945–1946.[62] Many ordinary Ukrainians placed garlands or flowers as well. So did representatives of the Przemyśl city council; they were the only ones whose flowers were in the Polish colours, red and white. Meanwhile, many people moved from the World War I tomb at the front of the cemetery, the centre of the ritual commemoration, to the much more controversial graves of the UPA soldiers at the back.

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[62] *Nadsanie* is the Ukrainian name for the region along the San River in contemporary south-east Poland, which Ukrainians consider to be historically ethnic Ukrainian territory.

After the religious part of the ceremony, the Ukrainian consul made a speech stressing that elsewhere in this part of Europe, 'the Cossack crosses that have led to Ukrainian independence were seeded along the roads', meaning that vast numbers of Ukrainians had died on the way to the country's freedom. He stressed that 'our predecessors died for this land, and we must find the strength to build a civilized and democratic Ukraine'. The next speaker mentioned the various eternal and religious roles this place played, pointing out that 'we came here to cleanse ourselves'. More greetings were given, including those by representatives of the Przemyśl city council. Their brief remarks about the necessity of seeing a common future despite having been divided by the past died away in the background noise of the participants as well as the fast-moving timetable of the event. After an informal gathering with friends and family members, people went home to their late Sunday meals. The guests from Ukraine piled into coaches waiting in front of the cemetery and continued their pilgrimage, visiting their nation's 'holy' places spread so densely over south-east Poland.

The two ritual commemorations – that for the Polish martyrs of ethnic cleansing at Rumno and that for the Ukrainian military heroes at Pikulice – indicate the existence of mutually exclusive narratives about the battles and sacrifices for freedom of the opposed nations. These ceremonies mark each nation's national heroes as the other's enemies. The clergy's supervision of the rituals reveals that religion is inseparable from the enactment of national suffering and mourning. Participants in the ceremonies couch this suffering in the language of the Christian faith – they speak of a search for 'truth', of 'blood and tears', and of the victims of the wars as 'martyrs'. Wearing military and quasi-military costumes, holding national and religious flags, reading poems and singing religious and military songs, the participants assist the clergymen in making the ritual spiritually profound. In south-east Poland it is religion that necessarily supervises a nation's memories. These memories are expressed not only in ceremonies but also in battles over religious symbols in the public sphere.

4.3 The Monument of the Przemyśl Eagles

Commemorations of war with religious overtones in south-east Poland are not limited to the kinds of grand ceremonies I have just described. They also include the erection of public monuments and commemorative plaques to war heroes. The Monument of the Przemyśl Eagles is a good example. Originally built by Polish nationalists in the 1930s, it commemorated the young Polish defenders of the city against the Ukrainian Galician Army in 1918–1919 (Tluczek 2001: 8). It was destroyed by the Nazis and then re-erected by patriotic Poles in 1995. I was able to meet several of the people responsible for restoring it. One was the eighty-year-old uncle of a friend of mine.

After meeting the uncle at a small shoe shop in the old town, I walked with him to the office of the Association for the Commemoration of the Przemyśl Eagles (Stowarzyszenie Pamięci Orląt Przemyskich), located on the opposite side of the river. We passed several buildings, and the uncle commented about the ones that were supposed to be or had already been returned to the Greek Catholic Church – in his eyes, to the Ukrainians. His complaints were not only about injustices to Poles but also about the fact that the buildings, as registered landmarks, would be renovated using Polish money. He assured me that there had always been conflicts between Poles and Ukrainians in the city, especially because of the nationalist Greek Catholic clergy.

The uncle's father had been sent to Siberia by the Soviets in 1940 and returned with the Polish army from Berlin in 1945. In June 1946 his entire family was forced to leave their village near L'viv. They left their farm and settled seven kilometres from Przemyśl on a Ukrainian farm whose owner had been forced to leave for Soviet Ukraine. As the uncle remembered it, at that time 'remains of the dead were floating down the river San trussed by UPA wires'. Because *banderowci,* UPA troops headed by Stepan Bandera, were killing in the area, it was difficult to settle down. I asked about Action Vistula, in which Ukrainians suffered at the hands of Poles, but the uncle explained to me that Ukrainians had just profited from being taken away and ending up on the rich farms taken from the Germans. Most importantly, he continued, thanks to Action Vistula, the killings of Poles stopped.

After 1989 the uncle joined a group aiming to re-erect the Monument of the Przemyśl Eagles (Orlęta Przemyskie). In the 1990s, he and his patriotic friends decided to move the monument from its original location to a more central site, the square just behind the bridge we were crossing, which was renamed the Bridge of the Przemyśl Eagles in 1994. During the socialist years, a monument to the inter-war communist party activist Stanisław Łańcucki had stood there, and the square was named after him. In 1991 it was renamed the Square of the Przemyśl Eagles. As the uncle told me, only the plaque remained of the original monument to the Eagles, and his group installed it on the new monument.

Plate 13. The Monument of the Przemyśl Eagles.

After leaving the monument, and before reaching the association's offices, the uncle took me to the monument to Polish resistance against Nazism, which faced the entrance to a new supermarket. Erected in the 1970s, the monument commemorated victims shot on that site by Nazis in 1943. Observing the supermarket, the uncle commented that all the Polish patrimony had been sold out to the Germans and other western nationals. In his eyes this weakened the security and independence of the Polish state, which was already being undermined by Ukrainians from the inside.

While discussing the threats Poland was facing, we approached the entrance of the association's office on Grunwaldska Street. The group used an office in a building owned by the city council, free of charge. Above the door were several plaques indicating that a number of other associations had their seats there as well. Besides the Association for the Commemoration of the Przemyśl Eagles, I noticed the name of an association dedicated to defending the Carmelite church (Stowarzyszenie Obrony Kościoła Ojców Karmelitów) and of another that took care of the National Museum (Stowarzyszenie Obrony Muzeum Narodowego Ziemi Przemyskiej). Although many patriotic associations are registered in Przemyśl, their memberships overlap heavily and remain stable. Reliable local sources estimated that these associations altogether had from ten to twenty active members in 2003–2004. Even during the escalation of nationalist passions in the early 1990s, no more than several dozen 'civil society' activists directly participated in them. At the office we met Mr. Żółkiewicz, the head of several of the associations, who claimed that his Association for the Commemoration of the Przemyśl Eagles had sixty members. I heard from several frightened Ukrainians that the number was at least several hundred, and once I was told by a desperate Ukrainian that there were two thousand committed Polish nationalists in Przemyśl.

Although local politicians, including the city mayor at the time – who had been a member of Żółkiewicz's association but had not paid his membership fees for several years – did not support these groups openly, they certainly did not object to their existence. As Żółkiewicz told me, the meetings of the oldest, core association, that of the Eagles, dating from the 1980s, were informal weekly gatherings at which members discussed their support for Polish national politics in Przemyśl. All the men in the club that I talked to stressed that by fulfilling their patriotic duty, they compensated for the lack of patriotic interest on the part of the local government. A discussion coming up later that day was to be about publishing a statement against the building of a costly ski lift in Przemyśl. The discussion suggested that the association took an interest in broader public affairs, not solely those restricted to patriotic matters. But during the discussion itself, I noticed that the concern of these older men over finances was rather 'populist' – they wanted to prevent foreigners (banks) and cosmopolitan outsiders (EU funders) from bringing Polish patrimony (the city) to financial ruin.[63]

When the uncle and I entered the office, Żółkiewicz and two other men were sitting behind a table, above which hung pictures of two political opponents from the inter-war period, Józef Piłsudski and Roman Dmowski. When I asked about this apparent contradiction – Piłsudski had held a pluralist vision of Poland, and Dmowski, a xenophobic nationalist one – Żółkiewicz explained that both were great Poles and both wanted the best for

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[63] The controversial ski lift symbolized the future prosperity of the city and south-east Poland, which some people believed should be developed through tourism. Many locals as well as experts objected that there were much better places for developing a winter sport resort than Przemyśl, with its low elevation, but the city council nevertheless accepted loans and began building the lift in 2004. By the end of 2005 it still had failed to obtain EU subsidies, but during the winter of 2005–2006 the first skiers enjoyed the slope from Tatar Hill down to the river floodplain.

Poland. Although he favoured Dmowski over Piłsudski, he said he understood that both were important for Polish statehood.[64]

On the opposite wall of the office hung the red flag of the association. Its left side depicted the coat of arms of Przemyśl and an image of the Mother of God of Jackowa taken from the city's Roman Catholic cathedral. On its right side was the coat of arms of L'viv and an image of the Mother of God of Mercy adopted from the L'viv Roman Catholic cathedral. In the middle of the flag was the coat of arms of Piłsudski's legionnaires from 1918; at the bottom, the text 'God-Honour-Fatherland' (*Bóg-Honor-Ojczyzna*); and at the top, the text '*semper fidelis*' (always faithful), evoking the medieval motto of the Polish state. On the back of the flag was a picture of the Monument of the Przemyśl Eagles.

Born in L'viv, Żółkiewicz had moved to Poland in the 1950s and later worked as an engineer. By his own account, as a boy in L'viv he had taken part in fist fights with young Ukrainians who were profaning the Lychakivskyi Cemetery, where the Polish national Tomb of the L'viv Eagles was located.[65] His political career in Przemyśl began in the early 1990s, when he was appointed vice-president of the county (*wicewojewoda*), although he held that position only for several months. It was rumoured that using his position, he helped allocate state money for the re-erection of the Przemyśl Eagles monument, and that some money from that time was still missing.

In addition to some state support, the monument was built with voluntary contributions and the voluntary labour of the association's members and other patriotic Poles. The cornerstone was blessed in 1989, and the monument itself in 1995. In every year but one since 1989, the city's official celebration of Independence Day had taken place at the Square of the Przemyśl Eagles, in front of the monument. Żółkiewicz explained that the monument showed 'the patriotism and self-sacrifice of youth for the city and the nation'. When initiating its re-erection, he was inspired by the Tomb of the L'viv Eagles at Lychakivskyi Cemetery and the patriotic pictures and inscriptions on its walls.

This was the kind of patriotism Żółkiewicz had in mind when he organized the defence of the Carmelite church against its supposed takeover by

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[64] The Monument of the Przemyśl Eagles sparked political controversy between Piłsudski and Dmowski supporters even in the 1920s, when Dmowski's National Democrats proposed erecting it. From Dmowski's perspective, it symbolized the defence of the borderlands and their polonization rather than the fight for independence. The latter perspective characterized Piłsudski's followers. I thank Stanisław Stępień for this insight.

[65] The L'viv Eagles (Orlęta lwowskie) were the Polish child soldiers who defended the city of L'viv against Ukrainian troops during the Polish-Ukrainian war of 1918–1919.

Ukrainians, the major symbolic religious-national battle fought in Przemyśl in the 1990s.

4.4 The Carmelite Church Controversy

The church in Przemyśl known as the Carmelite church was built in 1627–1631 by the duke of Podolia, Michał Krasicki, for the Roman Catholic Carmelite order of monks. In 1784 the Austrian government gave it to the Greek Catholics, and the church later became their cathedral. An octagonal cupola was built on top of the sanctuary in 1876–1884, and it dominated the Przemyśl panorama until 1997. In 1946 the socialist state gave the church back to the Carmelite order. The Roman Catholic Church decided in 1991 to return the buildings to the newly reactivated Greek Catholic Church for five years, during which time the Greek Catholics would build a new cathedral and then restore the church to the Carmelites. The handover was to be celebrated during a visit to Przemyśl by the pope on 2 June 1991. Greek Catholics perceived the return as historical justice, and local Ukrainians had no intention of giving the church back to the Carmelites after five years.

A group of Polish nationalists led by Żółkiewicz decided to occupy the church in order to prevent its being transferred to the Greek Catholics. During April and May 1991, some thirty members of the Association for the Commemoration of the Przemyśl Eagles lived in the church and the adjacent monastery. Outside, they were supported by some devout elderly women who stood in front of the Roman Catholic bishop's palace holding banners bearing slogans such as 'We will not give up the Polish Church'. Every day the women made a five-hundred-meter 'pilgrimage' from the bishop's palace to the Carmelite church.

Rumours circulated that Ukrainians might attack the 'defenders', so police patrols monitored the situation. Bishop Tokarczuk announced a censure over the church, but it did not make the defenders leave the sanctuary. No one from the bishop's office was willing to talk to them. Even Tokarczuk, known for frequently taking the Polish side, refused to legitimate their activity. The defenders nevertheless received many wishes of success from ordinary clergymen. Because the Catholic monastic orders are not subordinate to the diocese clergy, the Carmelite provincial priest in Warsaw was asked to come and restore order. He persuaded some of his monks to leave the buildings, but the defenders pretended to keep the remaining monks there against their will in order to give them an excuse not to follow the principal's command.

After significant pressure from high church officials, the defenders finally withdrew before the pope's arrival. But the intense pressure from nationalist circles led the pope to alter the original plan. Instead of giving the

Carmelite church to the Greek Catholics, he decided to give them the Jesuit church in which they had held their services semi-officially since the late 1950s. As one of the defenders said, 'We managed to defend one church, but the Ukrainians took another'.

In 1996 another controversy arose, this one over the Carmelites' replacement of the old cupola on the church with a more appropriate 'Latin' spire. The alteration erased the last of the supposed Byzantine elements in the church's architecture and reflected the dominant Western and Latin religion of the city and of Poland.[66] An entire historical narrative was constructed to justify both the defence and the 'Latinization' of the Carmelite church, a narrative going back to the founder of the church, Count Krasicki. According to its logic, the property once taken by the Austrian emperor Joseph II and given to the Greek Catholic Church had been returned to the Poles as a result of historical justice.

I found this explanation widely popular among Roman Catholics in the city, regardless of age. It seemed that people accepted the simplest nationalist argument – that after the partitions in 1772–1795, Poland had been enslaved. No one who believed this was aware that, as my Greek Catholic informants pointed out, the 1925 concordat between Poland and the Holy See confirmed the ownership of buildings by the Greek Catholic Church. For Greek Catholics, the case of the Carmelite church exemplified postsocialist injustice and intolerant Roman Catholic nationalist policy. One of my friends said bitterly that the decision not to hand the Carmelite church over to Greek Catholics 'was made by Tokarczuk. Actually, he did not do it alone. I think it was done in consultation with Rome'.

Among the people attempting to keep the church in Roman Catholic hands were several groups, including the Carmelite brothers who lived in the monastery. Its original residents after 1945 had been monks who were forced to leave their monasteries in L'viv and other places in Soviet Ukraine and who settled in Przemyśl soon after World War II. Because in Poland, unlike in other socialist countries, monasteries were not liquidated after 1945 – only substantial landed property was confiscated – the monks were able to occupy the church, which had been left empty after the Greek Catholics were expelled. Few of these men were still alive in the 1990s.

Another group favouring the church's remaining Roman Catholic was the old women who demonstrated outside it. They simply feared that their church would be taken away from them. According to a son of one of these *babcie,* they believed that 'redemption could be achieved only in this one church, and in any other they would go to hell'. Other people were emotionally attached to the church as well and were manipulated by the nationalists. Moreover, I found some of the actual 'defenders', such as my friend's uncle, to be old men with painful war memories who did not always understand the complexity of the situation in Poland after 1989 and who were attempting to protect what they considered to be their nation's patrimony. Although some of them belonged to the technical intelligentsia, the majority of the mobilized were from among the ordinary people. Their lower social status made them no less responsible for nurturing intolerance towards their Ukrainian co-citizens, but it shows the complexity of the factors behind such passionate nationalist protests, particularly the postsocialist restructuring of property relations, general social insecurity, and the role of the clerical and lay intelligentsia in mobilizing people.

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[66] For more details on this case see, for example, Hann 1998b.

One day in July 2004 I had the opportunity to meet one of these ordinary church defenders, a Roman Catholic man of about fifty, who came to repair a water tap in my flat. While he worked, we discussed the question of national patrimonies. The man said that Pope John Paul II had

> made a wrong decision when he handed the [Jesuit] church over to the Ukrainians. He should have given it to them for ten years and they should have built their own and that's it! ... Now the Ukrainians want to take our museum as well.[67] I know what they are about. My father came from Sanok, and after the war he fought for five years against the UPA. He had bloody memories from that time. The Ukrainians were shooting at all of Przemyśl from the Carmelite church. After the war, three lorries-full of munitions were taken out of there!

Even international politics underlay the Carmelite controversy. It was in 1991 that the dissolution of the Soviet Union culminated and independent states such as Ukraine were established. Neighbouring L'viv had long been a cradle of Ukrainian nationalist aspirations. Ukrainians old enough to remember the situation before 1991 expressed suspicion that apart from Polish nationalists, the Russian secret police were interested in suppressing Ukrainian claims to independence. One of my neighbours, for example, believed that even Żółkiewicz, the head of the Polish nationalists, had arrived in Przemyśl from Soviet L'viv in 1956 with a mission: to become a well-regarded Polish patriot, penetrate local politics, and, after being accepted, work to deepen national animosities.

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[67] The Muzeum Narodowe Ziemi Przemyskiej, a former bishops' palace built in 1887, was formally returned to the Greek Catholic Church. The museum, which had occupied the building since the late 1940s, was supposed to vacate it in 2005. As of November 2006, construction of a new museum building had begun, but the museum had not yet moved out of the church property.

Many experts would object that the interpretation just described is false and conspiratorial. This might be the case, but one should not forget the importance of actions driven by conspiracy theory that contribute to political mobilization. The situation in both Poland and Ukraine at the beginning of the 1990s, as elsewhere in postsocialist Europe, was very uncertain. Words I heard in Przemyśl such as, 'If we now allow [the number of] Ukrainians to grow, what we will do when the Jews come?' and the rumour I recorded from people once involved in local politics that five hundred thousand former inhabitants of south-east Poland intended to return from Soviet Ukraine confirmed a common feeling of insecurity among ordinary people.

As Mr. Żółkiewicz sadly agreed, in contrast to the beginning of the 1990s, in 2004 his group's patriotic activities were no longer viewed with appreciation. Especially after Archbishop Tokarczuk retired and the new archbishop, Michalik, was appointed in 1993, church support for the association's activities declined rapidly. Despite the relative marginality of the ardent nationalists in Przemyśl, they succeeded in dictating an agenda for postsocialist local political discourse and, as members of voluntary associations composing a part of 'civil society', made the local public sphere 'uncivil' (see Hann 1997, 1998b). Their mobilization was based not only on people's memories but also on constructions of nationhood. One must take equally into account the 'national ideology under socialism' (Verdery 1991a), in which Ukrainians were depicted as killers and bandits, and the mutually opposed narratives of martyrdom that circulate in the Polish and Ukrainian nations. The defenders of the Carmelite church, in overdoing their patriotic duty by spreading hate against their fellow citizens of another rite and nationality, based their actions on the symbolic repertoire already extant in the wider religious and national mythology and in state-sponsored commemorations, both Polish and Ukrainian.

4.5 Ukrainian Patriotism

The Ukrainian National House in Przemyśl is a part of the city's symbolic landscape that, like other buildings such as the Carmelite church, the palace of the Greek Catholic bishop, and the former Greek Catholic seminary, embodies the Ukrainian patrimony. The cooperative and credit union movements were widespread in late Austrian Galicia, and one of them, called Narodnyi Dim, was organized in 1900 in Przemyśl. Soon it built a new two-storey building, which was officially opened and blessed by the Greek Catholic bishop in 1904. One report observed that 'the costs were huge, because it was a monumental house – built of stone and iron'.[68] Contemporary Ukrainians in Przemyśl organize all their important secular events in this building. They gather there for patriotic occasions, concerts, and community activities, which they learn about through family, neighbourhood, and religious networks as well as publicity posters. Some events, such as Malanka, the Ukrainian farewell to the old year, attract Ukrainians from all over Poland. In April 2005, for example, the new president of Ukraine, Viktor Yushchenko, met with his fellow Ukrainians in the Narodnyi Dim.

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[68] I am thankful to Bogdan Huk for insights into the history of the credit union.

The Association of Ukrainians in Poland (Związek Ukraińców w Polsce), which hosted the president, was established in 1990 as the successor to the socialist Ukrainian Social-Cultural Association (Ukraińske Towarzystwo Społeczno-Kulturalne, or UTSK), which had existed since 1956. In the late 1990s the association had around ten thousand members and was organized into 137 regional branches, with a central office in Warsaw (Berdychowska 1998). It published a weekly, *Nashe Slovo,* in Ukrainian and received funding from the state budget for its activities, including book and magazine publishing and the organizing of festivals and artistic performances, choirs, and youth meetings (Berdychowska 1998: 152).

One evening in early December 2003 the seminar room of the Narodnyi Dim hosted around thirty elderly people, both women and men. On the walls were a painting of Prince Danylo of Galicia, several folk images, a painting of Shevchenko and some other Ukrainian national heroes, and several Cossack artefacts. The Polish eagle on the front wall was half-covered by a window drapery. Next to it hung a much larger trident (*tryzub*). Similarly, the white and red Polish flag was markedly smaller than the yellow and blue Ukrainian one. The most important person of the evening sat at the front table, together with an older gentleman who was supposed to chair the session.

The important man was Dmytro Bogush, a former member of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (OUN-UPA). His memoir, which had been published in Ukraine, was being presented that evening. Dmytro Bogush had taken part in battles for Ukrainian freedom in Zakerzonie, the ethnic Ukrainian territory beyond the Curzon line, in the 1940s and 1950s. Since then, according to the foreword of his book, he had been struggling for historical justice, the opening of memorial sites commemorating soldiers who had died for an independent Ukraine, and the general rehabilitation of the Ukrainian presence in Zakerzonie. Bogush had been born near Lubaczów, north of Przemyśl, once an area heavily inhabited by Ukrainians. After World War II he was repatriated to Soviet Ukraine, where he still lived.

At the beginning of the meeting, the chairman stressed the need to create a Ukrainian national memory, because everything Ukrainian in Polish

Zakerzonie had been erased after 1947. Dmytro Bogush then began his speech: 'We are now in the land that we have lost. It goes as far as Krynica. Nevertheless, I believe we have not lost it forever.' He said that for him, as a resident of contemporary Ukraine, 'the Curzon line was a mental line'. Many people in Ukraine, he claimed, knew nothing about what happened to their fellow nationals who remained in Poland after World War II. Fortunately, he continued, many signs of the Ukrainian past, such as memorials to Ukrainian soldiers, were still widely spread across Zakerzonie, and Ukrainians in Przemyśl were keeping the memory alive. During the following discussion, the need to educate young Ukrainians about their history was raised. One participant, pointing out the supposedly unpleasant situation of the Ukrainian minority in Poland, blamed the Ukrainian state for being weak: 'If there were a strong Ukrainian state, Poles would accept us here.' After the discussion the books were distributed, and Bogush signed some of them.

As the book presentation in the Narodnyi Dim reveals, the fight for national freedom plays an important part in the collective memory of Ukrainians in south-east Poland. The importance of military heroism in particular is visible in a comparison of two patriotic occasions celebrated by Przemyśl Ukrainians. Ukraine's Independence Day, 24 August, is a predominantly secular, family event. Przemyśl Ukrainians organize picnics and drink together to celebrate, but the festivities are relatively casual and informal. My retired neighbours might at most have watched the official celebration in Kyiv on Ukrainian TV or attended a concert in the Narodnyi Dim. In contrast, the Ukrainian national Day of All Saints, when fallen Ukrainian soldiers are honoured, is a passionately celebrated day, replete with marching and military symbols. It is carried out under the supervision of the clergy but proudly embodies the cult of militarism that is a part both Polish and Ukrainian nationalist narratives.

To the majority of conscious Przemyśl Ukrainians, the oppression their national collective went through represents a kind of martyrdom. Their grand narrative of Ukrainian suffering includes not only the losses of heroic UPA soldiers during World War II but also Action Vistula, the great famine of 1932–1933 (which did not touch Galicia at all), and communism, an import from Moscow. This narrative reinforces Ukrainian self-perception, but so does the Polish state. Commemorative events are coordinated with schools, and the linkage of state, church, and school helps to create both Ukrainian and Polish patriots.

A student at the Ukrainian school in Przemyśl, for example, mentioned the 'festival of the UPA', meaning the Pikulice march, as 'a festival of the Ukrainian state'. Students also mentioned Ukrainian Independence Day as a festival of the Ukrainian nation, along with Shevchenko evenings in the Narodnyi Dim. When asked which events were considered patriotic, a few respondents mentioned the Jordan ceremony and the Kupaly Night, which I discuss in chapters 6 and 8, respectively. But most considered the UPA commemoration on the Day of All Saints the true patriotic festival. One student said, 'Each year Ukrainians celebrate the memory of UPA soldiers. My parents say it is a tradition ... I take part in this ceremony because my grandparents fought and died for a free Ukraine and they are buried in unknown tombs.' The march to a war cemetery is a widely accepted form of patriotism even among many 'liberal' Ukrainians.

Why is this rather marginal military activity – in 1946 the number of UPA soldiers in all of south-east Poland reached a peak of 1,500 – so compelling for contemporary Ukrainians, especially if they are not direct descendants of UPA combatants? The answer lies in the fuzzy boundary between people's memories and national histories.

4.6 Patriotic Commemorations of War

A brief look at the calendar of public holidays in Poland shows that legitimated memory includes a great deal of war history. Commemorative practices in Polish cities and towns to a large extent reflect nation-wide practices, symbols, and narratives. Frances Pine noticed the strong presence of war memories in Polish cities, not only locked in memory sites but also a living part of people's daily conversation (Pine 2002: 163).

After arriving in Przemyśl, I was impressed by the frequency, popularity, and abundant ritual character of the national ceremonies enacted in the city, many of which were congruent with Catholic holidays. The third of May, for example, is Constitution Day (Święto Konstytucji), commemorating the adoption of Poland's first constitution on 3 May 1791. It is also the day of the Ceremony of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Poland (Uroczystość Najświętszej Marii Panny – Królowej Polski), which commemorates both the proclamation of the Virgin Mary as Queen of Poland during the reign of King Jan Kazimierz (1648–1668) and the Millennial Act of Submission of the Polish Nation to the Virgin Mary, approved by Pope John XXIII on 3 May 1966, the one-thousandth anniversary of the coming of Latin Christianity to Poland. Celebrations are held that day, particularly at Jasna Góra, Częstochowa, a national shrine, and in churches across the country.

On a more military note, the Roman Catholic Day of All Saints (Wszystkich Swiętych) on 1 November honours saints who do not have their own feast day during the year, as well as Poles who died in the service of their country. The latter include victims of the Katyn Massacre, perpetrated by Soviet troops during the occupation in 1940, and victims of the Warsaw

Uprising against the Nazi occupation in 1944. Independence Day (Dzień Niepodległości), on 11 November, commemorates Poland's regaining of independence in 1918, and in cities and towns across the country, masses dedicated to Poland are held.

In Przemyśl on 11 November, the national flag hangs virtually everywhere, even in private houses and restaurants. In 2003 the official county celebration was held in the town of Bircza, thirty kilometres west of Przemyśl. Because this ceremony was held in the town's main square, in front of a monument to Polish heroism against the UPA, my Ukrainian friends perceived it as an anti-Ukrainian provocation. Independence Day celebrations in Przemyśl that year were held in front of the Monument of the Przemyśl Eagles. Prepared by patriotic and combatant leaders, the ceremony could have not taken place without a Roman Catholic mass and the presence of soldiers and clergy.

It started at ten o'clock in the morning in the cathedral with a jubilee holy mass dedicated to the fatherland. At eleven thirty, participants in a 'race of independence' set off from the Tomb of the Przemyśl Eagles in the main cemetery, and later soldiers marched in a parade in front of the Monument of Przemyśl Eagles. This was followed by the placing of flowers in front of the monument and under the plaque installed in Piłsudski's honour on one of the houses on the embankment named after him. At noon, the commemoration program in front of the Monument of the Przemyśl Eagles took place with a candle lighting, a tribute to the fallen soldiers, an honorary salute, the placing of flowers, and the closing of the foot race. At one o'clock, flowers were laid on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the Main Cemetery, on the Tomb of the Przemyśl Eagles, on the grave of Irena Benszówna, a nurse from Poznań who died in the Polish-Ukrainian War, and on the Monument of the Legionnaires, Poles who had fought in foreign armies.

The evening of Independence Day was marked by an annual session of the city council in the royal castle and a concert of opera and operetta music afterwards. Among the parallel activities in town that night was the theatre play *The Story of the Wandering of the Polish Soul,* also performed at the castle. Earlier in the day, a festival was held in honour of the Polish Scout Association's Platoon of Przemyśl Land. It took place at platoon headquarters on 22 January Street, named for the start of the January 1863 Polish uprising in the Russian partition.

Dressed in their best clothes, the people of Przemyśl turn out in large numbers at the riverbank, where all military parades and national commemorations take place. A forty-year-old friend of mine once said: 'I take part in the patriotic holidays because of my son. Sometimes I feel guilty if I do not attend one or another, the third of May, Constitution Day, for example.' One student stated directly: 'I am a patriot and take part in one of the most important national holidays, the eleventh of November, the regaining of independence. It is a great day for the Polish nation because it brought freedom to us.' Another response from a student was: 'My ancestors died during the pacification of our village, and I would like to commemorate them. We should remember all those who died for our fatherland.' And in another example: 'I think each citizen has to take an active part in the state commemoration. Thanks to the people who died, we can enjoy freedom today.'

State leaders also take legitimacy from the military tradition of their nation. On 10 December 2003, for example, Poland's President Kwaśniewski gave an interview to Polish public television in which he stressed that Poles, as a nation of suffering (*naród cierpienia*), would firmly look after their national interests in the European Union. He mentioned the wars against Sweden in the seventeenth century, moved through Poland's losses of independence, touched upon both world wars, and ended with the communist years, all of which he said had strengthened the Poles as a nation.

The popularity of patriotic festivals among Poles and Ukrainians alike reveals that historical violence is not just an obsession of marginal nationalist groups but is also institutionalized in the official memory of the state. This gives more weight to certain memories that might otherwise have been forgotten. In other words, memories of violence and oppression held in family circles are also legitimated through the official state martyrology. In south-east Poland one cannot escape commemorations of war and violence, whether in the streets, the Poland-wide media, the churches, or the schools, Polish and Ukrainian alike, where pupils learn the official memory of suffering and heroism. Because of the fuzzy boundary between people's memories and national histories, the two continue to be ambiguous and to reinforce each other. That my Przemyśl friends considered themselves to embrace 'good' patriotism, distinct from the 'bad' nationalism of some other inhabitants, makes the boundary no clearer.

Once, during a discussion, a Przemyśl intellectual explained to me the origin of the conflict between Poles and Ukrainians. He said that 'the Slavic nations think with the heart, not with the head', and because they think emotionally, there must always have been conflicts among them. This explanation reveals not only the 'orientalist' view of Eastern Europe popular among intellectuals – in this case the idea that Slavs have a special emotional culture of ethnic nationalism, as opposed to the civic patriotism of Western Europeans – but also the structure of power relations still prevalent in Eastern Europe. That is, it shows who gives this emotional meaning to the national cultures and who takes over the past in a post-peasant setting – namely, the intelligentsia. As Pine, Kaneff, and Haukanes (2004: 8) pointed out, the intelligentsia is often both the source of critical thought about the past and the source of the problem of politicizing the past itself. Without post-peasant intellectuals – clergy, teachers, artists, and many other people I met in Przemyśl – the past violence would not have been so powerful a mobilizing factor in society.

Although I am concerned with the time after the modern guerrilla warfare of World War II, for a more precise look at the role of violence in national narratives it is useful to include pre-modern violence as well. Violent responses from serfs resulted from the reorganization of the Eastern European manorial economy now known as the 'second serfdom'. Chris Hann (1985: 21) noted that these responses were often initiated or at least supported by Orthodox priests, who lived under significantly worse economic conditions than their Roman Catholic counterparts. Particularly by making a cross-national, Polish-Ukrainian comparison, one can recognize opposition narratives reflecting supposed or actual economic inequalities between the two nations, and one element in these narratives is the phenomenon described as social banditry (Hobsbawm 1959). In the Ukrainian case this is complemented by myths of the Cossacks, the social rank famous for their military skills and self-reliance, but the social-national image of a hero defending powerless villagers has also been popular among other nations.[69] This implies that on the narrative level, intellectuals have valued some forms of pre-modern violence as part of the 'invented tradition' (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), full of 'retrospective martyrology' (Hobsbawm 1992: 3) and inseparable from the national 'imagination' (Anderson 1983). One should keep this in mind when analyzing contemporary commemorations of violence from around World War II.

4.7 Conclusion

Przemyśl was free of substantial nationalist tensions during the socialist years. The oppressive state permitted no 'unauthorized representations of the past' (Watson 1994: 2) to flourish, and alternative memories remained hidden in the private sphere or within the church. After communist control of the public sphere ended in Poland, the politicization of collective symbols strengthened national passions. This reshaping of symbolism resulted from people's insecurity during the transition. Religious symbolism and state-driven commemorations contributed to increasing and justifying some aspects of incivility between nations.

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[69] Ukrainian Cossacks formed the state of Zaporozhian Host in 1649. Many Ukrainians consider them the progenitors of the Ukrainian nation.

In the previous chapter I pointed out the 'peasant' elements of memories of oppression, such as the notion of the 'lost rural world', whereas in this chapter I have tried to show the more direct links these memories have to religious and national narratives of suffering and sacrifice and to the role of church, state, and intellectuals in nurturing them. These two chapters, therefore, bring together two of my major themes: the particular violence of ethno-nationalist conflicts in predominantly rural situations and the consequent reconsideration of religion as a primary element of identities in places where ethnic cleansing motivated by religious factors has been fundamental to the (re)establishment of nations. In the following chapter I look at the attitudes people hold towards the church after socialism, and how these attitudes are related to larger social and economic development in Poland.

Chapter 5
Popular Devotion, Anti-clericalism, and Post-Peasant Populism

> The Church warns against reducing the vision of a common Europe exclusively to economic and political aspects. It also warns against uncritical acceptance of the consumption life-style. If we want to make a new unity of Europe durable we must build it on the spiritual values that once established it. Taking into account the richness and plurality of cultures and traditions of the nations concerned, it should be a Great European Union of Spirit.
>
> Pope John Paul II in Polish Sejm, 11 of June 1999

Tensions between popular devotion and the orthodoxy of the institutional church in Poland offer an entry point for exploring the role of institutional religion, both Roman and Greek Catholic, in the postsocialist setting. Although the institutional church enjoys prominence in the public sphere, believers in south-east Poland often hold strong anti-clerical attitudes. Their ambivalence towards the church leads me to larger issues of the relationship between religion and postsocialist social and economic development, for despite people's anti-clericalism, many of them respond enthusiastically to the clergy's criticism of capitalism. An analysis of the annual Corpus Christi ritual in Przemyśl paves the way for a discussion of socially sensitive religious populism as an alternative to impersonal secular capitalism. The overarching questions I address are, why does church-centred discourse control 'official' politics? What makes people critical of the role of the church in the post-peasant setting? And what makes them, at the same time, sympathetic to the church's social criticism?

5.1 A Miraculous Vision in Chotyniec

The conflict between popular religion and the institutional orthodoxy of the Roman Catholic Church (Badone 1990b) was manifested at the beginning of 1990s in a dispute over control of a Marian apparition site in the village of

Chotyniec, about forty kilometres north of Przemyśl, near the border with Ukraine. The case illustrates the relationship between class, religion, and politics in post-socialist Poland. The Catholic Church's policy towards the apparition of the Virgin Mary in Chotyniec aroused anti-clerical attitudes among local people. Despite the church's being a consolidated political force in one of the most religious parts of the country, the people there seem not accept many of its policies. This ambiguous position of the church corresponds to the ambivalent political message Catholicism delivers – a message about the ideals of egalitarianism and sensitivity to people's needs, one the one hand, and about the legitimacy of the postsocialist power structures with which the church is allied, on the other. In the post-peasant setting this ambivalence feeds the nascent social movement I call post-peasant populism.

Chotyniec is one of the few mixed Roman and Greek Catholic villages in south-east Poland. Before 1947 it was Greek Catholic (Ukrainian). In 2004 its roughly eight hundred inhabitants comprised twenty Ukrainian and one hundred Polish families. The villagers worked mostly in agriculture, with small landholding prevalent, and in the privatized successor to the former socialist agricultural cooperative. A few people commuted to the city of Jarosław or worked at the state border, using the bad road built during communism. The locals joked that it had not been completed because the workers had spent the money on drinking. Unemployment and out-migration from the village were among the highest in the region. As one resident said of Chotyniec, 'There's nothing to do here but collect mushrooms.'

One Sunday in October 1989, a manifestation of the Virgin Mary – later named the Mother of God of Never-Ending Help (Matka Boża Nieustającej Pomocy) – reportedly appeared to the peasant worker Stanisław Kaczmar. Kaczmar described the apparition to me in the following way. He was taking a nap that afternoon in one of the two rooms of the family's little wooden house. In a cabinet in the next room stood a small statue of the Virgin Mary. He had a dream in which he heard a voice telling him to go to the other room and see how the Virgin Mary was crying. He woke up, went to the cabinet, and saw bloody tears coming from the statue's right eye. He awoke his wife, and she, too, saw the tears. They felt afraid and anxious. Their sixteen-year-old son came home and asked what was going on. They sent him into the room, and he screamed, 'Mum, Mum, blood!'

After this, Kaczmar went to the Roman Catholic priest – the only priest living permanently in the village – who asked him to bring the statue to the parish house. For four days it remained there under the priest's observation, and other priests from the vicinity came to see it as well. After four days Kaczmar asked the priest what he should do. The priest said they should all pray, and time would show them what to do. Kaczmar wanted to send the blood to a laboratory for analysis, but the priest said it would be too expensive. He nevertheless asked two order sisters working in the hospital to make an analysis of the blood. They did so in secret, and the result, according to Kaczmar, was breathtaking – it was blood, but without white corpuscles. A doctor whom Kaczmar asked about this said that it was impossible to have blood without white corpuscles, and he could not explain it.

Blood continued to flow from the Virgin's right eye over the following four months. The more Kaczmar prayed, the more intensively he heard the voice. He was afraid, because the devil, too, had the power to cause such apparitions and speak to people. Nevertheless, the messages reassured him that everything would return to its natural order, which made him feel that it could not have been the devil speaking to him. He understood the peaceful content of the message, moreover, from the way the message was transmitted through him to others. At the beginning of a transmission he saw the sky; he heard nothing and saw nothing around him, just a cloud, a white wall, and a beam of light that grew wider. Inside the light he saw a faint red light. In the middle of the red light was the Mother of God, who spoke to him in Polish.[70] He then transmitted her messages to the growing crowd of pilgrims who had heard about the statue and come to see it. He did not remember what Mother of God said when she spoke through his mouth, but after he transmitted the messages directly to the pilgrims he listened to a recording he had made of himself. Among other things, the Mother of God asked him to erect a chapel next to his house dedicated to the reconciliation of nations.

Heeding the wishes of Matka Boża, Kaczmar, who had worked as a tractor driver at the local cooperative during the socialist years but lost his job around the time of his first vision, began in 1993 to build a sanctuary called the Chapel of Reconciliation (Kaplica Pojednania). He described its architecture as eclectic, blending eastern and western Christian styles. Its location linked it via an imaginary line to both the Roman Catholic chapel and the ancient Greek Catholic *tserkva* in the village. According to Kaczmar, the chapel was open to people of all Christian denominations, especially to members of the three religions represented in south-east Poland: Polish Roman Catholic, Ukrainian Greek Catholic, and Ukrainian Orthodox.

Soon after the first few apparitions, Kaczmar asked the local Roman Catholic priest to endorse the divine power of the statue, which, through the bloody tears coming from its right eye and the bloody signs on its hands that had also begun to appear, was supposed to confirm the divine origin of the messages he was transmitting. The priest, after observing the statue during the four days it was at the parish house, refused to do so. Nevertheless, crowds were coming from outside the village to hear the messages, along with a few locals. Over the next few years, the numbers of pilgrims seemed to remain steady. In the meantime, letters against the apparition were read from pulpits across south-eastern Poland, and the majority of local parishioners remained hostile to Kaczmar and the pilgrims.

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[70] The pilgrim who accompanied me to visit Kaczmar in April 2004 asked whether the message came in other languages as well, and Kaczmar mentioned that during his visits to Ukraine, the Mother of God had spoken in perfect literary Ukrainian through his mouth.

After several years the Przemyśl Roman Catholic diocese decided to take control of the shrine and chapel that Kaczmar had built. In 1996, the year when the messages from the Mother of God stopped coming, he handed the chapel over to the diocese in a ceremony attended by the Roman Catholic archbishop and numerous clergymen. This change in the church's attitude toward the miraculous statue created powerful tensions among Roman Catholic believers in the area. They accused the local priest of lying – loyal to his bishop, he had initially rejected the divine origin of the messages but changed his mind along the church's line in 1996 – and protested the archbishop's decision. They tried to visit the archbishop, but he refused to meet with them. Police officers even came to protect the local priest from his angry parishioners; later the priest was removed and sent to another village. As one witness remembered it, 'the locals almost beat the parish priest most responsible for that, and he had to lock himself in his car'. Villagers blockaded the streets against incoming pilgrims, and the media described the situation in Chotyniec in terms such as 'village civil war' (*wiejska wojna domowa*).

After the chapel was handed over to the diocese, Roman Catholic masses were celebrated there every second Sunday of the month. On Saturday evenings, pilgrims heard evening prayers and made confessions. The officiating priests usually came with the pilgrims, and only rarely was the local priest asked for help, not least because he was not keen to give it. According to local people, the number of pilgrims visiting the shrine had diminished significantly in the few years before I was there. Once the village had been full of pilgrims, but in 2004 only two or three coaches, carrying altogether around a hundred pilgrims, arrived every second Sunday. The chapel was fairly isolated from the religious life of the local community. In contrast to the two older sanctuaries in the village, during religious events such as the procession of Corpus Christi and the Jordan ceremony, not even an altar was installed in front of it.

Apart from the chapel, Chotyniec has a Roman Catholic church built in 1989. The presbytery had been built during the socialist years, and people celebrated mass there before the church was built. For a couple of years after the removal of Ukrainians from south-east Poland in 1947, newly arrived

Poles in Chotyniec used the empty Greek Catholic *tserkva,* dating to 1613. Unlike in many other cases in south-east Poland, the majority of the Polish settlers coming to Chotyniec from central Poland had not experienced ethnic cleansing, and this contributed to their relatively peaceful co-existence with the Ukrainians who returned to their native village from the late 1950s onwards. Although some tensions existed, the return of property, including the *tserkva,* to the Greek Catholics in the early 1990s went unquestioned.

National sentiments were certainly not mentioned as the biggest problem in the village; the mayor (*sołtys*), himself Ukrainian, confirmed this. Instead, tension arose mainly from the attempts made by the institutional church to control popular religiosity. Conflicts arising from such attempts are well known in Poland (Czachowski 2003; Zieliński 2004) and have been widely researched elsewhere in Catholic Europe (Christian 1972; Badone 1990b; Bax 1995). The political processes involved in these tensions in south-east Poland are linked to the politicization of the past, consolidation of power relations, and insecurity after socialism.

The Roman Catholic parish priest in Chotyniec in 2004 claimed that it had been, and to a certain extent still was, Stanisław Kaczmar who was the source of conflict in the village. He also pointed out that the media had helped to deepen the conflict. He said that behind the decision of the Roman Catholic hierarchy to take jurisdiction over Kaczmar's chapel, against the opposition of the parishioners, lay the fear that the chapel would be taken over by one of the smaller churches, which he called sects. He particularly mentioned the National Church, a church officially recognized by the state but which, since the first Vatican Council (1869–1870), had not accepted the pope as its head.[71] According to him, 'everything took place in the palace of the bishop; Mr Kaczmar was there and also my predecessor [as resident priest in Chotyniec]. They arranged all the conditions there.'

What seemed most important to the priest was that although the chapel fell under the jurisdiction of the Roman Catholic diocese, the church did not directly endorse the existence of the visions that had allegedly appeared to Kaczmar. He emphasized that although pilgrims from elsewhere in Poland were welcome to visit the chapel, he did not encourage his parishioners to do so. 'We have nothing formally in common with the chapel,' he said. 'It is not a parish church, not even a diocesan one, but it belongs to Caritas,' the Roman Catholic organization dedicated to social work. Caritas was made the owner of the church in 1996 after it was handed over to the Roman Catholic Church. The priest thought Caritas planned to make a hospice out of the chapel, although it was far from any hospital and the roads were bad. It was Caritas and the pilgrims who financed the entire enterprise, and he believed they should get to decide what to do with the chapel. He asked, 'Does the Mother of God really want to have three churches in such a small village?'

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[71] The National Church (Kościół Polskolatolicki w Rzeczipospolitej Polskiej) is a small church with around fifty thousand believers that dates back to the first Vatican Council in 1869–1870, when the infallibility of the pope was institutionalized. It belongs to the group of so-called Old Catholic churches, active in several countries in Europe and North America. See http://www.polskokatolicki.pl/index2.htm.

The Greek Catholic priest who served Chotyniec did not live permanently in the village, so I met with him in Przemyśl. Like his Roman Catholic colleague, he had not served in the village at the time of the apparitions. It was his predecessor who had initially blessed Kaczmar's statue, something Kaczmar had not mentioned when I spoke to him in his chapel. According to popular eastern Christian tradition, in which nearly every village or *tserkva* has its own local Mother of God, usually in the form of an icon, the previous Greek Catholic priest had blessed the little bleeding statue without hesitation. For his successor, the apparitions Kaczmar spoke about were his private matter, and the church had not yet endorsed any miracles in Chotyniec. He agreed, though, that with deep and genuine prayer, miracles and apparitions could happen. Because nobody actually came to ask his assistance, he respected the fact that the Roman Catholic Church took responsibility for the shrine. The problem, it seemed, was already solved for him.

In the village itself, the situation was rather different. The Polish shopkeeper in the middle of the village showed no interest in the case: 'I go to church and I have my own faith; I have never been interested in that,' she said. She sent me to the mayor instead. The mayor regularly attended the *tserkva,* and from the beginning he appreciated Kaczmar's reconciliation attempts. He mentioned that although Kaczmar was Ukrainian by birth, he had a Polish mother-in-law. This family link led him, in the mayor's opinion, to give the chapel to the Roman Catholic Church and not to try subordinating it to the Greek Catholic Church. If the Greek Catholics had controlled the popular pilgrimage site, he believed, Poles would have feared that Chotyniec was 'going to become a part of Greater Ukraine'. As the mayor explained it:

> Because there was a local war, Mr Kaczmar, aiming to calm down the heat, asked the Roman Catholic archbishop in Przemyśl to take care of the chapel. People accused him of various things: that he had built a mosque here or belonged to a kind of sect. Poles especially wanted to destroy what he had built … Since he handed it over to the church, there have been no signs that something miraculous is still happening there. Nevertheless, some Polish pilgrims keep on coming.

I also recorded a pragmatic explanation of the situation from Stanisław Kaczmar's brother, Izidor. A retired peasant, he still worked on approximately nine hectares of land. Unlike his brother, with whom he got along well, he was an active member of the Greek Catholic parish. Izidor Kaczmar saw the local tensions as ultimately linked to the manipulations of clergymen. He said, 'The churches are responsible for dividing people in the village as well as in the region.' He remembered that even the Greek Catholic parish priest had read the letter against his brother's visions, although, unlike his Roman Catholic colleagues, he at least said that he personally saw nothing wrong with people's going to pray there. According to Izidor, the Roman Catholic priests kept telling the people they should not go to the chapel, that his brother lied and lived a sinful life with his sister, whom he pretended was his wife, and that participation in religious activities at the shrine would be seen as a sin by the church. But soon after the chapel was built and a blessing was needed, he said, the Roman Catholic priests who opposed his brother happily attended the ceremony, accompanying their archbishop.

A Greek Catholic man born in 1917 remembered a great deal of the area's history. Although he had not been born in Chotyniec, he had moved into the village in 1956, after returning from the north of Poland. He recalled that 'when those who believed in the visions of Mr Kaczmar wanted to enter the Roman Catholic parish house with the statue of the Mother of God – at that time their church was just under construction – people did not allow them to go in. Kaczmar and his followers, therefore, started to build their own Chapel of Reconciliation.' He added: 'The priests told the people not to go there, but when Kaczmar handed the chapel to the curia, it was suddenly OK.'

A similarly critical attitude towards clergymen was expressed by one of the most active defenders of the village against the pilgrim strangers. Mr Lamasz was a peasant in his early forties who owned a small plot from which he earned a livelihood for himself, his wife, and their three children. They all regularly attended the Roman Catholic church. Beginning in mid-1990, he had organized actions against the consecration of the chapel. He was among the parishioners who took part in the unsuccessful visit to the Przemyśl archbishop, and he spoke sarcastically about Stanisław Kaczmar's visions. During a pig-sticking in 2004, he explained to me angrily what had preceded the handing over of the chapel. The biggest evidence of Kaczmar's miracle, he said, was his new house and the new cars in his backyard: 'Once Kaczmar made a business of his visions; today he wants to enjoy the money he has made on the pilgrims.'

According to Lamasz, even the chapel building was illegal, and Kaczmar had officially built a private house. 'If the church finally took it under its control, Caritas should have taken the keys from the chapel. Without this nobody can guarantee that everything is done according to the rules there … People sleep there, nobody knows what they do there.' The decision to take over the chapel was made according to someone's interests, Lamasz thought: 'They made a deal with the archbishop. The priests believed they would make some profit out of it, make some money. My peasant brain tells me that there were huge interests in all that … But the church made a mistake. It took it under its responsibility but has no control over it.'

The worst thing, said Lamasz, was that Kaczmar kept the key to the tabernacle containing the Holy Sacrament, which only a priest was allowed to keep, and Kaczmar was not a priest. In any case, 'We do not want the Greek Catholics here; all that smell that comes with them! … But it was our archbishop who took over the chapel. He should have ignored Kaczmar from the beginning instead!'

Lamasz, it seemed, apart from disliking what he saw as Kaczmar's dishonest profit, disliked the way the transfer of the chapel had taken place in secrecy, the way the consecration of the chapel was not advertised until the last moment, and the unreliability of priests. According to him, the priests made a secret agreement with Kaczmar and decided even about financial matters, especially those related to the donors from Canada who contributed heavily to the building costs. The greatest moral failure, in his eyes, was that of the local Roman Catholic priest, who initially discouraged people from attending Kaczmar's sessions but later 'went there himself'. The archbishop, too, was unfair, claimed Lamasz: 'Plenty of holy sites have been made across the country, but the church representatives did not accept them. Here, the archbishop did the opposite … We have enough sanctuaries! It would be better if they gave people some bread.' For Lamasz and many of his fellow parishioners, the church was conducting its own politics:

> They could say that people should ignore Kaczmar, but they do not want to. The church wants people to go there. The high church structures have entry to the government. Even journalists are afraid to attack the church, to create conflict with it. When the election comes, everybody is into the priests. The priests do not do it directly as they once did, but they still do influence politics.

The Chotyniec case shows how people's political mobilization in south-east Poland draws on national tensions. It might be seen as an attempt by the Polish church to control a Ukrainian site, or a site that had been Ukrainian in the past – an interpretation especially popular among Greek Catholics in Przemyśl. The involvement of the institutional church in reconciling Poles and Ukrainians in this instance appears effective and necessary: only after the Polish archbishop took the site under his control did the nationalist arguments end. At the same time, Kaczmar's attempt to create an ecumenical religious site 'from below' has much in common with the phenomenon I describe in chapter 6 as 'ordinary tolerance', which is subordinated to the 'artificial tolerance' of the elite. It also reflects the important role of religion in the public sphere. The power relations behind the nationalist façade, however, also call for an investigation of the religious and social-structural landscape after socialism.

Kaczmar's visions might be seen as the sort of apocalyptic, millenarian reaction that often appears at times of increasing insecurity accompanying capitalist modernity around the globe (see Matter 2001). Such reactions often carry messages of political resistance (Comaroff and Comaroff 1993). The Chotyniec miracles, corresponding to similar events across Poland (Czachowski 2003; Zieliński 2004) and Eastern Europe, are linked to the insecurity of postsocialism. The case also shows the growing economic inequality in rural south-east Poland, as highlighted by people's criticism of the visionary's material well-being. It shows, too, the marginalization of certain groups after socialism: what looks like national tension conceals social deprivation. As David Lane (2005) explained, the postsocialist transformation in Eastern Europe has been characterized by winners and losers with clear class bases. The manual working class and the peasantry have lost the most (Lane 2005: 431).

I believe that in Chotyniec this deprivation is visible in people's criticism of the institution of the Catholic Church. People see that the church is part of the postsocialist power bloc. Its dominance is visible in the way it eliminates or attempts to supervise popular forms of religiosity, and its policy weakened the clergymen's authority among the locals. The Chotyniec case illustrates the diminishing importance of popular religiosity after 1989 and the concomitant consolidation of institutional churches (see Wojakowski 1999). At the same time, the anti-clericalism of the peasants confirms that ordinary believers are not powerless victims of church politics but critics of the church's position in the regional power structure. This ambivalent perception of Catholicism among the believers corresponds to the ambivalent political message the church carries – social sensitivity and egalitarianism, on the one hand, and loyalty to the existing power structures, on the other.

5.2 Anti-clericalism in South-east Poland

A friend of mine characterized Przemyśl as a place where 'custom counts more than the actual needs of life.'[72] Sociologists of religion have recorded the highest levels of religious practice and institutional loyalty to the Catholic Church in Poland among people in the country's south-east. They have also observed the behaviour summed up in the well-known saying, 'Poles love the pope, but they do not listen to him.'[73] As the sociologist Janusz Mariański (2004: 373) pointed out, 'an increasing number of Catholics … do not refer to religious interpretations of moral issues'. Although a high level of self-declared belief and religious practice exists in Poland, people are less significantly attached to religion as a guide to the moral issues of everyday life – a feature Poles share with other Europeans (Mariański 2004: 373; Halman et al. 2005: 63).

For an observer of south-east Poland, people's strong social conformity in religious practice is confirmed by the omnipresence of Catholic symbols in public, which appears to be unquestioned. On an average Sunday in Przemyśl, people attend services in the morning, and in the afternoon the main streets of the old town are full of ordinary people, nuns, priests, and soldiers enjoying a walk. Dressed in their best clothes, the men respectfully chat with clergymen. Children stop and kneel in front of the churches, and young mothers pushing their prams cross themselves when passing a shrine or statue of a saint. Girls and boys attend Sunday school and then go to have cake at a confectionery. The churches are open every day, and although people say their informal use is far from what it was during the socialist years, someone always comes in to meditate for a while.

Nevertheless, one often hears jokes about church representatives – while shopping in a grocery store, buying a newspaper, having a drink in a pub, even during a mass or religious ceremony in front of a church, especially where young people have gathered. Not only men, for whom it is more common, but also women enjoy the jokes, especially the ones related to the allegedly vital sex lives of the allegedly celibate priests and nuns. I heard the following one told by a middle-aged man at a barbecue party:

> A fisherman caught a goldfish. The goldfish promised to fulfil any three wishes if he let her go. The fisherman, however, said, 'I do not need anything; I have everything I need.' The freedom-loving fish said, 'I can provide you with a big luxury car. Everyone will envy you!' The fisherman answered, 'I do not need a luxury car. I have one already.' But the fish kept promising: 'I can cause a huge, com-

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[72] *Zwyczaj to więcej niż potrzeba.*

[73] *Polacy kochają Papieża, ale go nie słuchają!*

> fortable house to be built for you, and the entire village will become blind with jealousy over it!' The man replied, 'Oh, I do not need it. I have a big house already, and people are jealous, anyway.' The desperate fish then tried one last chance. 'So, I can substantially improve your sex life. You will have regular sex every day or even more often, if you wish!' The fisherman replied, 'It is quite enough for a priest to have sex twice a week!'

The joke highlights two domains of social life that many people see as questionable when they evaluate the authority of the church. These are the material affluence people attribute to clergymen and their alleged sexual behaviour. I look at these domains first and then at two others in which the dominant role of institutional religion is challenged: religious education in the public schools and local politics. The latter is often criticized for being hypocritical (*farizejska*) – controlled by committed Catholics but corrupt, full of patronage and clientism, and therefore immoral.

Once I had a talk with a secondary school teacher, age forty-eight, about the church's authority during the socialist years. He saw the church as having been 'a pillar of freedom' during communism and felt that it was necessary to contribute both financially and practically to keeping the church powerful and independent from the oppressive state:

> During communism the priest did not have too many options for spending his money; he could not go on a holiday, and he had to behave morally. Today he can even buy girls. At that time he was observed by the UB [the Urząd Bezpieczeństwa, the Polish communist secret police], and he could perhaps at most have bought a TV or a poor-quality car. What did he do? He helped his family, his poor altar boys, attracted them to become priests, helped the people around him, and so on … and the people did not let the church starve at that time.

Things changed, he said, and the demands the church imposed on the state in the political and economic sphere went too far after socialism. Opinion polls confirm that Poles believe Roman Catholic priests to be one of the country's richest social groups. The media have revealed that several priests have been charged with illegally importing and selling cars under tax exemptions, and they criticize priests for indulging in a 'consumption life-style' (Luxmoore 2001: 305). In Przemyśl I frequently heard the expression, 'Today, the church in Poland is only a matter of business.'[74] The son-in-law of one of the last remaining inhabitants of a once Ukrainian village near Przemyśl, a Pole who had recently moved to spend his retirement years there, often expressed this sort of distrust towards the Roman Catholic clergy. One of his complaints was about the recent erection of a cross on the hill above the almost empty village: 'In Poland, there is an obsession with building churches and erecting crosses everywhere. Even monuments to the pope can be found everywhere. Why don't they give some food to the poor children instead of wasting so much money?'

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[74] *Dziś kościół katolicki w Polsce jest tylko biznesem.*

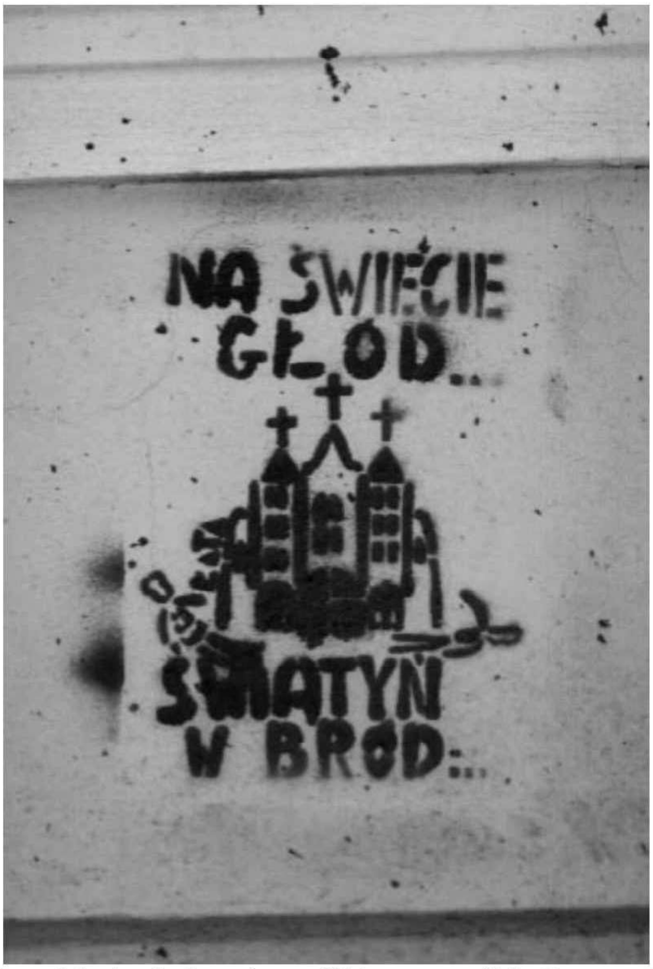

Plate 14. Anti-church graffiti on a wall in Przemyśl.

A great deal of property has been returned to the churches since 1989, something many people criticize. They complain that many new churches are being built, but nobody takes care of the roads and hospitals. In front of one newly built church, with a rather unconventional tower, I overheard someone say, 'Look, here are the Polish highways. But these go to heaven!' A friend of mine, a middle-aged believer in one of the Przemyśl parishes, said critically:

> Because of the concordat, the Polish state lost a lot of money and control over marriages. There are still new churches under construction; [the clergy] collect enormous amounts of money that the state

> is unable to control or tax. On the other side, the hospitals are collapsing; the roads are no longer maintained … this is the world's most visible paradox. After 1989 in Poland, Roman Catholic dominance has been effectively re-installed, and it is self-controlling. Nobody can challenge the dominance of the church.

Local Ukrainians, too, held anti-clerical opinions, nurtured in part by national animosities. They mostly criticized Roman Catholic priests but were critical of their own Greek Catholic clergymen as well. One retired Greek Catholic peasant said, 'The Polish priests? They are nobility. It is the way they think about themselves. They are materialists who came to power after communism. Once there were Jews who ruled everything, today there are Roman Catholic priests who do so … They love good cars, women, satellite TV.'

On another occasion I talked to a devout Greek Catholic man in his mid-forties about what he saw as the mentality of priests in Poland. He characterized the arrogance of Roman Catholic clergy towards ordinary believers with the words, 'What is allowed to a nobleman is not allowed to you, the smelly one.'[75] While selling luxury kitchenware in the mid-1990s, he had visited many Roman Catholic parishes around the country and observed what he considered to be the affluent life of the clergy. He saw what lay 'behind the official role of the priests talking to the poor retired woman who gives her last money to the church'. According to this man, ordinary believers and devoted Radio Maryja listeners would be unable to imagine the luxurious conditions the priests lived in, what they ate (he mentioned wild game), what kinds of luxury goods they bought (art, porcelain, hi-fis), or what sorts of exotic holidays they could afford.

This paradox has been pointed out in other European contexts as well, not least in eastern Christian countries such as Greece (Just 1988: 27). Although in fact both ordinary people and the tabloid media exaggerate the affluence of priests in Poland, and vast numbers of ordinary clergymen are far from being substantially richer than their parishioners, popular perceptions of the clergy's wealth reflect changing perceptions of power relations after socialism. Whereas the church enjoyed greater popularity during the socialist years, nowadays the Roman Catholic clergy are perceived as a part of the dominant class. This privileged position of the clergy, regardless of political regime, is well reflected in popular Polish sayings such as, 'If someone has a priest as a family member, he cannot be poor.'[76]

In February 2004 I was invited to the flat of an older Greek Catholic couple. The host's sister and her husband, both retired Ukrainians, were also present. As we discussed the enlargement of the European Union, about to become a reality in a few months, our hostess suggested reading some articles by the Roman Catholic bishop Stanisław Wielgus, from Płock.[77] The two men replied that the bishop spoke very nicely, but we should be aware that the clergy could not be fully trusted: the church represented 'an autocracy of clergy, not a democracy of believers'. The men argued that for many priests, their job was just a 'business, not a way of life', corresponding to the opinion Joyce Riegelhaupt (1984: 100) found earlier among peasants in the Mediterranean. The two men believed the church should first give up wealth and property possession. Priests should not build luxury parish houses and huge churches or drive big cars, but rather should live in poverty.

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[75] *Co wolno wojewodzie, to nie tobie smrodzie.*

[76] *Kto ma księdza w rodzie, tego bieda nie bodzie!*

Our hostess disagreed and cited what in her view Father Rydzyk, the director of Radio Maryja, would say if he were in her position: 'We must have the most beautiful parishes, cars, and churches, because God is beyond any beauty. The church should be above everything!'[78] Her husband replied that this was exactly the way Father Rydzyk made money from retired women like her.

My Greek Catholic informants often expressed the belief that Roman Catholics perceived Greek Catholic clergymen as having lower status than Roman Catholic clergy. At the same time, informants tried to make them appear equal by attributing to their own priests the possession of the same prestigious symbols and goods that Roman Catholic priests enjoyed. In Poland, for example, one can easily recognize a car belonging to a clergyman. It usually has a pictogram of a fish on the back and often a cross and rosary inside, and frequently the cars are not the cheapest models. The Greek Catholics I worked with stressed that their clergymen should possess the same kinds of luxury cars that their Roman Catholic counterparts drove. Although they criticized the affluence of churches in general and often stressed that the Greek Catholic Church was poorer and therefore closer to Christ than the Roman Catholic Church, they supported their priests and even expected them to behave similarly to Roman Catholic clergymen. 'Our priests are no worse than the Polish ones' was a frequent comment.

While I waited for a friend in a family-run pub on Borelowskiego Street, just beyond the bridge named in the 1990s after the anti-communist hero Ryszard Siwiec,[79] the television showed news about a fine imposed on a parish somewhere in Silesia. Instead of the thirty trees its conservator was permitted to cut in the allée of the parish's historical park, someone had actually cut three hundred trees. The men in the pub commented that, first, the priest made huge money on the wood from the trees and, second, the penalty would be paid not by the rich clergyman who, according to them, was responsible for the offence but by the poor believers. The men offered as another example a car accident in which a priest killed a person but had his case withdrawn from court. Their belief that clergymen were not on a par with ordinary people seemed unshakable.

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[77] His articles for a Catholic press at that time were well known in militant anti-European and anti-modernist circles.

[78] Born to a poor family, Tadeusz Rydzyk became a Redemptorist monk in 1971. In 1986 he left for five years in Germany. After his return to Poland in 1991, he started Radio Maryja and initiated the newspaper Nasz Dziennik. A few years later he brought the television station Trwam into existence.

Reports of bribery and cronyism also undermined people's confidence in the authority of some church employees. During my stay in Przemyśl a scandal arose over bribery in the public hospital. Its leading surgeon was taken to jail but was later discharged thanks to a moral guarantee the court received from the Greek Catholic archbishop. For some of my informants, including loyal Greek Catholics, the affair brought into question the archbishop's authority. Having been in the underdog position in hospitals as patients from whom doctors expected a bribe, a practice widely highlighted in the media, they saw the archbishop's support for the physician as confirming the existence of alliances between members of the dominant stratum in society – priests and doctors, or the intelligentsia in general. Many people saw priests, particularly Roman Catholic ones, as among those who had profited from the new postsocialist order. Nevertheless, whenever they met a clergyman, they paid respect to him.

The example people most frequently offered of the contrast between the teachings of the church and the actual or alleged behaviour of its employees was that of priests' failure to practice celibacy. In Poland as elsewhere in Catholic Europe (Riegelhaupt 1984: 100), a good deal of gossiping goes on about the sexuality of the supposedly celibate clergy. The majority of people I spoke to in south-east Poland were keen to see celibacy as questionable and even referred to it as unnatural. I was told that some Roman Catholic priests had children. One seventy-year-old, university-educated man told me the 'secret' of the unofficial funds the Przemyśl Roman Catholic diocese kept in order to cover the costs of priests' illegitimate children. He criticized what he called the 'fraudulence of celibacy' (*faryzejstwo celibatu*), meaning the tolerated sex lives of priests. His perception was supported or perhaps even generated by widely publicized affairs involving homosexuality and child abuse among the clergy that appeared in the Polish media after 1989. Even the Roman Catholic archbishop in Przemyśl was privately called a 'defender of paedophiles' (*obrońca pedałów*) because he failed to punish a priest who was accused of child molestation in his diocese.[80]

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[79] Ryszard Siwiec was born in Przemyśl and during World War II fought in the Home Army (Armija Krajowa). In protest against the invasion of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact troops in August 1968, he burned himself to death during the harvest festival in the Stadion Dziesięcolecia, the largest stadium in Warsaw.

An even more controversial battlefield was that concerning contraception and abortion. Thanks to strong pressure from conservative Catholic circles, an anti-abortion law was passed in Poland in 1993.[81] The widely available access to abortions during socialism symbolized what pious Catholics called the 'culture of death'. Today, devout people often link the 'godless society' of socialism to what is supposedly embodied in liberal and socialist Europe. The church instead promotes the 'culture of life'. Many people criticize the church's stance in rejecting contraception, but more fundamental questions are raised over abortion.

Officially, almost no unwanted pregnancy may end in abortion, but some of them do. The business of illegal abortion flourishes. It is usually the role of the man 'responsible' for the pregnancy to find a doctor and pay him for the operation. Some women travelled to L'viv in Ukraine, where the operation was legal. The cost there was half that in Poland, where, according to my information, in 2003 it reached three thousand złotys (about eight hundred euros). For many people in Przemyśl this was roughly three months' salary. But many women, because they mistrusted doctors in Ukraine, underwent illegal operations in Poland. Some of my informants, seeing themselves as liberals, especially in questions of sexual behaviour, blamed the abortion business on the poor system of sex education in the schools and the relative lack of public information about contraception methods. The Catholic Church heavily opposes any kind of education in this domain.

Despite the church's having historically developed control over the formal part of people's sexuality and, by favouring the conjugal bond, strongly influenced inheritance patterns and the economy (Goody 1983), people's sexual behaviour has obviously never been restricted to marriage. Even the church's control over sexual behaviour through pastoral visits and personal confessions has never been entirely effective. Many of my friends made it clear that even though they regularly practiced religion, they would never share their intimate problems with a priest, even if they were asked to do so.[82] They smiled when they described the religious classes they had taken, in which the priests advocated a pure sexual relationship between men and women in marriage, railed against masturbation, and hysterically condemned homosexuality. Especially popular among the priests was the metaphor of the broken virgin flower, symbolizing the broken soul of the masturbator. Many children did not even recognize what the priest meant by that metaphor. Concerning homosexuality, the priests employed vague quotations from the Bible (especially Leviticus 18: 6–23) about the spoiling of bodies, the anchors of the soul, but they discussed nothing concrete.

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[80] The best known and most widely publicized case of inappropriate sexual behaviour by a clergyman was that of Archbishop Paetz, from Poznań. He favoured his lover priests by allocating them wealthier and more prestigious parishes and buying them expensive gifts.

[81] Poland's anti-abortion law is significantly more restrictive than those of Spain and Italy and only a little less so than Ireland's. It mandates large fines and prison sentences for doctors who disobey the law (Korbonski 2000: 127).

Juxtaposed against the ready availability of pornography and the open sexuality observable in the media – one can find erotic magazines at every corner shop or tobacconist's, just next to the Catholic press; condoms are widely accessible; and soft pornography programs are shown on television – the advice of priests and nuns who offer the 'true' guidance on sexually appropriate behaviour must raise irony, if it makes an impression at all. For many of my religious informants, the world of open sexuality was another world of evil, but even they could not entirely avoid it in everyday life. They could only agree that significant differences existed between what the church taught and what some of its representatives and many ordinary Catholics actually did.

Another domain in which anti-clericalism is expressed in south-east Poland is that of religious education in the public schools. While discussing the school system in Poland, one of my friends, a single mother, made the following comment: 'Relations between church and school? I am sure you know how it is. The church intrudes everywhere, and that's it! Nobody protests, perhaps just quietly over beer.' The close ties between school and church after 1989 are visible in the way one supports the other. Priests and nuns teach religious classes in the schools. On Teacher's Day (14 October), for example, pupils attend a morning mass dedicated to the work of teachers. One of my friends explained that although religion was not compulsory, the 'crowd syndrome' made parents sign children up for religious classes. Her daughter, too, attended them, because my friend did not want her to be excluded from her peer group.

Another friend, a student at the Jagellonian University in Kraków and an activist in a regional Christian foundation, expressed his fear of what he described as domination of the philosophy departments at Polish universities by the neo-Thomist school of Catholic theology. In addition, many newly founded private high schools in the provincial cities allowed philosophy classes to be taught by theologians. A friend who was a teacher also complained that philosophy classes in secondary schools were taught mostly by priests.

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[82] According to a survey taken in 1997, 60 per cent of Polish boys and 20 per cent of girls had had sex by the age of 18, every sixth Polish child was born to a teenager, and illegitimate births were on the rise (Luxmoore 2001: 323).

Another form of church education works through the pastoral activities of priests. Many of my informants, both Greek and Roman Catholic, disliked clergymen's coming for an annual visit (*kolęda*), with the aim not only of socializing but also of compiling records about believers. They considered such visits an invasion of their privacy and resented the way a contribution was expected when the priest came to the house. Despite informants' reservations about the visits, no one had actually denied a priest entry. Nor did anyone discuss how religious classes might be run better, and no one challenged the parish priest, not to mention the bishop. This observation leads me to analyze the position of institutional religion in the community's power relations.

5.3 Religion and Politics

When visiting churches in Przemyśl on Sundays, I used to listen to people criticize the priest if they saw the sermon that day as interfering in political matters. The most frequent reaction of churchgoers, even the most pious, was that priests should not talk about politics but should concern themselves exclusively with religious matters. One informant, the owner of the pub in the city centre, who characterized herself as a practising Roman Catholic and a conscious Pole, thought the clergy 'should take care of the church and not of politics'. In Przemyśl, she said, the actual situation was the reverse: 'The clergy govern the city ... and ... most of the priests make politics in church.' She used the example of the city's refusal to permit a Christmas charity evening to be held in 2001, a Poland-wide event organized by a non-profit foundation. According to her and other informants, the reason for this refusal was the archbishop's opinion that the event was run by a liberal, nonconformist Warsaw journalist whose charity was too commercial.[83] Although it was actually the city mayor at the time, a pious man who had initiated the installation of the huge cross on the hill above the city, who refused to allow the event, my informant was sure the clergy had a hand in the decision. 'Any other city in Poland would have gone for it, if it had been offered the chance to organize it, just because of the money and publicity it would had brought.'

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[83] The Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity (Wielka Orchestra Świątecznej Pomocy), founded in 1992, is a Polish non-governmental, non-profit organization operating on a nationwide scale and focussing on children.

In the eyes of the pub owner, local politicians profited from their alliance with the church, and the church used them to secure its power. A Greek Catholic friend used even stronger words to refer to the city's political scene. Everyone who had governed the city since 1989, he said, had been 'indoctrinated' by Bishop Tokarczuk. For him, the local politicians were 'the children of Tokarczuk' (*dzieci Tokarczuka*), still fully in the hands of the Roman Catholic clergy. Another friend, a local intellectual who had grown up in a pious family but later abandoned religious practice, mentioned an event involving an important visit to decide on the possible development of Przemyśl into an academic centre. It was important that city representatives show interest in the project, but during the negotiations they withdrew from the meeting, apologizing that they had to discuss the building of a new church in one of Przemyśl's neighbourhoods.

No one I talked to, whether Greek or Roman Catholic, could imagine any city mayor other than a practising Roman Catholic. The current mayor, one of the 'spiritual sons' of Bishop Tokarczuk, was a well-dressed man in his early forties who, according to my friend, often 'tried to give sermons' in his speeches, 'instead of [leaving it to] the priests'. His family on his mother's side, members of the rural intelligentsia, had moved to Przemyśl from the area beyond the contemporary border with Ukraine, and he had learned at home of the hard times around World War II. He finished his studies during the late socialist years, and before being elected to his current post in 2002, he worked at various levels in the state bureaucracy. Entering party politics, he first became a member of Christian-National Unity (Zjednoczenie Chrześcijańsko-Narodowe), a conservative parliamentary party in the 1990s known for its close informal ties with the Roman Catholic Church. Although the party was active in Przemyśl, the mayor ran as the candidate of a larger right-wing coalition.

In 2006 he was a member of the governing, conservative Law and Justice Party, the most vital stream of which formed after the downfall of the right-wing coalition in the late 1990s.[84] The mayor could be seen in one of the front seats at the Roman Catholic cathedral, and he attended all the religious festivals and processions, including the Greek Catholic Jordan ceremony. He also attended a celebration in honour of the anniversary of the Greek Catholic archbishop and other public events organized in the Greek Catholic cathedral. As a member of several church associations, including the Association of Christian Families (Stowarzyszenie Rodzin Katolickich) and Catholic Action (Akcja Katolicka),[85] he was suspected by some locals of discussing important public matters with the archbishop. In the mayor's own words, he appreciated 'continual cooperation between the secular powers and the church for the common good' and considered relations between the office of the Roman Catholic bishopric (*kuria*) and the city council to be particularly warm.

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[84] For a more detailed view of party politics in Poland, see, for example, Szczerbiak 2002.

Politicians in Przemyśl enjoyed the support of the church, and in return they helped incorporate the church's agenda into politics. Although people complained about the church's interference in politics, they accepted the interconnections between the two. They perceived both local Christian politicians and high church representatives as part of the postsocialist power bloc. Although people criticized the dominant position of clergymen, at the same time they accepted their right to supervise society's dominant moral discourse. In the following section I examine the form and origin of this moral discourse and the possibilities for political mobilization it nurtures.

5.4 Catholicism and Capitalism

Ritual, although commonly attributed to religion, is also an essential part of politics (Kertzer 1991). As such it has four political ends: organizational integration, legitimation, the construction of solidarity, and the inculcation of political beliefs (Kertzer 1991: 87). All these purposes can be observed in the most significant Catholic annual ceremony in Przemyśl – Corpus Christi, a festival of the western Christian Church honouring the presence of the body of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. A movable feast, it is observed in May or June on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday.[86] The ritual literally brings God into the community when the Holy Eucharist is carried through public places. In this sense the ritual sacralizes public space, and religious power is spread over the sphere most often governed by secular actors. Before exploring this process, however, I want to describe the kinds of activities the Corpus Christi ritual involves. The following description is based on my observation of the Corpus Christi procession in Przemyśl on 10 June 2004 and on one of the universally used manuals for clergy (Elliot 1995: 695–711).

According to the general rule, which applies to the Przemyśl Corpus Christi festival (Boże Ciało), or Ceremony of the Most Blessed Sacrament (Uroczystość Przenajświętszego Sakramentu), the ritual should consist of a solemn mass followed by a procession. It is the largest annual procession in town, attracting thousands of participants.[87] People make preparations far in advance, buying dresses, training for the program, preparing flags. In 2004, as police closed roads to traffic, the festival began in front of the Salesian church, where holy mass was celebrated. As at all the following stops – the Holy Trinity church, the main square, and both Catholic cathedrals – daises covered festively in white-and-red cloths had been prepared for the ritual. Altars, too, were covered with white cloths, ready for the display of the Eucharist. Candles burned on the altar in front of the Salesian church, and an extra priest's host was placed on the paten, to be consecrated for the procession. The monstrance was ready on a credence table.

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[85] Catholic Action is an association and movement of lay Roman Catholics who cooperate closely with the church hierarchy in order to strengthen the role of the church's teaching in public life.

[86] Pope John Paul II declared October 2004 through October 2005 the 'Year of the Eucharist'.

In addition to priests of various ranks standing around the altar, armed soldiers stood in a row in front of the dais. They later accompanied the Holy Sacrament in the procession. A trumpet band was on hand, as well as the cathedral choir and the Przemyśl children's gospel band. Many people waited along the proposed procession route, but the main crowd followed the procession from beginning to end. The place offering everyone the best position to see was the main square (*rynek*), so the sermon was delivered there by the archbishop of Przemyśl.[88]

To highlight the most important parts of his speech, after a general theological introduction about the presence of Christ's body in the Eucharist, the archbishop urged people 'to spend more time with Jesus'. He reminded them of the first visit Pope John Paul II made to his homeland, in 1979, and of his predictions of the problems Poland now faced. The pope made a huge appeal at that time when he prayed to God, 'Let your spirit come and refresh the face of this land!'[89] He bade farewell to the Polish nation in Kraków by saying, 'You must be strong with the strength that faith gives you.'[90] The archbishop also mentioned the days of Solidarity, the 'spiritual movement' that attracted people because 'it tried to build the ideals of modesty, belief, and defiance against lies, injustice, the exploitation of one nation by another, the exploitation of the people by the party, and even of the small group within the party'. Then he analysed what had caused the decline since those highly moral times. The adoption of sin was his main explanation: 'Look at

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[87] Four major Christian processions take place in Przemyśl every year: the Greek Catholic Jordan ceremony (19 January), Corpus Christi (May or June), a procession in honour of the patron saint of the city, Saint Vincent (19 July), and the procession of the Virgin Mary from the Franciscan church (15 August).

[88] As in many other important religious ceremonies, including some Greek Catholic ones, the sermon and surrounding events were broadcast nation-wide over Radio Maryja. TV Trwam was also present, and later in the day it reported the news from Przemyśl.

[89] *Niech wstąpi Duch Twój i odnowi obliczev tej ziemi!*

[90] *Bądźcie mocni mocą wiary.*

Sunday, the Lord's Day! How often we sell it for Judas earnings … The big supermarkets, the big superstores, madly kill the lord's day for money. By devastating the little people's shops, they take a big share of unfair profits. They taint the conscience!'

'Today,' he continued, 'workers are also pushed to accept the serf system of work.' Because of high unemployment, their job security is threatened by employers. He criticized the demands employers made of women, who were pressured to postpone pregnancy in order not to lose their jobs. The archbishop said, 'This is serfdom, barbaric serfdom, manipulation of people's conscience! It is actually the way of adopting evil, the sin and harm that can never bring benefit to any nation or society.'

He also extolled the traditional family: 'This family is able to restore health to everybody, it strengthens the fallen ones, it welcomes each of its members – the lost daughter and the wandering son.' He urged legislators to promote the healthy family, consisting of father and mother, 'the family where there is always room for another child, the family that is not afraid of life, that does not prohibit the flowers of love.' He criticized a sociological survey of schoolchildren ordered by the Ministry of Education that, among other questions, had asked about the children's sexual experiences. In the archbishop's opinion, the questionnaire had inflamed the children – 'seduced them' – because it included questions promoting moral relativism. According to its editors, especially the professor responsible for the survey, whom the archbishop characterized as 'godless', it was a standard 'European' survey (that is, used in other European countries). The archbishop questioned this:

> In what sense do we want to catch up with Europe then? Certainly, we have to catch up to Europe in decency, in the fair achievement of material and technical development. But we certainly must avoid catching up with Europe for the price of selling the consciences of our children! We are not supposed to catch up to Europe's sewers and sinks! We need to restore our health, our families, our nation, and the Europe we live in. That is our healthy ambition!

The archbishop then pointed out what he saw as the absence of religious values in the media – the kind of dangerous and morally relativist mediocrity that in his eyes had accompanied the post-Solidarity years. He generalized that Europe 'kills its own values, its own identity when it kills God; it is sentenced to a decline'. He declared: 'If God is not saved [by people in modern societies], man will not be saved either … Although it [Europe] takes a modern form, the stronger ones will benefit from the weaker ones, the poor will become poorer, the rich richer … In order to avoid this, faith is needed!'

As an example of the result of belief overcoming sin, he cited national forgiveness between Poles and Ukrainians. The next issue he raised went back to Europe. He referred to a letter he had received from a parish priest in Bavaria who expressed surprise at the high attendance at his Sunday mass, which the priest attributed to the presence of Polish immigrant workers from parishes in the Przemyśl diocese. The archbishop explained that 'these people went for money … but they did not lose what was worth keeping'. In his eyes this valuable thing was faith received in Christ's church. 'We are the church,' he said, 'and it is a living organism.'

After the sermon the audience applauded, and another priest, quoting the words of the pope, again explained the theological and spiritual significance of the Eucharist procession. The procession then continued as a children's choir sang hymns. People followed the canopy under which the Eucharist was carried, until the entire crowd arrived in front of the Greek Catholic cathedral. There, an altar in the Byzantine style had been prepared, and a Greek Catholic priest waited for the canopy to approach the stairs. The Greek Catholic archbishop appeared and took the role of the celebrant. The Byzantine liturgy and some parts of hymns were sung and read, and then the archbishop carried the Eucharist farther along, followed by one of his priests and all the other Roman Catholic clergy. In front of the Roman Catholic cathedral, he passed the Eucharist to the Roman Catholic priest, who put it on the Cathedral Square altar. A final benediction followed. The Roman Catholic priests profusely thanked their Greek Catholic counterparts and the Greek Catholic archbishop. The procession ended with informal gatherings around the altar; people took photographs and chatted. The crowd disappeared around two in the afternoon.

The message the archbishop delivered in the main square had several points linking it to Catholic social doctrine. Its most audible political message was a critique of postsocialist social and economic development. Criticizing some of the social consequences of capitalism has been common in Catholic teaching since the end of the nineteenth century, and encyclicals such as *Rerum Novarum* (1891), *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), and *Centisimus Annus* (1991) have attempted to resolve the 'social question'.[91] The pope's speech at his fifth homecoming, in 1997, for example, highlighted the harsh economic and social conditions in postsocialist Poland and urged those responsible to fight against unemployment and the 'exploitation' of human labour (Luxmoore 2001: 307). His pilgrimages also stressed the need for a ‘profound new evangelisation’ (Luxmoore 2001: 314) and confirmed the continuity of the church’s stance towards capitalism.

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[91] For more details on Catholic social doctrine, see, for example, Hebblethwaite 1982. For a specific account of Catholic revolutionary radicalism in Latin America and Catholic social thought there, see de Kadt 1967.

Plate 15. The Roman Catholic archbishop of Przemyśl, Józef Michalik, bringing the Eucharist to the Greek Catholic cathedral, Przemyśl, June 2004.

Speaking in the main square, the archbishop, referring to people who were pressured to work on Sundays, criticized the exploitation of workers by the capitalist machine. He offered a message of solidarity with those who were pushed aside – the oppressed. Although he criticized the EU’s alienation from Christianity, commenting on its refusal to mention God in its constitution, he did not oppose Poland’s EU membership. Rather, Europe could serve as a moral reference point insofar as fair trade and the fair earning of money were concerned. Nevertheless, he offered a solution for Europe’s ‘dying culture’, which ‘violated its Christian roots’. European Christians, especially Poles, he said, could help to build a new order.

DOM RZEMIOSŁA

Plate 16. The last part of the Corpus Christi procession between the Greek and Roman Catholic cathedrals, Przemyśl, June 2004.

In short, a certain egalitarian, morally activist, and socially sensitive alternative development project emerged in the archbishop's sermon. This project is observable not only at the discursive level. The Catholic Church in Przemyśl and elsewhere is providing social care for people in need, running charity programs, and collecting money outside the formal channels of the state, which in Eastern Europe was until recently the exclusive provider of social services. This program is not always popular with the local intelligentsia, but their position does not challenge the church's social criticism; intellectuals nowadays do not favour a sort of socialist anti-clericalism the way many members of this social stratum did during agrarian times. Instead, local elites often espouse free-market ideology.

On one occasion I visited the head of the cultural centre of the Przemyśl city council, a conservative, university-educated Roman Catholic in his late thirties. We discussed the development of Przemyśl as an East European trade centre, a gateway to the east. My discussant painted an optimistic scenario for his city in which he saw the development of business and tourism as an inevitability, determined by the proximity of the state's (and the EU's) border with Ukraine. He and most of the local press believed that the petty trade for which the city had been known after socialism should disappear, and big new shopping malls should be built instead. He blamed the underdevelopment of the city on, as he put it, the fact that people in Przemyśl remained 'Homo sovieticus' and that many communists still held powerful positions. Referring to the residents of Przemyśl he said, 'We have a lot of socialism in our heads' (*mamy socializm w glowie*). He wanted people to learn more about how to achieve the level of material well-being he saw during his travels in Western Europe. Huge hypermarkets were part of his imagined city. He assured me that shopping in them would be cheaper and more hygienic, and people would enjoy greater shopping comfort. The small shopkeepers on which a large part of the local economy depended should be allowed to survive, he said, but they should organize themselves into corporations or guilds and offer better prices. The provisional bazaar, where one could cheaply purchase everything from housewares and clothing to groceries, which he saw as a sign of the lean post-communist years, should be rebuilt into a fancy tourist ethno-bazaar where 'aesthetic' kiosks and cafés would offer souvenirs and refreshments.

It is beyond my competence to draw possible development trajectories for the city, but I deal further with capitalism and ethno-revivalism as a fashionable escape from underdevelopment in chapter 8. Here I add only that family-run shops in Przemyśl supply consumers with inexpensive products that many of them cannot afford to buy in 'regular' shops. Moreover, the bazaar, together with out-migration to Western Europe, has been the most significant source of income for the city's inhabitants since 1989, a fact this local intellectual overlooked. He was wrong about the lack of interest in organizing on the part of private shopkeepers, too. Several times I saw people protesting in Przemyśl's main square against the granting of permits for new shopping centres to supplement the two that had already opened in the city. Their arguments did not differ substantially from what the archbishop said about the family and social security. Both reflect the social basis and the moral program nurtured by the church in south-east Poland on which the kind of political mobilization I call post-peasant populism can rely.

5.5 Post-Peasant Populism

Rather than viewing official and popular religion as distinct, monolithic entities, Ellen Badone (1990b: 6) proposed that researchers focus on the dialectical character of their relationship. David Gilmore (1984), Ruth Behar (1990), and Badone (1990a) all showed that anti-clericalism on the part of rural working people was as politically conscious as that of urban intellectuals. As Badone (1990b: 22) emphasized, Catholics in rural Europe may criticize the church and refrain from participating in regular religious observances, but they remain Catholics in essence. Riegelhaupt (1984: 96–97) made the distinction between an anti-clericalism that was 'anti-church' because of the church's institutional position in a state and a broader anti-clericalism that was equivalent to 'anti-religion'. In Greece, where the position of Orthodox clergymen was different but where national and religious identities appear to have been congruent with those in Poland, Roger Just (1988: 29) observed that although adherence to the Christian faith seemed unquestionable, respect for the church was lacking. The popular anti-clericalism widely observable in south-east Poland, like that elsewhere in Catholic Europe, does not question the position of religion in society. People in Przemyśl show a high level of social conformity in their religious belonging, but at the same time they criticize the church's representatives for their membership in the dominant social stratum, their alleged affluence, their 'immoral' behaviour, and their involvement in politics.

Challenging the Durkheimian assumption of ritual's integrative role, Steven Lukes (1975) showed that ritual may actually exacerbate social conflict. Building on recent re-interpretations of working-class lives and cultures, Alison Stenning (2005) called for alternative accounts of class after socialism, accounts based particularly on ethnographic studies and discourse analyses. From a sociological perspective, clear class boundaries have been recognized on the basis of inequalities between class groups, consciousness of class, and awareness of other classes in postsocialist Eastern Europe (Lane 2005). In the post-peasant parts of Eastern Europe, such as south-east Poland, these class relations and identities reveal the situation in the past when movements carrying socially liberating and religious messages of populism influenced politics. Following Michael Mann (1986), John Gledhill (2000: 52–53) emphasized, from a historical perspective, the contradictory nature of Christianity in agrarian class relationships. As he described it, after the early church reached an accommodation with state power, its hierarchy dedicated itself to reproducing the ideology of the ruling class. Nevertheless, Christian doctrine continued to offer an alternative, classless ideology (Gledhill 2000: 52–53). 'However much the church tried to preach obedience to authority, it could never suppress this dangerous popular message – that Christians should seek social improvement in this world, if necessary in opposition to this-worldly authority' (Gledhill 2000: 53).

Studying political movements and their connections to class and national identities, Jeff Pratt (2003) distinguished three analytical levels. The first was the conceptualization of movements in relation to major historical processes (also called social transformations). The second involved the form of organization of the movement by which its political activities took place (cells, parties, unions, clubs, cultural circles, etc.). The third level, inseparable from the other two, was that of the discourse that mobilized the movement by articulating who its members were and why the movement was formed (Pratt 2003: 7–11). In other words, political mobilization requires organizations that are local but often federated into higher-level organizations, and these constitute the movement through a discourse that reflects transformational changes.

Looking at religion and politics in south-east Poland from a historical perspective, I believe that the Catholic Church and its various ecclesiastical and lay associations form the channels through which a possible political mobilization develops. As the archbishop's sermon made clear, the church has formulated its stance towards the major social transformations of the twentieth century, both socialist and capitalist. It has well-developed organizational structures in local communities and at higher levels through which it spreads its moral discourse. Through its organization of committed activists – priests and churchgoers – it nurtures an identity discourse necessary for the creation and maintenance of a political movement. This does not mean that a mass political movement based on Catholic social doctrine – a new kind of 'liberation theology' movement – is flourishing in south-east Poland, but it does imply that Catholicism is worth studying from the perspective of power.[92]

The political movement that I believe has emerged in postsocialist Poland is one that I recognize as post-peasant populism. It is built upon the premodern myths and rural imagery that help to create an enemy in the form of a wealthy capitalist society or a godless socialist society (and the coexistence of the two is possible). As in many other Catholic parts of contemporary Europe, many Catholics in Poland perceive EU integration as a Christian project. Their perception can be defined as ambivalence towards modernity; the EU symbolizes affluence and stability even as it threatens 'traditional' morality. Following Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff (1993), Jon Mitchell (2002), who observed a similar ambivalence among Catholics in Malta, explained that the feeling arises from the anxiety people feel about rapid social change. Mitchell stressed, however, that the ambivalence does not represent a rejection of modernity but 'encompasses a simultaneous fascination with and desire to be "modern" and deep anxiety about where society is heading' (Mitchell 2001: 5).

5.6 Conclusion

The Roman Catholic Church is seen as a powerful political institution and the supervisor of society's moral discourse in post-peasant south-east Poland. In particular, the clergy keep issues surrounding family, gender, and reproductive behaviour under close observation. Poland is one of the countries of Europe in which a mass anti-clerical political movement has had minimal chance of success. There is no politics in Poland without a religious agenda, and no religion without politics.

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[92] For more details on the 'liberation theology' movement, see Klaiber 1989.

A closer look, however, reveals that many people even in such statistically religious regions as south-east Poland hold critical opinions about the church. This finding illuminates the effects of broader postsocialist changes and the disillusionment they have brought. After the fall of state socialism, one of the few solid alternative development projects has been offered or inspired by the Catholic Church and its social thought. My point is that this project does not simply come from the Vatican; it grows from the ground as well. Catholics dislike church employees for being part of the postsocialist power bloc, but they accept some of the church's criticisms of recent social and economic developments. Their ambivalence stems from the fact that while the church legitimates existing power structures and relations, it also offers an ideology of liberation and equality. To put it simply, a nascent anti-capitalist movement exists in contemporary south-east Poland, but no organized political protest has yet come out of it. Instead, it is manifested in Catholics' increasing support for post-peasant populism. Keeping in mind the role of religion in both national and wider politics in Poland, I describe in the next chapter the revitalization of an important narrative and practice legitimated by the past that are accompanying these postsocialist changes – the narrative and practice of multiculturalism.

Chapter 6
The Revival of Multicultural Tradition: Artificial Tolerance versus Ordinary Tolerance

> What the Austrians mixed has survived until today … There has never been a national conflict; it just seemed from the press that there was something like [the conflicts] in the Balkans.
>
> An officer in the Przemyśl district council, June 2004

Religion, although it is a primary source of division between the Polish and Ukrainian nations in Poland, also creates the basis for a new public sphere in which the emphasis is placed on tolerance. The reconciliation of nations is promoted through rituals supervised by the church or at least including church participation in some form. And the churches are not alone in this effort. Events meant to foster reconciliation between Poles and Ukrainians also originate in or are sponsored by the state, by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and by intellectuals. Increasingly, narratives of multiculturalism have become part of both religious and secular reconciliation events.

In this chapter I look first at three religious activities that support tolerant coexistence between Poles and Ukrainians – the annual Greek Catholic Jordan ceremony, an ecumenical ceremony dedicating a new church created from a renovated *tserkva,* and the common singing of carols at Christmas. Then I describe two events that reflect policies of multiculturalism lying outside of direct religious influence: a seminar for teachers and a multicultural festival. Finally, I attempt to characterize the type of civility that is developing in contemporary Poland and the way it is shaped by what I describe as 'artificial tolerance' and 'ordinary tolerance'. My primary question is, what constitutes tolerance at the local level? If religion has the greatest capacity to reconcile nations, then what kind of tolerance grows out of it?

6.1 Religious Reconciliation

Although many clergymen of both Catholic rites continue to support nationally based intolerance, representatives of the two rites have also, in an increasing number of situations, directly or indirectly facilitated reconciliation between Poles and Ukrainians. Many local NGOs working on reconciliation have a religious background or are run by religiously committed persons. In order to gain more substantial political legitimacy, they usually ask clergymen for at least symbolical supervision or assistance.

To give one example among many, in October 2004, near Bircza, a town where battles between the Polish army and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) were particularly fierce after World War II, a regional NGO sponsored the planting of a 'Media Forest' symbolizing Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation. The seedlings were planted on the site of the former village of Łomna, which had fallen into ruin after the expulsion of the Ukrainians. Besides journalists from L'viv and Przemyśl, state and local officials and priests of both Catholic rites took part in the ceremony. Another example is the annual Polish-Ukrainian Prize for Reconciliation (Nagroda Pojednania). It was initiated by the Greek Catholic Sisters Servants of the Holiest Virgin Mary (Siostry Służebnice Najświętszej Maryji Panny) and is still awarded under their auspices. Each year its committee selects one Pole and one Ukrainian as prizewinners.[93]

Keeping in mind the exclusive role of Catholicism in local politics, I believe that political changes in both directions – towards animosity and towards peaceful coexistence – are mediated predominantly through religious-supervised and religious-assisted rituals in south-east Poland. Among the rituals strengthening animosity in south-east Poland are those commemorating war heroism and war suffering, such as Ukrainians' annual march to the military cemetery in Pikulice and the various commemorations organized by local Polish combatant associations, described in chapter 4. In both, Greek Catholic and Roman Catholic clergymen play crucial roles.

The other kind of ritual I have in mind is an action through which two religious-national groups share tolerant connections evoked by the interpretation of common tradition, acknowledgement of the existence of the minority by the majority, and – presumably among at least some people – a religious experience of forgiveness and togetherness. All three of these elements, especially the last, can be attained through religious practice, supervised by religious specialists and explained using religious narratives. Apart from fuelling violence, religion can contribute to personal comprehension and public expression of the costs of war (Watson 1995: 167).

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[93] In 2003 the prize was awarded to the Polish journalist Paweł Smoleński and the Ukrainian historian Borys Woźnicki. The year before it went to the well-known Polish dissident and politician Jacek Kuroń and the Ukrainian writer Mykola Riabczuk, as well as to the Polish-Ukrainian battalion in Kosovo.

The annual Greek Catholic Jordan ceremony is one ritual that promotes tolerance. It is common in south-east Poland nowadays for representatives of one rite to attend the annual religious rituals of the other, and the Jordan ceremony is a good example. It is a holiday of the eastern Christian churches (Orthodox and Greek Catholic) that takes place on 19 January, during Epiphany (Bohoyavlennyia). A reminder of the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River, it includes a procession and the blessing of a body of water, generally the local creek or river. In the vernacular tradition the festival is also called the blessing of water (Ukrainian *vodosvyashenia;* Polish *święcenie wody*).

After a morning service, the Jordan ceremony continues with a procession from the *tserkva* to a creek or river. The climax of the ritual comes when the priest blesses some water from the river that has been collected in a barrel or a bin. He blesses it three times with his hand and then plunges his hand into the water. Then he takes a three-branch candelabra with burning candles that symbolize the Holy Trinity and plunges it into the water. He blows three times on the surface of the water, to symbolize the Holy Spirit. Finally, he blesses the water with a cross, which he also plunges into the container, and he sprinkles holy water on the crowd. When the ritual ends, people take holy water home in bottles and bless their houses, flats, candle stands, and so forth. Many use it for healing illnesses.

Ordinary believers in south-east Poland no longer celebrate each other's holidays as often as they did before World War II, when the practice was widespread, particularly in religiously mixed families. But members of the Polish 'liberal' intelligentsia regularly take part in Greek Catholic celebrations, as do many local politicians. In villages such as Kalników, Hrebenne, and Chotyniec, where adherents of eastern and western Christianity have lived together without interruption, people practised common celebration even during the socialist years. Now the practice is becoming increasingly popular elsewhere. In Przemyśl, the Orthodox parish reactivated its Jordan ceremony in the 1980s. The Greek Catholics used to bless their water within the walls of the Jesuit church, their current cathedral, but after 1989 they, too, entered the public sphere, and the ceremony organized by the small Orthodox community lost popularity. Today, interest in Jordan blessings is growing among both Ukrainians and Poles who are enchanted by the eastern 'spirituality' the ritual enacts. In 2005, for the first time since 1945, the ceremony was also organized in the county capital, Rzesów.

The nineteenth of January 2004 was a sunny but cold workday. In front of the Greek Catholic Cathedral of St John the Baptist, dozens of young people stood chatting on the steps. I noticed some pupils from the Ukrainian school (they had the day off), and there were many more people in and around the *tserkva* than usual. Police officers watched the street, ready to regulate traffic during the procession and perhaps, as some suspicious Ukrainians told me, to prevent Polish nationalist provocateurs from spoiling the ceremony. To the best of my knowledge this has never happened, and I believe that contrary to the intolerance expressed towards the secular Ukrainian presence in the city – as in derogatory graffiti and activities against the Ukrainian school in the early 1990s – even the most ardent nationalists, who confess their deep respect for religious practice, would have perceived a protest as a profanation of a religious event. This did not, however, prevent some Polish observers from discussing their dislike for such a public demonstration of Ukrainianness.

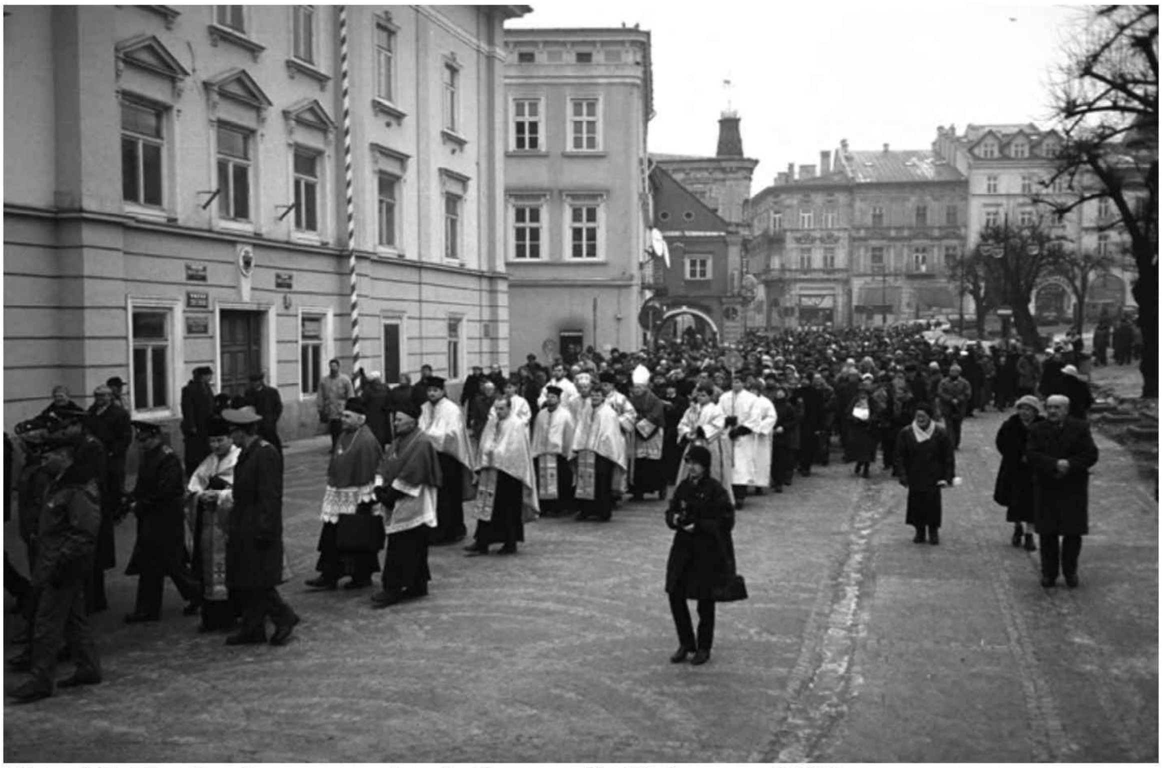

Plate 17. The Jordan procession in Przemyśl, 19 January 2003.

A two-hour service took place inside the cathedral, and then the procession started from the cathedral steps. It wove through the main square, and after continuing several hundred metres along the riverbank, it ended at a place over the river where a temporary pier had been erected. On it stood a decorated table and a tank of water. The procession was led by flag bearers and people carrying crosses. Some of the flags were Ukrainian national flags, and when some doves, symbols of peace, were released, the first one had a ribbon in the Ukrainian colours on its feet. Unlike in 2003, no soldiers from a joint Polish-Ukrainian battalion stationed in Przemyśl were present, although a senior officer represented them.

Plate 18. The climax of the 2003 Jordan procession in Przemyśl.

Many religious and political personalities did take part in the procession. The Greek Catholic archbishop metropolitan, in Byzantine gold, was accompanied by his Roman Catholic colleague, in purple. Among the crowd of Greek Catholic priests and deacons, also dressed in gold, were a few Roman Catholic priests in black and white vestments. One of them, I was told, was a secretary to Archbishop Michalik; another was the parish priest from Krasiczyn. There were also Greek Catholic clerics from the seminary and Greek Catholic monks and nuns from the Przemyśl orders. I noticed several NGO activists, local intellectuals, and politicians, including the city mayor, who made a short speech after the ceremony at the riverbank.

The Jordan ceremony in Przemyśl, locals recognize, receives more attention every year from the media and politicians. Some Greek Catholics perceive this with suspicion. One person commented: 'Jordan is changing into a media event. The photographers and TV teams allow no concentration on the internal aspects of the festival; they prefer the external, visual side and the fact that in a few moments all of Poland will see us. I must confess, last time I left the Jordan ceremony in Przemyśl.'

After the ceremony, one of my neighbours informed me that 'the water is blessed by God' and asked me to drink some, as many people had been doing, taking water directly from the river. They also washed their faces and collected water in bottles. I was told to take some water with me and perhaps serve it to guests, as my neighbour planned to do later that day. On the way home, she introduced me to a young woman from L'viv who was holding several bottles of holy water. She had arrived by coach with a group of pilgrims from Ukraine and said that she came to Przemyśl only for this religious event. But as usual, the majority of the visitors from Ukraine had come not just out of devotion; they also wanted to shop in the bazaar, and most of them hurried there immediately after the ceremony ended.

On the way home, two of my neighbours and I discussed the presence of politicians at the event. Yaroslav and Kateryna, a retired couple, said that the Roman Catholic archbishop attended the ceremony only because of political correctness, which was fashionable. As Yaroslav summarized it: 'Roman Catholic tolerance appears because it has to, because such times have come, not because the church wanted them to come.' In the Yaroslavs' eyes, the mayor attended any religious ceremony, regardless of rite, mostly because he wanted to be re-elected. Two thousand disciplined Greek Catholic votes, said Yaroslav, along with the votes of sympathizers from pro-Ukrainian artist circles, was a significant number in a city of seventy thousand. Because the mayor wanted to raise money on the strength of multiculturalism (*wielokulturowość*), he supported minority cooperation, the couple believed, and like any other politician, he wanted to be seen in the media. We agreed that the archbishop's attendance was a political act, and any politician who wanted to succeed in south-east Poland gained legitimacy from being close to the head of the Polish Bishop's Conference. I would add that because the NGO sector is a source of prestige in the eyes of the outside world, especially in the 'cosmopolitan' cities, and because it offers access to the media, it is worthwhile for politicians to be on good terms with its representatives as well.

The public face of the ritual therefore showed many signs of what I later describe as 'artificial' tolerance. It was an important part of local civility, especially in the way it contributed to calming national tensions, but it was insufficient as a source of civility by itself. As one Ukrainian saw it, this new kind of tolerance was easy to incorporate into the local situation, because 'it depended solely on well-prepared advertisement and media manipulation'. He believed that tolerance dictated from above would last only as long as pressure was exerted from above. 'It is an artificial tolerance' (*sztuczna tolerancja*), he said.

Behind this public façade of multiculturalism, many people took part in the Jordan ceremony for religious reasons, not because they cared about national interpretations of the event. My friends pointed out some devout women (*dewotki*) speaking in Polish at the ceremony. The women joined any activity in the city where a blessing took place, my friends said, and some of them might even have remembered the Jordan ceremony from before the socialist years. The event was also attended by some young Poles who had married Ukrainians and by people of mixed Polish-Ukrainian origin who otherwise did not practise the eastern rite, not least because they felt ashamed to openly show their affiliation with a once proscribed group or because they feared being accused by conscious Ukrainians of having changed their nationality to Polish. Owing to the strong demands Ukrainian minority nationalism make on people's loyalty, some people may not have wanted to become demonstrative Ukrainians after 1989.

In 2003 and 2004 I noticed dozens of participants observing the ceremony who might have fallen into this group. They were watching from the opposite side of the river, and although I saw them only as interested spectators, my informants recognized them as hidden Ukrainians. They had to have made the effort to find out exactly what time the Jordan ceremony would take place at the river, and because 19 January was a workday that year, they had to have got permission to leave their workplaces.

Visitors from Ukraine formed another group taking part in the ceremony who might be said to practise a sort of unregistered tolerance, outside of the religious-national collectives. They came to fulfil their religious needs as well as to shop, and few of them were aware of or interested in Przemyśl's national tensions. The 'ordinary' sharing of ritual by all these groups represents a form of civility alternative to the artificial tolerance performed by the clergymen, politicians, intellectuals, and journalists.

Somewhere in the middle ground between ordinary and artificial tolerance lie the activities of the priest from the parish of Krasiczyn, ten kilometres west of Przemyśl. Regardless of political regime, the Roman Catholic presbytery, or parish house (*plebania*), has always played a crucial role in the social lives of villagers in south-east Poland. The parish of Krasiczyn is no exception. As an article in the regional weekly illustrates, the presbytery there became an important place, especially in politically shaky times:

> It was the year 1989. The entire country was boiling. The old order was collapsing, and the morning star of freedom was approaching the most remote parts of Poland. Everywhere, citizens' committees were formed. In Krasiczyn the most important place, where a lot was always happening, was the parish house. There, opposition politi-

> cians once met, as did parliamentarians, Solidarity activists, and all those who wanted to take part in building the new.[94]

The Krasiczyn parish priest, Father Stanisław Bartmiński, was known for his interest in political affairs. To political sociologists who divide the Polish Catholic Church into 'open' and 'closed' segments (Michlic 2004), Bartmiński would certainly belong to the open, tolerant group, especially in terms of his attitudes towards Jews and Ukrainians. On 11 November 2003, for example, the day of the parish's patron saint, St. Martin, Bartmiński organized a joint Greek and Roman Catholic service. During it a plaque was installed commemorating a Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation ceremony that had taken place the previous summer in Pawliwka, Volhynia, Ukraine.[95] A quotation from the pope on the plaque read, 'It is time to break away from the past.'[96] As the priest emphasized several times, the pope asked both Christian nations for a deep examination of their consciences and for reconciliation.[97]

Father Bartmiński was generally popular among his parishioners, and even more so among Przemyśl intellectuals. Some parishioners complained that the priest was too outgoing and wanted to be in the media as often as possible, but others appreciated having a priest who initiated a local newspaper and even served as an advisor for the soap opera *Parafia* (Parish house) on Polish public TV. I heard that after Bartmiński spearheaded the rebuilding of a Greek Catholic *tserkva* in the neighbouring village of Chołowice, several families who disliked his ideas decided to attend church in another parish, but this was a rare example. Rumours also circulated that church representatives had punished Bartmiński for his activities, especially for taking care of Jews and Ukrainians while neglecting Poles; this supposedly was why he did not advance beyond the position of parish priest. Nevertheless, his activities were usually favourably perceived, and parishioners were afraid of losing him, as he neared retirement age, for a new priest.

Although Krasiczyn, predominantly a Roman Catholic parish, was not a village where severe ethnically motivated conflicts broke out during World War II, the post-war repatriations affected it substantially. The Greek Catholic parish had been located in the nearby village of Śliwnica, and its *tserkva* was destroyed during the war. Until they were expelled in 1946–1947, local Greek Catholics were allowed to worship in the chapel of Krasiczyn castle, owned by the well-known noble Sapieha family. Other nearby *tserkvy* were in Mielnów and Chołowice. The former was given to the Roman Catholic Church, and the latter fell into ruin from neglect.

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[94] *Życie podkarpackie,* 3 March 2004, p. 19.

[95] This ceremony, attended by the presidents of Poland and Ukraine, commemorated the Pawliwka victims of the ethnic war during World War II.

[96] The full text of the plaque read: 'It is time to break away from the past. On the sixtieth anniversary of incidents in Volhynia; in order to pay honour to the victims, to turn away from hatred, to commemorate reconciliation. Pawliwka 11.07.2003, Krasiczyn 11.11.2003' ('Czas już oderwać się od bolesnej przeszłości. W 60-lecie wydarzeń wołyńskich, by uczcić Ofiary, przestrzec przed nienawiścią, upamiętnić pojednanie').

[97] For another of Bartmiński's activities of this kind, see Hann 1998c.

The rebirth of the Chołowice *tserkva* from the ruins as a Roman Catholic church (*kościól pocerkiewny*) was initiated by Father Bartmiński and celebrated in a ceremony on 30 May 2004.[98] The church was painted in the 'eastern' style; because of its pure Byzantine features, a sanctuary of this style was rare in the border region of the two overlapping Christian traditions before World War II. It was dedicated to the Holy Spirit (Świętego Ducha), but Bartmiński emphasized that it was additionally dedicated to Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation. Villagers from among Chołowice's ten or fifteen families attended the event, but most of the two hundred or so Roman and Greek Catholics present came from Krasiczyn and Przemyśl.

From the beginning of the ceremony, speakers narrated a tolerant history of the region and evoked the unity of Christians under the Holy Spirit. The priest who delivered the sermon, a guest of Father Bartmiński's, said, 'In one spirit we were baptized, and there must be no division between us.' Prayers for the unity of Christians were said, and former residents of the village and their descendants, now living in Ukraine, were invited to visit. By stressing the multinational environment, speakers recalled a tolerant past located either in the inter-war Polish Republic or in the medieval Rzeczpospolita. At the end of the mass, Poles and Ukrainians shook hands, and the local priest gave a greeting in Polish, Ukrainian, and German, noting that the three languages were equal and commonly used in the area before World War II. The priest particularly expressed his gratitude to the Greek Catholics who attended the ceremony and who reminded the Polish majority of the lost pre-war harmony. Stressing their eastern-rite Catholicism, he expressed a wish for 'one common fatherland where there are no divisions. We all come from one God. Shalom!' Evoking the third, Jewish part of the pluralist tradition, the priest expressed the hope that it would become normal to hear Ukrainian and German in the streets again.

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[98] *Kościół pocerkiewny,* a term used widely by Greek Catholics in south-east Poland, refers to a church that served as a *tserkva* before 1947.

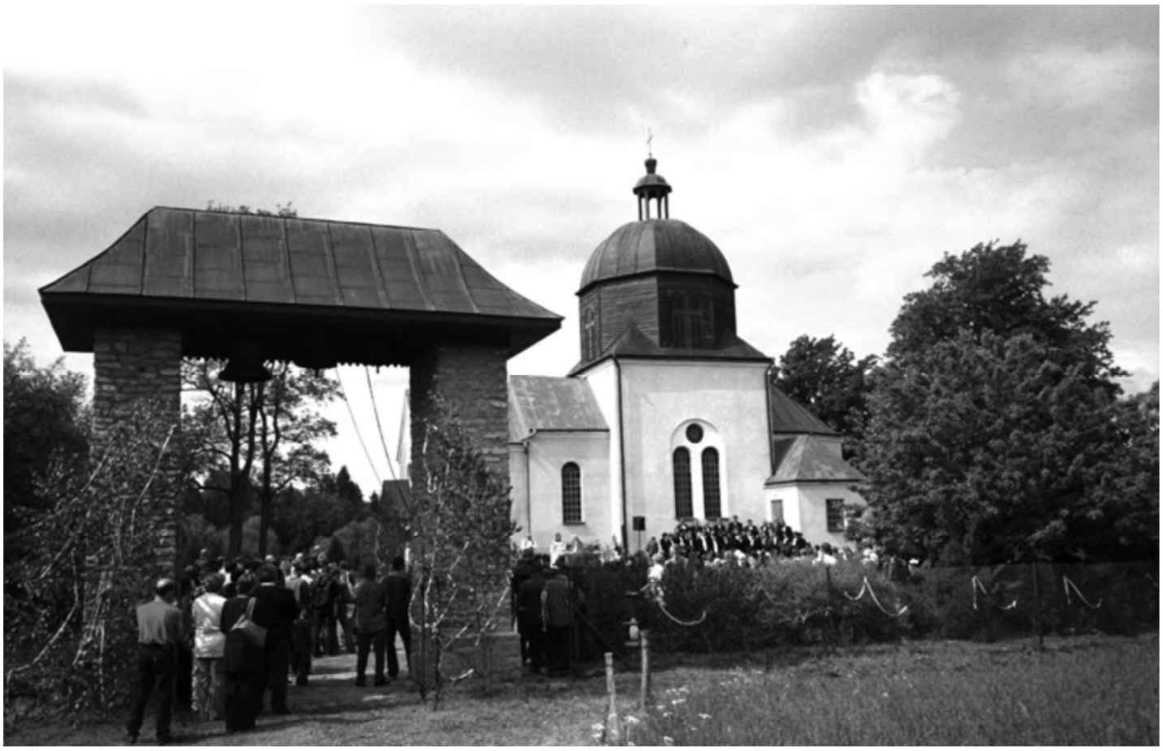

Plate 19. The ceremony marking the rebirth of the Chołowice *tserkva* from its ruins, 30 May 2004.

Afterwards Father Bartmiński invited everyone to tour the church. Inside, the professional painter who had restored the church, herself a Roman Catholic with eastern Christian roots, described the work she and her husband had done. She explained that the church was painted in a pure Byzantine style, recognizable from the painting style and composition of the icons of the apostles and the Virgin Mary. Empty places on the walls would later hold portraits of former Przemyśl bishops of both rites, complementing the Byzantine church art. As the painter explained, this dichotomy was necessary in order to show the 'two cultures' that had lived next to each other for centuries.

In the meantime, the event continued with a picnic. People ate sausages, drank beer and coffee, sang Polish and Ukrainian folksongs, walked around, and talked. A discussion arose among the painter, a teacher from the Przemyśl Ukrainian school, and other participants about the exceptional musical talent of the Ukrainian nation. The painter said, 'The Ukrainian nation is gifted with musicality. It is visible in the culture of the Greek Catholic Church, where the singing needs no support from an organ. People learn singing from childhood listening to the *tserkva* choir.' It was clear from the discussion that eastern-rite Catholics were perceived as more spiritual, more emotional, and more musical than western-rite Catholics. This opinion, commonly held by the local intelligentsia, both Polish and Ukrainian, also appeared in connection with the singing of Christmas carols in Krasiczyn.

6.2 The Singing of Carols

Of the explicit rituals of tolerance held nowadays in south-east Poland, those initiated by Father Bartmiński in Krasiczyn are the best known. Among them, the common singing of carols (*wspólne kolędowanie*) by Roman and Greek Catholics, an annual event held soon after New Year's Eve, holds a special place. Before World War II it was a widespread practice in the religiously mixed areas of south-east Poland for believers of the two Catholic rites to celebrate Christmas and other important religious holidays together (Bartmiński 1990: 272). Because of the difference between their calendars – Roman Catholic Gregorian and eastern Julian – the holidays seldom coincided, and neighbours used to invite one another to their homes as well as to the church or *tserkva*. This was almost unavoidable in religiously mixed families, but it was also common for one-rite families to sing carols with neighbours of the other rite. Before the Second World War, people moved freely from carols in Polish to carols in Ukrainian.

Paradoxically, this language shifting was also observed after Action Vistula, when Poles in some of the villages around Przemyśl, after singing Polish carols at their Christmas vigil (Wigilia Bożego Narodzenia), continued singing Ukrainian ones (Bartmiński 1990). This might have resulted from the fact that not all Greek Catholics were expelled; those living in mixed families stayed. But some Roman Catholics also continued practising the local tradition. With the construction of a Ukrainian enemy by the Polish state after World War II, this kind of activity tended to be risky and was possible only in face-to-face local settings. Nevertheless, this kind of 'agrarian' tolerance – as opposed to the official polonizing canon of socialist Poland – survived in Krasiczyn. Some active parishioners organized village social life, including harvest festivals and the singing of carols. Their role in keeping old traditions alive was particularly enhanced during the 1970s and the 1990s, when the political situation in Poland was more relaxed.

In the 1970s, soon after the arrival of Father Bartmiński, who continued his predecessor's practice in supporting carol singing, the local tradition was further revived and became an organized event held at the presbytery. The carol singing described here took place on 11 January 2004, soon after Christmas according to the Julian calendar, in the royal hall of Krasiczyn castle. For the first time it was organized jointly with the local branch of the Kraków-based foundation Bridges to the East (Mosty na Wschód), which was intellectually backed by the well-known Christian association ZNAK and financed by the US consulate general.

The several hundred Catholics of both rites who attended, most of them from Przemyśl, included ordinary parishioners as well as local journalists, politicians, intellectuals, and priests. After a welcome by Father Bartmiński, a representative of Bridges to the East opened the ceremony. He said, 'Living on the Polish-Ukrainian border, we would like to take advantage of our common roots, to identify with these roots, to take inspiration from our common Polish-Ukrainian heritage.' He welcomed the high-ranking clergymen of both Catholic rites who were present, along with representatives of self-government from the region – 'the stewards of the land' (*gospodarzy tej ziemy*), as he called them. Stressing the need to spread the activities of multiculturalism away from centres such as Kraków, he introduced his foundation's new program, 'Bridges of Tolerance', which was being launched at Krasiczyn castle. Another NGO activist expressed his gratitude to Father Bartmiński, a 'very much honoured person' among the speaker's friends in Kraków.

To loud applause, the floor was then given to Bartmiński himself. Mentioning Cardinal Sapieha, who had been born in the castle and who 'enriched the multicultural environment of Kraków', he highlighted the 'multicultural values' of Przemyśl and south-eastern Poland. He observed that close to the city were Slovakia, the Czech lands, Ukraine, and Byelorussia, that Przemyśl had two archbishops and two cathedral churches, and that a strong Jewish heritage was visible in the streets. Moreover, continued the priest, some Muslims had recently moved into the region, not to mention those in the cemeteries, such as the Ottoman Turks buried in Krasiczyn. All this demonstrated the multiculturalism (*wielokulturowość*) of the region. 'Is any other city in Poland so drenched in multicultural traditions?' he asked. 'This land is linked to many nations, and we must emphasize this tradition. As the holy father said, let's leave the accounting of history to the historians and try to build a common future.'

After this introduction, he asked the Greek Catholic archbishop metropolitan and the Roman Catholic auxiliary bishop each to say a few words. The metropolitan began with the story of the Russian poet Yevtushenko, who, while in Paris, wanted to connect that city metaphorically with Moscow. Two thousand years earlier, he continued, Christ had connected earth and heaven, as well as people among themselves: 'Christ always connects and never divides. He always shows the way of unity and brotherhood. It happened that in this place there also appeared bridges – bridges to the east. These took inspiration from a great humanist tradition, but they were also based on faith and forgiveness, on the teaching of the church.' The metropolitan compared state borders to those dividing people's hearts, which were even more difficult to cross: 'I wish for all of us that this border in our hearts would not exist. As Christ brings peace to all people of good will, I wish for good will among us and for peace among nations in the entire world. I wish this to all of us. Christ was born!'

Similarly, the Roman Catholic bishop noted that Christ had been born a man in order to show solidarity with sinful humans. In the bishop's eyes, the pope, too, spoke of this type of solidarity, which meant 'everybody with everybody and everybody for everybody'. He expressed the wish to experience solidarity while sharing *prosfora*, the eastern Christian Eucharist bread, and Christmas wafers, the western symbol of the Eucharist. For him, this was similar to the sharing of hearts, something that could be achieved only through pure human love. It was not only the solidarity of man with man, he said, but the solidarity of God with man that was symbolized in the sharing. Bringing in the importance of a peaceful home and a morally healthy family, he emphasized the significance of Christmas, a time when people discover the secrets of faith in God and brotherhood among themselves.

The emotional atmosphere went further. Onstage, the choirs began to sing Christmas songs, Ukrainian ones alternating with Polish ones, while the *prosfora* and wafers were distributed. Some people shook hands and cried. The floor was then taken by a village mayor. He expressed the wish that, thanks to activities like the common singing of carols in Krasiczyn, 'Przemyśl area' would no longer be seen as a place where national tensions prevailed. 'I would like to show everybody that we know how to live together and cooperate, no matter what rite or nationality we belong to. Besides health, peace, and wisdom, I wish to everyone brotherly love, openness to every man. I wish for cordiality to take root in our hearts.'

Afterwards, a letter of greeting from the mayor of Przemyśl was read, and then an opera singer, with guitar and sombrero, come onstage. He commented on the presence of Jesus in people's hearts, which brings internal peace of soul and also appears in the external peace of people's everyday relationships. He wished the true Christian faith to everyone and then sang carols from around the world, some of them in Spanish and Italian. People sang with him, especially on the Polish songs, clapped their hands, and enjoyed the performance.

The event continued with a programme by some schoolchildren, and the Greek Catholic parish priest from Przemyśl offered final thanks to the organizers. He invited everyone to the annual Greek Catholic Jordan ceremony in Przemyśl, where Roman and Greek Catholic archbishops would together 'bless the river that becomes Jordan'. The crowd sang the well-known German Christmas song Silent Night in Polish. The ritual ended with a common blessing by the bishops, and everyone was invited to another hall where refreshments and Christmas folk dishes were served. The clergymen, nuns, and other VIPs were invited to a separate hall, where they were served dinner.

Although several Greek Catholics noted that the ceremony was conducted predominantly in Polish and that even their metropolitan blessed them in the Latin style, the participants appreciated the public form of the event. Several hundred people were present, and some political and media representatives from the region showed interest in the activities of the Krasiczyn priest. Some Roman Catholic participants commented on the opportunity to learn more about the practices of their fellow Catholics. A young Greek Catholic girl said the common singing of carols helped to make the churches more open to each other. As some Greek Catholic participants observed later, the sharing of wafers and *prosfora* made for a warm atmosphere, bolstered by the miraculous air of Christmas.

All this evoked strong positive emotions. Bishops kissed each other and people cried. To those present, the common celebration of Christmas exemplified the teachings of Christ, whose activities were universal, overcoming divides based on nationality or confession. This Christian tradition, based on solidarity among people and between people and God, implied redemption, which could be achieved through what Pope John Paul II described as 'breaking away from the past'.

Coming from Kraków intellectual circles to visit the periphery, the NGO specialists claimed that the common Christmas celebration was a way to transcend the intolerance of south-east Poland. A new regional narrative based on a multicultural past was evoked. As one participant from Przemyśl commented, Father Bartmiński had from the beginning 'supported people in becoming "themselves", in singing "their songs" [*po naszemu*] as they used to be sung before the war. He wanted to build on local traditions. People used to come to the veranda of the parish house and sing for him because he liked it. He opened the locality, built regional identity.'

Two sorts of narratives were mixed in this event. The first came from urban intellectuals, and the second aimed to reveal the local past. But despite the expressed unity of the celebration, the two did not really gel. The presence of the bishops of two rites and the politically correct alternating of Ukrainian and Polish performers illustrated the 'managed' character of the whole event. The carol singing embodied what I call artificial tolerance; the local tradition of agrarian tolerance was dying away in favour of the elite-controlled reconciliation of distinct national collectives. The initiative of holding a joint Christmas celebration with carolling, which had originated in the parish, had now been moved to the castle and was co-organized by the municipality and a regionally significant NGO. The entire event was legitimated by the presence of the bishops of both rites. Some locals discussed the role of these postsocialist power holders and saw them as exploiting the hard work of the local priest. I heard local NGO activists complain about the lack of resources for their community work, which to them contrasted sharply with the resources available to the 'cosmopolitan' intellectuals from Kraków. These people also expressed nostalgia for times when the ritual had been much more local. One of the Przemyśl activists said:

> Once it was more spontaneous, organized next to the parish house and in front of the church. Then he [the priest] decided to enlarge the activity, he asked the cathedral office for approval – both Roman and Greek Catholic – they sent their choirs … Sometime in 1990–1991 it happened that Poles began to sing only Polish carols, and Ukrainians, only Ukrainian ones. They alternated one after the other, and the spontaneity was lost. The teachers teach pupils only Polish carols; Ukrainians come with only Ukrainian ones … There is 'us' and 'them'; before it was just 'us'. There is no longer that continuity of the local language, the mixture, the local blend.

This speaker agreed that particularly during the nationalist tensions in Przemyśl in the 1990s, the Krasiczyn singing played an important educational role: 'The Poles came and saw that the Ukrainians were similar [to them].' From the mid-1990s, however, the Przemyśl bishops began attending the event, and 'it became a Przemyśl event, not a local one. The castle wants to run its business; politicians and Bridges to the East want the same. It is a party [*impreza*] of the Przemyśl intelligentsia. Although the local schools prepare their programmes, they are just participants … Fewer and fewer local people come; there are no grandmothers [*babcie*] who remember how it was before the war.'

Although the Christmas event was initially a local activity of the parish priest and villagers, the priestly and lay intelligentsia had now become engaged it, with the approval of the same priest and his bishop. Because local politicians and journalists were present, the carol singing became a prestigious event for the local elites. A cultural activist of the Ukrainian minority, a teacher and singer in the Greek Catholic choir, directly stressed the importance of 'showing that Ukrainians are a highly cultured minority and their strong culture should be shown to Poles'. As she put it, 'everything must return to normality' – presumably meaning as it was before the war. She said:

> We should invite more high-ranking Ukrainian artists; we in Przemyśl have a lot to show to Poles … I fought in a war-like activity for Ukrainian culture in Przemyśl, [a culture] that in fact did not exist in Poland. It was necessary to build it and emphasize it all the time because it was somehow nameless, because there was no Ukrainian

> statehood. It was very difficult, but that culture survived in people, and it exists.

Unlike agrarian tolerance, this new multiculturalism is reminiscent of the nineteenth-century project of modern nation-building undertaken by the rural intelligentsia. Today such people speak in the names of their national collectives. They purify and essentialize their folk traditions, making them 'appropriately' high, according to middle-class tastes, and often ignore local voices. Although the Christmas event in Krasiczyn is perceived as multicultural, in fact it acts to strengthen the national cultures. The state-supported education system, represented during this and similar rituals by the contributions of local schools, only supports the bounding of national collectives that are supposed to be undergoing reconciliation. On various public occasions, for example, students from the Shashkevych school in Przemyśl, the Ukrainian minority school, sang folksongs and performed dances from areas hundreds of kilometres away, presenting them as purely Ukrainian and therefore local.

Two workable models of relatively tolerant societies have appeared historically – cosmopolitan cities and rural empires (Berghe 2002). In the 1970s Renée Hirschon (2006) studied Greek refugees from Turkey who, after several decades on mainland Greece, remembered their harmonious coexistence with Turks on the basis of lived contacts with them, contrary to the official, elite-driven national history of ethnic hatred. In Krasiczyn, as in a few other places in rural south-east Poland, a similar surviving tradition of agrarian tolerance kept the communal singing of carols alive. In the Krasiczyn case, however, the formerly local activity has been overwhelmed by the growing political significance of the event for the entire region. It is widely publicized in the media and valued by 'liberal' intellectuals as an example of a desired *wielokulturowość*. Father Bartmiński himself seems not to object to these perceptions and even assists in promoting this artificial tolerance.

In order to understand these ritual changes, it is necessary to analyse the contents of the tolerance narrative that underpins them. John Borneman (1997) argued that reconciliation was about the restoration of social relationships and the application of everyday notions of justice, rather than about rational bureaucratic and legal procedures. Studying post-conflict societies across the globe, Brandon Hamber and Richard Wilson (2003) described the sorts of reconciliations initiated by many post-authoritarian religious and political elites as taking the form of social rehabilitation and public or societal healing. These reconciliations are a kind of therapy for a sick and divided society – the restoration of the national psyche.

Signs of this kind of reconciliation can be found in Przemyśl. The discourse of reconciliation there not only aggregates individual and family memories into the memories of nations but also foregrounds the religious language of forgiveness. Therefore, although rituals such as the common singing of carols open public space to a once-proscribed religious-national collective and bring political change, they also favour forgetting and national healing (Hamber and Wilson 2003). They use the Christian vocabulary of redemption and evoke the idealist tradition of a lost peaceful world. They narrate an impersonal tolerance and ignore religion's own history in the conflict (see van der Veer 2002).

Local intellectuals who are engaged in the telling of 'macro' history widely agree that forgetting and generational change automatically bring tolerance. Seen from the perspective of the 'sudden' emergence of fifty-year-old memories of ethnic war in the early 1990s, this is a simplistic hope. The practice of artificial tolerance expresses the feeling shared by many ordinary locals that reconciliation is being actively promoted on the surface while religious-national tensions thrive underneath. This certainly does not mean that every attempt to promote tolerance 'from above' is necessarily superficial – the participation of high-ranking clergymen of both rites in each other's ceremonies in Przemyśl has been a precondition for calming conflicts since the early 1990s. Sometimes, however, artificial tolerance serves to reinforce the dominant worldview without fully acknowledging the alternatives. This reflects a particular sort of power relations that is developing in contemporary south-east Poland.

6.3 Teaching and Performing Multiculturalism

Jarosław is a city on the bank of the San River, thirty kilometres north of Przemyśl, where a workshop for teachers took place on 26 November 2003. I was invited to the conference by one of its keynote speakers, an historian in Przemyśl known for his pioneering activities in Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation (I call him Mr Director). Another Przemyśl historian (Gustek) and a colleague of theirs, a teacher then working for a local research institute, joined us. During the half-hour drive from Przemyśl we passed one newly built church after another. In Jarosław we found an older building, the former socialist house of culture (*dom kultury*), where the seminar was to take place. Inside were gathered sixty-eighty teachers from the region, most of them teachers of history and related disciplines. The district president (*starosta*) of Jarosław opened the conference with a brief greeting. According to him, the main goal of the conference was to 'revive the history of national minorities in Jarosław', which had been suppressed during communism.

He turned the floor over to his deputy, who introduced himself as an historian. Stressing the position of teachers and the respect people traditionally gave them, he touched upon the responsibility they had in 'our little fatherland' for 'teaching people to respect traditions in our turbulent times'. He told the audience: 'To educate is your duty. Who else if not you, the teachers, can do it?' In order 'to break the ties with the communist past', the role of teachers seemed to him essential. The general public knew little about its history, and so 'we [the teachers and historians] must fill the empty space left by communist historiography. In order to achieve this, we must get to the roots!' Contemporary politicians, he continued, knew little about history, either. Although they did not have time to read scholarly articles, they should listen 'to you historians, who create our current reality [*rzeczywistość*].' And teachers, he said, should be more engaged in public activities, especially patriotic ones, than they had been until now:

> Once people were dying under the flags, which were treated as religious relics. And today? The white-and-red [Polish] flag goes as it goes, carried by the young, chewing gum, and nearby another flag is being rolled up [improperly]. Young people do not treat the symbols of the fatherland properly. We do not know how to celebrate our national holidays anymore. Even we, the adults, do not know the duty of honouring the holiday, a part of our traditions.

According to this speaker, if someone were to write a monograph about Jarosław, he or she would have to mention that Jarosław, incorporated under the Polish crown by Queen Jadwiga (1373–1399), was multi-ethnic in the past.[99] By that time, he stressed, the burghers of Jarosław were predominantly Polish by nationality, although the dominant language was Latin. He mentioned tradesmen from Italy who underwent polonization, as well as the underprivileged position of Russians – meaning Ruthenians, the older name for Ukrainians – and Jewish settlers in historic Jarosław. He recognized as intruders the Swedes whose raids at the beginning of the eighteenth century initiated the city's decline. Among other nationalities, he also mentioned Saxons, and he did not forget to stress that Jews had been responsible for the little trade that took place up until World War II. In his interpretation, four dominant nationalities had coexisted in Jarosław before the mid-twentieth century: Poles, Russians, Germans, and Jews. The Germans were quickly polonized, and the Jews remained isolated. After World War I the Germans left the city, he underlined, only to return during World War II as conquerors. Today, he said, Jarosław had a chance for development. It could become a bridge to the east, but only if it had good, skilled citizens, as it had during the First Rzeczspospolita, when civic-minded traders governed the city.

In a more professional way, Gustek commented on 'the beginning of multiculturalism in the south-eastern borderlands'. He stressed the importance of the 1353 Magdeburg Law for the city's self-government, highlighted the existence of church union as a significant source of multiculturalism (*wielokulturowość*), and tried to link this religious plurality with contemporary Europe. He drew the following conclusion: 'Not only in the cemeteries, where it is still most visible, but in people's everyday lives, this multiculturalism used to work in our land. As we now enter multicultural Europe, we should be aware that we have already been multicultural, and we should propagate our traditions of multiculturalism in the same way we take inspiration from Europe.'

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[99] Crowned in 1384 at the age of eleven, Queen Jadwiga married Jagiełło, the ruler of pagan Lithuania, who became king of Poland. She was canonized by Pope John Paul II in 1997.

After a break, another historian, Mr Zamojski, took the floor. Although his topic was ostensibly the history of Jews in Jarosław, he spent most of his time glorifying Galicia under the Habsburgs. Stressing cultural differences between Galicia and the rest of Poland, he stated that Galicia was somehow a different country, 'and this has enormous significance for us'. As differentiating features he mentioned self-government, which did not exist elsewhere in historical Poland, and the tradition of tolerance, which came from Galicia's autonomy under the tolerant Habsburg monarchy:

> Look at Warsaw and the former Russian partition, what do they look like? They have different architecture, poorly built houses, no marketplaces in the centre. And look at Galicia, how nice it still looks! ... We love our Galicia, we love our Franz Joseph. Only in Galicia do people hang his picture on the walls in houses and pubs. We love our Galician roots ... Let's love Galicia, its religions and nationalities, its self-government, our roots, the hundreds of thousands of Jews, of whom Galicia was the biggest European seedbed. They were not only usurers but followers of liberal constitutionalism ... The years 1942–1943, the time of the Holocaust, meant the end of an historical epoch in Galicia.

After a subsequent presentation by Mr Director, who explained the danger of collective guilt, another speaker talked about the German minority in Jarosław. She described how the positions of the patricians in Jarosław were at some point taken over by Germans, and how business and the local bureaucracy ended up in their hands as well. Her discussion of Austrians reflected the widespread Polish patriotic interpretation of history, in which Austrian times were '150 years of the rule of a conqueror – a soft conqueror, but still a conqueror' – and Germans were, together with Russians, the greatest Polish enemies. In her view, Jarosław was a Catholic city, untouched by Protestantism. Austrians had Germanized the area and closed Polish schools. She also stressed that Germans were essentially good, hard-working traders, and although they had little influence on culture, they had enormous influence on trade. Drawing evidence from the telephone book, she tried to convince the audience that some Germans still lived in the city – not least because there was a Lutheran church, and Lutherans must be Germans! Her conflating of nationality, language, and religion – the German speakers she mentioned could actually have been Saxonian Lutherans, Austrian Catholics, and Jews – illustrates the nationalist logic behind the 'multicultural' interpretation of the past.

After this presentation, a new project for students was introduced under the titles 'The Regional Route of Education – Our Small Fatherland' and 'Jarosław, the Multicultural City'. Its main goal was to advance knowledge about the region's history and culture. As its schoolteacher authors stressed, it should remind students about *wielokulturowość,* cultural heritage, and lead to the development of a national identity.

Next, some students from the music school offered a concert called 'The Music of Many Nations' (*Muzyka wielu narodów*). Its narrator, a Ukrainian music teacher from L'viv, explained that the students were playing multicultural pieces by Austrian composers of Jewish origin, a Danube waltz and peasant dances by another Austrian composer, a Russian folksong, and a Ukrainian song about Cossacks on the Danube. The music teacher himself finished the concert by playing piano motifs from the American musical *Fiddler on the Roof.*

The conference for teachers illustrates the way the new multicultural tradition is constructed in the Polish school curriculum. As in elite-driven ceremonies of reconciliation, so in this form of artificial tolerance, nations remain basic in defining cultures. This multiculturalism takes the form of either a multinationalism in which one nation (Polish) is, from a patriotic standpoint, superior to other, tolerated nations or a romanticized blend of the good old days of the upper classes and an idealized notion of the peasantry. The reference point of this new multiculturalism is often the European Union and its policies of *wielokulturowość.*

In September 2003 the first Galician Multicultural Festival (Wielokulturowy Festiwal Galicja) was organized in Przemyśl. According to its mission statement, advertised on placards throughout the city, the festival was 'a sign of nostalgia for the past, for the people who made everyday culture, for the nations who inhabited this land for centuries'. As the organizers elaborated in one of the festival's leaflets: 'Our aim is to forge cultural links at the same time Europe is uniting … The aim of the festival is to inspire and create a growing interest in the cultures of national minorities … Enhancing and promoting regional culture, encouraging an attitude of tolerance between people – these are our chief objectives, the objectives of a uniting Europe.'

A Polish woman in her late forties, Ms Krystyna, was an initiator and organizer of the festival. She had grown up in Przemyśl but had emigrated to

London, where she established a foundation called Heritage (Dziedzictwo), which was the official organizer of the festival. She maintained homes in London and Warsaw and a farm near Przemyśl. She said she wanted to open provincial Przemyśl to high art and theatre and to offer regional cultural features such as folklore and cuisine to the outside world. In her view the festival was a combination of local patriotism and cosmopolitanism. She wanted to return to the 'good old culture' for which the city had been known before World War II and to help people learn about their tradition, history, and culture. She had heard from her late husband, a former resident of Przemyśl of Jewish origin, about the city's past – about the best cafes and the celebrations of Franz Josef's birthday, which was widely celebrated during the inter-war period but which she had been unable to observe herself, growing up in socialist Przemyśl.

Among the various activities of the festival was a concert presented on 4 September 2003 by a choir from Ukraine. Held in the Greek Catholic cathedral, it was called 'A Thousand Years of Ukrainian Sacred Music'. At the end of the concert, Father Kruba, the parish chaplain, described the artists and listeners as the 'Ukrainian family', formed out of the connections between Ukraine, the motherland, and Przemyśl Ukrainians. 'All routes from Ukraine to the west go through Przemyśl,' he said. The concert was well attended. Not only were local elites present, including the city mayor, but so were people from Ukraine's Ministry of Culture and some high-ranking diplomats. Some hours before the concert started, the ambassador of Slovakia visited the city, too. All the official guests signed commemoration books, toured the chambers of the city council, and demonstrated their support for the culture presented at the festival.

Another part of the 2003 festival was the exhibition *Three Confessions – Two Religions* (*Trzy wyznania – Dwie religie*) in the National Museum of Przemyśl Land. It presented Judaism, Roman Catholicism, and eastern Christianity in three separate rooms, placing Greek Catholicism on the margins of the Orthodox room. The religions were represented through objects such as books, insignia, paintings, and liturgical garments. Parallel events were 'scientific sessions' about Galician history and culture provided by literary and art historians, other conferences, art exhibitions, concerts, theatre performances, film screenings, lectures, readings, and displays of handicrafts and regional cooking.

The most popular event for the local elites was a performance of Verdi's *Nabucco* by the L'viv Opera Company, held in the square of the Renaissance castle in Krasiczyn. Although Przemyśl was already known for its 'high' culture – it was a centre for art, the seat of the oldest amateur theatre in Europe ('Fredreum', est. 1869), and a site for jazz festivals – some local intellectuals complained that few people bothered to attend these high-quality performances. A concert in the main square by the first orchestra of Israel, for example, attracted just a few locals. Some of my intellectual friends blamed their fellow ordinary citizens for a lack of good taste and for provincial ignorance.

Among other, more popular events reminiscent of the past was an open-air performance called 'Švejk's Manoeuvres' (*Manewry Szwejkowskie*), an enactment of parts of the story 'The Fortunes of the Good Soldier Švejk in the World War', written by the Czech novelist Jaroslav Hašek. Dealing with a 'good soldier' in the Austrian Army, the story takes place partly in Galicia. Plans were also being made to erect a statue of Švejk in the city. For many locals this statue would be at least as attractive as the ones in nearby Sanok and in Humenné, Slovakia.

The Galician Multicultural Festival represented a fashionable revival of the good old days of Eastern Europe. A friend reminded me that this multiculturalism had come to Przemyśl from the bigger cities only four or five years earlier, but when conceptualized in terms of the politics of commemoration, it has an older pedigree. It reveals an idealized past from before World War II. The narratives that underpin this past do not result simply from the new politicization of the public sphere in Eastern Europe since socialism but are also determined by traditional power relations in south-east Poland. They are nurtured by minority rights policies as well as by tourism and the demands of the market (see chapter 8). The political correctness displayed at the Jordan and Krasiczyn ceremonies, the nation-state flags displayed on the main square during the Galician Festival, and the various diplomats and foreign artists who participated in the festival reveal the blurring of the line between the multicultural and the national(ist) perspectives on human collectives. If 'culture' equals 'nation', then what kind of tolerance is developing in south-east Poland?

6.4 Artificial Tolerance and Ordinary Tolerance

Even in the elite-driven rituals of tolerance I have described, the Polish and Ukrainian participants shared tolerant connections evoked by the interpretation of common tradition, the majority's acknowledgement of the minority, and the religious experience of forgiveness and togetherness. In addition, the singing of carols remained more a local activity than a public event in several other villages in south-east Poland. More than at Krasiczyn castle, agrarian tolerance was still visible in Hrebenne, Kalników, and Pakoszówce and in a part of Przemyśl called Kruhel Wielki, where I saw children and adults visiting each other's houses during Latin (Polish) and eastern (Ukrainian) Christmas and singing carols in their national languages. It appeared that elite-driven discourses of tolerance in south-east Poland insufficiently acknowledged the importance of this ordinary aspect of tolerance.

In looking at ordinary tolerance, however, one should consider not only its rural, agrarian manifestation but also its manifestation in urban sites, narratives, and relationships of coexistence between Roman Catholic Poles and Greek Catholic Ukrainians. A Przemyśl district officer once mentioned to me that 'during the fights over the Carmelite church, the Ukrainian vodka and cigarette smugglers in the bazaar had not a clue about what was going on there. It was a sign [that] normal relationships [continued there] – trade, contacts between young people, and so on.' Although he was derogatory of the petty traders and unfriendly towards local Ukrainians, he pointed out an important site where religious-national differences played no significant role. A local artist who once sold socks in the bazaar confirmed this view: 'People started to see that every conflict with Ukrainians ended in the market.' One friend of mine told me that even the nationalist uncle I introduced in chapter 4 as a Polish defender of the Carmelite church was making deals with Ukrainian traders at the bazaar in the fluent Ukrainian he remembered from childhood. He spoke Ukrainian even though he did not really need to; Polish and Ukrainian are mutually intelligible, and Ukrainian traders speak some Polish anyway.

Chris Hann (1998c) highlighted the way trade and migration formed a basis for limited but still considerable social trust in Przemyśl. I see this sort of trust as constituting the local forms of ordinary tolerance. For many Greek Catholics it required no particular heroism to be Ukrainian in Przemyśl during socialism and its aftermath; the two sets of neighbours, Poles and Ukrainians, got along well for most of the socialist years. As oral histories reveal (Hann and Stępień 2000), and as I noticed in the recollections of several of my informants, some Ukrainians even remained open about their nationality during those times. One might also consider it a sign of normality that many Poles in Przemyśl were unaware that the Greek Catholic Church had functioned semi-legally during the socialist years. All this changed when the politicizing of the public sphere nourished not only new democratic ideals but also particular memories of national heroism and suffering.

Discussing syncretism at common religious sites in Bosnia and India, Robert Hayden (2002) recognized the phenomena of 'competitive sharing' and 'antagonistic tolerance'. Despite pragmatically tolerating each other, the religious groups in fact competed for dominance over shrines. I do not think competitive sharing is the exclusive form of tolerance between Roman Catholics and Greek Catholics in south-east Poland, although some pragmatic tolerance might be found outside the religious sphere, such as in the bazaar. Indeed, I am sympathetic to Glen Bowman's criticism of Hayden's interpretation as a 'benign version of the will to exclusion' (Bowman 2002: 219–20).

Instead of this essentialist treatment of identity, Bowman, relying on his research in Palestine, proposed looking at sharing in a range of forms, including the 'pleasures of conviviality' that people experience. He emphasized that conflicts in the former Yugoslavia were not somehow 'latent' in the crowd but were imported from outside, through priests or soldiers and through the antagonistic activities of another community of people (Bowman 2002: 220). Subscribing to Bowman's logic, one can see how agrarian tolerance not only flourished before the ethnic wars in south-east Poland but also was able to survive after it. Although not fully recognized by the builders of civil society and the creators of narratives of national history, agrarian tolerance and ordinary tolerance have been continually practised under both socialism and postsocialism in south-east Poland.

In postsocialist Europe, discussions of civil society have often been narrowed to Western models of liberal individualism and non-governmental organizations (Hann 1996: 1). Besides urban intellectuals, in the 1990s these thoughts were initiated not least by Western-funded NGOs promoting democratization. Now they are being applied with a similarly controversial logic to non-Western areas such as the Balkans and Central Asia (Hayden 2002; Fagan 2006). In order to overcome the limitations of this conception of civil society, Hann (2006) suggested that notions of civility should be infused into the concept of 'civil religion'. He wrote: 'Whereas the definitions of civil society emphasize individuals and the diversity of associations, the emphasis in approaches to civil religion is usually placed, in accordance with Durkheimian assumptions, on collective solidarity … [Civil religion] emphasizes the collective, binding function for the community' (Hann 2006: 164–65). It is obvious that civility cannot be exclusively driven by elites; artificial tolerance is insufficient by itself. Civility must also include the tolerance I describe as ordinary – agrarian and other everyday forms of peaceful coexistence between individuals and religious-national groups.

6.5 Conclusion

Because religious affiliation was stigmatized during ethnic conflicts and remains inseparable from local politics, it is impossible to build a tolerant society in south-east Poland outside the realm of religion. Within that realm, a tradition of tolerance has developed into a celebration of diversity, but with boundaries between the two religious-national groups strictly drawn. Events such as the common singing of carols have brought political change to south-east Poland, but carol singing is no longer the spontaneous and voluntary local activity it used to be. It has gained regional significance and is supervised by the archbishop's office and local intellectuals, sponsored from outside or even from abroad. I call this artificial tolerance.

Through artificial tolerance, even supposedly innocent multicultural narratives and practices such as the seminar for teachers and the Galician Multicultural Festival may strengthen the nationally defined 'cultures', which clerical intellectuals blend in a kind of national healing. Although 'there is no reconciliation outside of the church', as one priest in Przemyśl said, artificial tolerance implies the possibility of the undesired reproduction of religious-national tensions. At the same time, ordinary tolerance – manifested in the presence of ordinary believers who avoid nationalist groups at ritual events in Przemyśl, in the survival of agrarian tolerance across the countryside, in the pragmatism of petty trade, and in the cordiality of neighbourhood trust – seems to exert at least equal influence on local civility.

Nevertheless, it seems that the intelligentsia, minority rights policies, and the demands of tourism favour a multiculturalism that equates culture with nationality. In the following two chapters I look more closely at this essentializing of religious-national cultures and at people's responses to it.

Chapter 7
Greek Catholics between East and West

> The Ukrainian fate is to straddle East and West.
>
> A Przemyśl intellectual, May 2004

Although Ukrainian religious identification is considered eastern Christian in both its Orthodox and Greek Catholic forms and is opposed to Polish Roman Catholicism, people's religious practices, beliefs, and identity narratives seem ambiguous in terms of east-west differentiation. In this chapter I look closely at the syncretism, mixing, or plurality that arises from the existence of two neighbouring traditions of Christianity. After examining theoretical approaches to syncretism, I offer an historical perspective on the making of the Greek Catholic Church in south-east Poland. An ethnographic example of the intersection of this history with the modern politics of commemoration in Przemyśl is the restoration and ritual dedication of the crypt of Ivan Mohyl'nyts'kyi, a Greek Catholic priest who was active at a decisive time for the formation of an independent Greek Catholic tradition. I then look more specifically at religious-national identification among Greek Catholics in south-east Poland. My argument is that because of changes in the religious and societal landscape, Greek Catholicism is becoming more bounded in what its leaders consider to be 'pure' tradition, and that tradition is increasingly being centrally defined. The main question I address is, how do believers of various generations practising an eastern Christianity but acknowledging the pope as their head respond to the strengthening of religious boundaries 'from above'?

7.1 Greek Catholic Syncretism

Syncretism has been defined as 'the temporary, ambiguous coexistence of elements from diverse religious and other contexts within a coherent religious pattern' (Pye 1971: 93). It is a process in which 'elements of two different historical "traditions" interact or combine' (Stewart and Shaw 1994: 10). Anti-syncretism is resistance to the mixing of elements from different cultural sources. Anti-syncretists attempt to maintain what they consider to be pure tradition. Charles Stewart and Rosalind Shaw (1994) suggested investigating these two processes together.

These definitions of the terms do not presuppose that syncretism has something like a beginning and an end – that a pure tradition existed, from which syncretism departed and to which practitioners might return (Stewart 1999: 41). Syncretism is not a transient stage that will disappear when assimilation occurs (Stewart 1999: 41). Because even the most traditional religions 'suffer' from syncretism, a more precise focus is needed. Stewart and Shaw (1994) looked at the politics of religious synthesis in the form of competition between discourses about syncretism and anti-syncretism and argued that religion was not only about purification (anti-syncretism) but also about ongoing syncretism. An anthropology of syncretism requires understanding the way zones of purity and hybridity come into being. It is concerned not with pronouncing a particular religion syncretic or otherwise but with competing discourses over mixing (Stewart 1999: 55).

The dominant reading of syncretism and anti-syncretism is not unique to the domain of religion but also applies to nationalist policies and narratives. In both domains it involves purity and authenticity – the 'essential', allegedly innate parameters of human collectives. Several writers (van der Veer 1994b; Stewart 1999) have discussed similarities between syncretisms in the religious and national domains. Peter van der Veer (1994b), for example, examined similarities between debates over multiculturalism in secular nation-states and debates over syncretism in societies where religion played a crucial role. Looking at south-east Poland, I extend this discursive model of syncretism and anti-syncretism to include certain structural parameters. As I argued earlier in the book, power relations in post-peasant south-east Poland are determined by traditional social structures – family networks, the intelligentsia, and institutional churches. To understand syncretism and anti-syncretism in this post-peasant context therefore requires a focus not only on 'discourses about religious purity and mixture' (Stewart and Shaw 1994: 7) but also on the broader institutional basis of power relations and on the politics of commemoration.

Chris Hann observed that although 'practised' religion remained an important east-west boundary marker, the Greek Catholic Church had proved to be a case of syncretism that had complicated the east-west dichotomy since it first appeared in Eastern Europe (Hann 2003a: 228). Especially at times of increasing national identification, an enduring east-west dichotomy in religious practice contributed to the differentiation of the population into Poles and Ukrainians (Pospishil 1989; Stępień 2000). Because religion served as a primary differentiating factor in establishing and nurturing nations in south-east Poland, the key to understanding a nation either as exclusivist or as inclusive, tolerant, and pluralist lies to a large extent in understanding the role of religious syncretism and anti-syncretism.

In the following section I want to illuminate what Hann (2003a: 223) saw as 'complex social and political processes rather than a "civilizational" divide between East and West'. To shed more light on these processes, I first take an historical look at what might be called the Greek Catholic politics of religious synthesis. The conditions favouring or weakening a specific Greek Catholic tradition have varied over more than four centuries, but the anti-syncretic stress placed by power holders on embracing a separate tradition reached peaks during the times of Ivan Mohyl'nyts'kyi (1778–1831) and Metropolitan Andrei Sheptyts'kyi (1865–1944) and from the late socialist decades onwards.[100] The most recent politics surrounding Greek Catholic synthesis is related to the implications of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), the consolidation of the religious landscape in postsocialist Poland, and the state's recognition of minorities. The politics of commemoration has remained essential for the experiencing, adopting, and contesting of this synthesis.

The Union of Brest (1596) opened the way for more frequent borrowings between the eastern- and western-rite churches. The Uniate (Greek Catholic) Church accepted organizational structures analogous to those of the Roman Catholic Church along with Roman Catholic dogma and some religious practices. 'Latinizations' were introduced into the Greek Catholic Church through the initiative of bishops and clergy (Pospishil 1989: 204), not least to distance Greek Catholic worship from Orthodoxy. The newly rigid hierarchical structure made Greek Catholic clergy pay more attention to prescribed forms of worship than they had done under looser rules prior to the union.

These processes were strengthened after the provincial Synod of Zamość in 1720, which institutionalized some Greek Catholic practices (Stępień 2000: 91). Many Latinizations were approved for Uniates at this synod, which was dominated by Basilians (Himka 2005: 27). Greek Catholic clergy who feared a move towards Orthodoxy or the irreligious socialism that some streams of Ukrainian nationalism appeared to be following (Pospishil 1989: 212) tended to defend 'Catholicism'. On the other hand, Greek Catholic identity was particularly shaped in relation to Ukrainian national identification (Himka 1990, 2005; Stępień 2000), and Ukrainian nationalism favoured the expurgation of Latin elements from the Greek Catholic Church.

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[100] The historian Stanisław Stępień (personal communication) corroborates my threefold division of the making of the Greek Catholic tradition: the Austrian period, which I name after Mohyl'nyts'kyi, the national period, which I name after Sheptyts'kyi, and the present period, following the Second Vatican Council. In Stępień's opinion, however, the present period should be divided into two: before and after 1989.

Pope Leo XIII's 1894 encyclical *Orientalium dignitas ecclesiarum* rejected Latinization and supported the preservation of the eastern-rite churches united with Rome (Pelikan 1989: 4). Metropolitan Sheptyts'kyi of L'viv-Halych subscribed to this program, and the encyclical became, according to Jaroslav Pelikan (1989: 4), the 'Magna Carta of a program for the intellectual reunification of East and West that would not merely not require but would prohibit "hybridism" and the sacrifice of Eastern identity for the sake of unity'. Sheptyts'kyi was oriented toward the unity of Christendom. His view on liturgical reform, for example, was to find a form of worship acceptable to all (Pospishil 1989: 213). One of his reforms was to establish the Studite monks (1907), the first monastic community in the eastern branch of the Catholic Church, which supposedly represented a return to the contemplative character of ancient monasticism as preserved in the liturgical books of the Orthodox Church (Pospishil 1989: 214).

Concerning the liturgy, Victor Pospishil (1989: 202) recognized three problems Sheptyts'kyi confronted when he became a bishop in 1901. The first was the need to achieve uniformity of worship in Greek Catholic churches, especially in rites surrounding the Eucharist. Ultimately, this problem was solved only with the publication of liturgical books produced in Rome in the 1940s. The second problem was the elimination of Latin or Roman liturgical influences, which was eventually achieved with the publication of *Ordo celebrationis* in 1944, the year of Sheptyts'kyi's death.[101] The third was the need to provide the faithful with forms of worship that reflected modernization (Pospishil 1989: 202). In sum, Sheptyts'kyi's times were important for the re-codifying of a tradition on which later modifications of Greek Catholic worship were built.[102]

The implementation of the reforms took a long time. The biggest obstacle was the prohibition of the Greek Catholic Church in Soviet Ukraine. Moreover, at the time the liturgical books were published, many bishops and clergymen already opposed the church's tendency towards 'Byzantinization'. But the new generation of priests in emigration subscribed to the reforms (Pospishil 1989: 221). The changes also found fertile ground at the

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[101] This book described for the clergy how to perform the liturgy, how to make the signs of the cross, how and when to bow, how to use incense, and so on; it also described the essential features of the interior of a church (Pospishil 1989: 220).

[102] In addition, many Greek Catholic eparchies chose the Gregorian calendar (*novy stil*) over the Julian (*stary stil*) at this time (Stępień 2000: 100). In others, such as Przemyśl, the liturgical year has followed the Julian calendar up to the present day.

Second Vatican Council, where Iosyf Cardinal Slipyi (1944–1984), a follower of Sheptyts'kyi's, further relied on *Orientalium dignitas,* thus continuing the development of an 'eastern' Catholic identity (Pospishil 1989: 221).

The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church was underground in Ukraine, but better conditions for spreading these changes existed in Poland, where the church continued to function under the umbrella of the independent Roman Catholic Church during the socialist years.[103] This might explain why the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Poland seems to be more 'Byzantine' (that is, anti-syncretic) than the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in nearby L'viv, which shows many more signs of east-west mixing. Although nationalism played an important role in this east-west divergence of formerly united Ukrainian Greek Catholics – religious identification with the 'East' strengthens Ukrainian minority identity in Przemyśl, for example – so did the independent position of the Catholic Church in communist Poland, which made possible the implementation of the changes agreed at the Second Vatican Council.

Even after the Union of Brest, the eastern Catholic churches maintained separate codes of canon law. The first attempt to codify eastern law, under the title Codex Iuris Canonici Orientalis (Code of Eastern Canon Law), was partially completed under Pope Pius XII in 1948. In 1959, Pope John XXIII suspended work on it, because the expected reforms of the Second Vatican Council would affect the code. The Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium (Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches) was promulgated in 1990. The majority of the canons correspond closely to the Roman code, but they incorporate certain differences in hierarchy, administration, and other areas.

Greek Catholicism has continually been made and remade 'from above', a process that has accelerated at certain times. Changes made at the top level of church politics have gradually but increasingly come to define Greek Catholic identity on the ground. Later in the chapter I show how the church's driven anti-syncretism is being accommodated by clergymen and believers in south-east Poland. First, I want to illustrate how the religious-national synthesis has been reconstituted through the politics of commemoration.

7.2 The Mohyl'nyts'kyi Commemoration

During the lifetime of Ivan Mohyl'nyts'kyi, Galicia was under the rule of the Austrian Habsburgs. Empress Maria Theresa (r. 1740–1780) had proclaimed the Roman Catholic and Uniate churches to be equal and renamed the latter the Greek Catholic Church (Himka 2005: 27). Mohyl'nyts'kyi, therefore, makes a good symbol connecting this important time in the Greek Catholic and Ukrainian past with the equally important present, when the church and the nation have become secure after decades of suppression under state socialism, when an independent Ukrainian state has been established, and when the European Union is considered to guarantee minority rights. Mohyl'nyts'kyi's role as a priest in Przemyśl, as an intellectual, and as a national awakener makes him particularly suitable for legitimating the present Greek Catholic religious synthesis through the politics of commemoration.

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[103] The Polish Primate also had the rights of a Greek Catholic bishop and received direct instructions from the Congregation of Eastern Churches in the Vatican.

Among the early promoters of the Ukrainian/Ruthenian national awakening in Galicia were Bishop Mykhailo Levyts'kyi (1774–1858) and the eparchial canon, Ioann (Ivan) Mohyl'nyts'kyi, who in 1815 initiated the establishment of the first Ukrainian educational and religious organization, the Association of Greek Catholic Priests in Galicia (Societas presbyterorum graeco-katholici Galicensium).[104] Mohyl'nyts'kyi published a Greek Catholic catechism in the Ruthenian/Ukrainian language in 1815 and a spelling book for Ruthenian/Ukrainian primary schools.[105] After the establishment of the Teacher's Institute in Przemyśl in 1817, he became its first director and teacher. In 1829 he wrote a defence of the Galician Ruthenian language, which he saw as an independent Slavic language, different from Polish and Russian. Many later Ukrainian linguists would take inspiration from his works.[106] Mohyl'nyts'kyi also became a member of the regional parliament and entered the ranks of the nobles. After he died of cholera in 1831, he was buried in a Przemyśl cemetery that no longer exists. In 1902 he was ceremonially re-interred in the Main Cemetery and his crypt was re-erected there.[107]

One hundred years later, a librarian at the Greek Catholic cathedral, Mr Bylyi, initiated the restoration of Mohyl'nyts'kyi's crypt at the Main Cemetery. In July 2005 I joined him and two other men, the art restorer Yuryi and his assistant, who were making the last repairs to the crypt. Besides an old, barely legible inscription, I noticed a new inscription in contemporary Ukrainian. I was told that the marble canopy and the cross with Mohyl'nyts'kyi's coat of arms as a member of the eparchial canonry had been newly added to the original crypt by the architect responsible for the repair project. While fixing the last details on the tomb, Mr Bylyi explained how the renovation had started:

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[104] For more details about the role of Przemyśl in the Ruthenian/Ukrainian national awakening of the first half of the nineteenth century, see Stępień 2005.

[105] As mentioned in chapter 2, not until the 1890s did the Ukrainian intelligentsia adopt *Ukrainian* instead of *Rusyn/Ruthenian* for designating their national community (see Magocsi 1998: 440).

[106] The intellectuals Markiian Shashkevych (1811–1843), Iakiv Holovats'kyi (1814–1888), and Ivan Vahylevych (1811–1866) were the most important ones. They formed the cultural program for the unity of Ukrainian lands and of the folk language as the basis of a new national literature. It stressed the links between the present and the glorious past of Kievan Rus and the Cossacks, and it pointed to the peasantry as the most valuable element of the national community (Brock 1992: 25).

[107] For more details, see Stępień 1999.

> Once … I started to write down the names of the dead in the cemetery. Sometime in 2002, after finishing my work, I went to the cemetery and stayed late. I walked and made notes … I was mostly interested in the Ukrainian graves, because these were not on the official lists. After the exodus of Ukrainians there was no one who could remember who had been buried in which grave. I came to one of the crypts and realized it came from the first half of the nineteenth century. A faintly visible *Kriloshansky* cross [pertaining to the Greek Catholic cathedral chapter to which Mohyl'nyts'kyi belonged] was engraved on the front plate, and this made me aware that this was a Greek Catholic grave. Since the inscription was unclear, I started to look in the archives to find out which important personality the grave belonged to.

After the librarian proved that this was the grave of Mohyl'nyts'kyi, he received support from the parish priest. They decided to renovate the crypt:

> We kept the original crypt, the plate, but all the other elements were newly built in order to stress the importance of Mohyl'nyts'kyi. His great intellect can be appreciated only by scientists, historians of culture and literature, linguists … I asked for contributions worldwide, especially through academic links. Initially, I did not want to address this call to people who were unaware of Mohyl'nyts'kyi's importance … Later, articles appeared in journals; I organized an exhibition about my findings, and even the local Polish press noticed it … I collected almost twenty thousand złotys [about five thousand euros] … After people read the articles they decided to donate money. Before that they had thought it was one of the many priests' graves in the cemetery … I am pretty sure that if I had not started to look at it, this trace of Mohyl'nyts'kyi would have disappeared.

On the evening of 4 July 2005, a ceremony was held in the Main Cemetery to dedicate the restored crypt and commemorate Mohyl'nyts'kyi. The majority of the seventy to eighty participants were elderly people, but the key clerical and intellectual leaders of the Ukrainian community were also present: the director and teachers from the Ukrainian school, the priests, the Greek Catholic sisters, and donors of funds for the crypt renovation, among whom were several local entrepreneurs. Apart from several journalists, I noticed no Poles attending the event. A group of guests also came from L'viv, including representatives of the associations of former inhabitants of the Przemyśl area. Many participants brought flowers in the Ukrainian national colours. After a short funeral liturgy headed by the archbishop metropolitan, the parish priest, and other clergymen, the metropolitan read a sermon centred on the importance of the Eucharist and the role of the clergy:

> Now we stand in the ancient cemetery where some twenty of our priests are buried … It is a great history of these men, chosen by God. We particularly commemorate one of the priests who accepted the faith and was a teacher of the faith, who transmitted the faith to the believers, looked after the faith and attempted to live by it … [That priest] was Ivan [Mohyl'nyts'kyi].

Then the archbishop read a summary of Mohyl'nyts'kyi's life and emphasized that 'language is a possession of every nation, and no one is allowed to forget the language of his parents'. He criticized 'de-nationalization' and mentioned that the language promoted by Mohyl'nyts'kyi was 'rich and equal to other languages'. He highlighted the historical context of its appearance:

> Russia, as usual, attempted to suppress Ukraine, called it Little Russia; that language was proscribed there, people did not use it. Even in Lemkovyna [the Lemko region] it did not appear, but [Mohyl'nyts'kyi] nevertheless wrote the first spelling book in the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria ever used in our schools. He also wrote the first catechism, and in order to show the quality of that language he also published the first book of logic … As the first theoretical writer, he wrote the first grammar. One priest only was able to do all this! … This is our pride, dear people of Przemyśl … Today, many people in Ukraine forget that everything started in Przemyśl! … As you can see, from this grave grows a unique tree, a new life. Is it not a symbol that from the grave of a man who did so much for his church and nation grows such a tree? We all, our church, the clergy, the students, came from that wood … According to God's words it seems improbable that people like him would disappear. They live forever! … The generations after him have been building the church. They have been afraid neither of Moscow nor of Rome, which exerted pressure to limit them, those Greek Catholics–Uniates … They [Moscow] write letters to Rome just in order to eliminate Uniates, to forbid them from praying, to erase them. But the Greek Catholics will remain! That church will survive because it comes from the nation! It is as strong as that tree and will flourish

> and grow! But this depends on our faith … Nobody can destroy God's work. Amen!'

After these words, the archbishop led the liturgy and prayers dedicated to Mohyl'nyts'kyi. He sprinkled the crypt with holy water and drew the smoke of incense over it. Then he gave the floor to Mr Bylyi, who said, 'Most of the time the cemetery is a place for sad events, but now we are celebrating. Today, a *mohyla* [tomb] that had been forgotten for sixty years has become a beautiful monument, with the first *Kriloshansky* cross made out of Ukrainian granite.' From the time of Action Vistula until now, he said, there had been no one to take care of Ukrainian graves. 'Thanks to God's guidance, a miracle happened … and thanks to donations we managed to finish the job within two years.'

Могильницький Іван

Plate 20. The grave of Ivan Mohyl'nyts'kyi at Przemyśl Main Cemetery.

The next speaker was a woman of about forty, the recently elected head of the Przemyśl Association of Ukrainians and a teacher at the Ukrainian school. She said:

> We, the people of Przemyśl, are not always aware of what kind of land we walk on and what kind of tombs we pass by. We teach history but do not know how to draw properly from the source that should give us more strength. The greatest men of our culture, our religion, and spirituality used to walk this land … Our priests, our natives were able to uphold three schools on this land, but we have just one today. Do we deserve that school? We, the children of this land, the parents who send their children to this school, do we deserve it? The personality of this priest [Mohyl'nyts'kyi] shall show us the way to go. We learn about that way from the past; we live in the present for the future.

Plate 21. The Ivan Mohyl'nyts'kyi commemoration, Przemyśl Main Cemetery, 4 July 2005.

The parish priest then gave the final thanks and underscored the need for donations for the restoration of other graves in the cemetery. 'The national wisdom says that the graves give testimony about the culture of the nation. We are a nation of high culture, and we patiently take care of the tombs of our brothers, from whose wisdom we are learning; they show us how to build our church and our social-political future.' After the final liturgy, some people lingered at the crypt to talk and take photographs, and the donors and other important guests were invited to dinner.

The restoration and dedication of Mohyl'nyts'kyi's crypt illustrate the intersection of the politics of religious synthesis and the politics of commemoration. They reveal the interconnectedness of enduring national and religious traditions. As the archbishop stressed, the church would persist because the nation needed it and nurtured it. Other speakers emphasized the importance of the national language and the role of the clergy as leaders. The discoverer of the tomb stressed the way in which the Ukrainian Greek Catholic community was excavating its lost glorious past and the need to learn about that past. A burial ceremony is a life-cycle ritual of an individual person, but through the politicization of an important person, the ritual can become important for an entire group, such as a nation (Verdery 1999).[108] It traces the nation's origin to historical times and builds solidarity within the faith-based community. The Mohyl'nyts'kyi commemoration helped instil in individuals their 'national memory' and reminded them of their religious tradition, with one of its heydays as far back as early Austrian times. Mohyl'nyts'kyi also served as a reminder of the importance of the clergyman-intellectual in post-peasant south-east Poland today.

The role of intellectuals in the nineteenth-century national awakenings in Eastern Europe has been widely studied, as have their later roles in building new states, opposing communism, and drawing the initial projects of the post-communist moral order (Eyal et al. 1998). The Polish intelligentsia enjoyed considerable social prestige and played an important part in the reconstruction of Polish identity and statehood; the intelligentsia transformed itself into a permanent element of the social structure and even now substitutes for an almost non-existent bourgeoisie and middle class (Zarycki 2000: 867). The Greek Catholic Ukrainian intelligentsia in Poland, consisting mostly of priests, teachers, and engineers, has come entirely from the peasant rank since 1947, when the expelled Ukrainians exchanged land for education as their main family investment. The members of this intelligentsia are important in guarding religious-national patrimony and fostering traditional power relations.

Nevertheless, it would be simplistic to think only within the framework of an elite-driven politics. For broader insights, I next trace the major features people recognize as characteristic of their Ukrainian Greek Catholicism. First I focus on younger people and people with higher education, and then I present some opinions from among ordinary Greek Catholics of the older generations.

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[108] For a similar example in the case of Israel, see Weingrod 1995.

7.3 The Byzantinization of the Greek Catholic tradition

The historian Stanisław Stępień (2000) differentiated four processes defined in terms of an east-west continuum that had operated under the institutional umbrella of the Greek Catholic Church. 'Occidentalization' was an intellectual movement of church theologians, artists, legal thinkers, and educators. 'Latinization', a process linked to practised religion as opposed to the orthodoxy of the official church, encompassed the forms of preaching, liturgy, and popular devotion that the eastern rite borrowed from the Latin rite (Stępień 2000: 92). Similarly, 'orientalization' in the Greek Catholic Church was linked to the civilization of eastern Christianity as a whole, whereas 'Byzantinization' was related to the rite itself – the forms of Greek Catholic religiosity as practised (Stępień 2000: 92).

Following Stępień, I refer to various features of popular Greek Catholicism as results of Latinization. These include a particular form of the Marian cult, rosary and pilgrimage practices, and the cults of holy places, water sources, and holy pictures. The blessing of food, on the other hand, is considered to have come initially from the East and to have been adapted to Roman Catholic practice, as are visits to graves at Easter, the blessing of water, and the popularity of icons in Roman Catholic worship. Although I am aware that a widespread, long-lasting syncretism exists on the ground that cannot easily be attributed to any particular church or rite, I refer to this syncretism as the Byzantinization of the Greek Catholic tradition.

Because it is religion rather than nation that serves as a primary marker of group difference in Przemyśl in everyday life, it is necessary to look closer at the role of religion in creating and maintaining difference. A perspective on Greek Catholicism – the way it is practised and the kinds of identity narratives that underpin it – complicates the east-west dichotomy. Although Greek Catholics in Przemyśl tend to see Orthodoxy as the religion next 'closest to their hearts', they also identify with what are considered to be Roman Catholic institutions, symbols, and practices. One young Greek Catholic priest explained to me that his church's belonging to Rome was most important, but the phenomenon of Ukrainian nationality intervened, so that many people agreed about the church's greater unity with Orthodoxy. Occasions such as the eastern Christian Jordan ceremony, he said, were generally considered to be Ukrainian patriotic demonstrations as well as religious events. Another Greek Catholic priest stressed that all the discussions about the relationship between Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism were wrong, and one had to understand the Union of Brest as a return to the unity and the roots of the churches and not as the establishment of a new church.

Plate 22. The blessing of food in front of the Greek Catholic cathedral in Przemyśl, Easter 2004.

Once I asked a Ukrainian entrepreneur, an engineer in his mid-forties, what it was to be Ukrainian in Przemyśl. He replied: 'I go to our cathedral, I have a strong national consciousness, and at home we speak Ukrainian and observe our religious holidays.' A journalist friend of mine, while criticizing his young Greek Catholic priest for being more Uniate than Ukrainian, explained that Greek Catholicism was close to Orthodoxy; it was a mystical religion in which one could directly sense God's energies. He also pointed out the absence of compulsory celibacy and the less hierarchical organization of the Greek Catholic Church: 'We Greek Catholics are different, less dogmatic than Roman Catholics,' he said. A twenty-three-year-old student at the Jagellonian University expressed his dissatisfaction with the restoration of the Greek Catholic cathedral in Przemyśl, which he saw as the

> unsuccessful rebuilding of a church into a *tserkva.* It lacks the mystery, the spirit of the true *tserkva.* When you enter the true *tserkva* it is something completely different from when you enter the church. There are icons, the whole building, and an iconostasis. This cathedral has an iconostasis, but that does not make it a *tserkva* … In stressful moments you can find peace in true old *tserkvy* … Orthodoxy is tied to culture and nationality. I am Ukrainian, and Orthodoxy is the major religion in Ukraine. It is the closest religion to

> Greek Catholicism, much closer than Roman Catholicism. It is not closer through the clergy but closer by spirit.

In another discussion about the cathedral, a sixty-two-year-old Ukrainian intellectual pointed out:

> Certainly, the Greek Catholic Church is tied to Ukrainian culture. This religion and the feeling of history and nationality are impossible to separate from each other. As a Galician Greek Catholic I can only be Ukrainian, and vice versa. Also, the true *tserkva* is the true *tserkva!* It is not large, but intimate. The iconostasis lends an aura that no other Christian religion has ... Our current Greek Catholic cathedral is too large; the little iconostasis is dominated by other artefacts. In the little wooden *tserkvy* it is the iconostasis that dominates. Because of this, Przemyśl Greek Catholics are more likely go to the Basilian *tserkva,* which is smaller and maintains intimacy. In the Jesuit church [now the Greek Catholic cathedral] there are three aisles; the Carmelite church [the former Greek Catholic cathedral] has just one aisle. It was chosen [as the cathedral] at the end of the eighteenth century because it was more intimate; the interior was more suitable for Greek Catholic worship.

One of my neighbours, a retired engineer, used to say that the eastern Christianity practised in Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches was a more truthful tradition of Christianity than Roman Catholicism. A forty-four-year-old musicologist from Przemyśl, a devout Greek Catholic, loved the Church Slavonic liturgy for its greater mysticism and religious vitality – for what she saw as its 'living archaism'. Nevertheless, she recognized that some people did not understand it, and so she condoned the use of Ukrainian as the current liturgical language.[109]

Yuryi, age thirty-nine, the art renovator, was a well-known expert on eastern Christian art. He was responsible for supervising all restoration of sacred objects in the Przemyśl Greek Catholic archdiocese. He said that he wanted to restore the Greek Catholic Church to the glory it once enjoyed:

> Greek Catholicism is very much bonded to tradition; it does not like hypocrisy. On the one hand, it is very traditional, and on the other, it

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[109] Church Slavonic, used today in Orthodox churches, was also the language of the Greek Catholic liturgy before the introduction of national languages. Ukrainian began to be used in the Greek Catholic liturgy after the Second Vatican Council, but it was many years before believers accepted it. In Przemyśl this acceptance started in the 1980s, but even in the early 1990s Church Slavonic was still used occasionally, depending on the preferences of the priest and the cantor. On the other hand, sermons have been preached and some songs (carols, Easter songs, and so on) sung in Ukrainian since the mid-nineteenth century, and religious classes in the schools have been taught in Ukrainian (Stanisław Stępień, personal communication).

> is open to all new trends. The Greek Catholic Church is an Orthodox church; it has only been reformed … and the *tserkva* is its traditional sanctuary. Other religions made concert halls and gathering chambers out of their sanctuaries … My sanctuary preserved what had been by the creation of the world … My religion emphasizes my identity, the state of dignity – it is a state of mind … Look, Christian countries were against [mentioning] God in the EU constitution. I saw in Germany that religion was just a matter of conformity … In the west it is different from us. They are leaving religion, and therefore they have nothing to rely on. Today, open atheism is finished, and there has come an age of searching for traditional religiosity. As I saw in France, the holiest place had only a little Orthodox chapel, not any other sanctuary. It was a place of silence where man could be alone with God. There were symbols of the eastern rite; the west does not have it any longer. It is natural for a man to want to enter such a sacred place … In the west there is no mystery; in the western church everything is artificial.

Yuryi did not like seeing Latin elements in his church. Together with his colleagues, he led the rebuilding of the former Jesuit church into the Greek Catholic cathedral in the 1990s according to 'Byzantine' standards. Although he characterized Greek Catholicism as taking the best from eastern and western traditions of Christianity, he thought it remained much more eastern than western. As an example he mentioned Holy Communion. In the western church, the tradition was very feudal, he said; people knelt and remained subordinate to the priest. In the eastern tradition, people usually stood, and the level of equality was closer to that established by Christ. Moreover, in his view, Greek Catholic art was not inspired by secular works the way Roman Catholic art was. In the Byzantine tradition, artists thought about eternal issues, and the particularities of their works were determined by the biblical and overall religious rules of eastern Christianity. The eastern Christian artist had in mind 'the whole of the theology and symbolism of the East', he believed, whereas in the west, art dominated theology.

A painter who made a living by restoring and decorating *tserkvy* in Poland mentioned that the requests she received for paintings were now for 'pure Moscow' Byzantine art. But although Greek Catholic priests might ask her to paint a proper, traditional *tserkva,* she said, this type of Byzantinism had nothing in common with the regional tradition, in which many more Latin elements prevailed in decorations before World War II.

Once Yuryi took me to an icon museum in the town of Łańcut, eighty kilometres north of Przemyśl, where a great deal of *tserkva* art from Greek Catholic sanctuaries had been stored after the Greek Catholics were expelled. There he introduced me to a colleague of his, Jacek, an icon restorer. He had worked with Yuryi on the renovation of the Greek Catholic cathedral in Przemyśl. He said that because the building had previously been a Jesuit church, they had to retain certain elements of historical value, even though they had been asked to create an eastern-rite cathedral. Jacek and Yuryi believed they had won the competition for the restoration because other, older art professors had not offered such an ambitious – that is, Byzantinizing – project.

During Easter 2004 I had the occasion to speak to a former Greek Catholic student at the Przemyśl Roman Catholic seminary. Then studying in Warsaw, the twenty-five-year-old came from Ukraine and no longer wanted to enter the priesthood. He saw several differences between the eastern and western Catholic rites. The western liturgy, he said, was 'military' (*wojskowa*), and the eastern one, 'mysterious' (*tajemnicza*). Although he accepted that there were many Latin-inspired elements in the Greek Catholic Church, he stressed that those elements had been introduced and adapted by the Greek Catholic Church itself. The adoration of the Heart of Jesus, for example, was different in Greek and Roman Catholicism, as was praying to the Mother of God.[110] The Greek Catholic saints were common with those of the Orthodox Church, and the Greek Catholic calendar was independent of the Roman Catholic one. He also remarked that it would always be difficult to study proper Greek Catholic practice in Przemyśl, because the atmosphere there was too nationalistic. He himself became a Ukrainian patriot after his studies in Przemyśl, especially after experiencing the superiority of his Roman Catholic Polish colleagues, who looked down on Greek Catholics. In his perception, they believed the eastern rite was secondary to true Roman Catholicism.

Several themes emerged from my interviews with university-educated and relatively young Greek Catholics in Przemyśl. They considered Greek Catholicism an overwhelmingly eastern Christian tradition within the universal Catholic Church. Within this Catholic framework, people like Yuryi could imagine an even more straightforward purification than was happening at the time. For many ordinary people, the trend towards Greek Catholic purification might actually mean a move towards Orthodoxy, but the intellectuals, while rejecting as many Latin elements as possible in their Greek

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[110] With no equivalents in eastern Christianity, and combining Latin pious practices with Byzantine liturgical forms, two *molebens* (prayer services to the Holiest Heart of Jesus and to the Blessed Mary), the *Supplikatsiia,* the rosary, and the Devotion of the Stations of the Holy Cross were incorporated into Greek Catholic ritual towards the end of the nineteenth century. They became popular among believers, and new religious songs were dedicated to them (Pospishil 1989: 210).

Catholic practice, would hardly have signed up to any formal merging with Orthodoxy. For them, what Greek Catholic identity consisted of was clear: it was a return to the roots of true eastern Christianity within the Catholic Church.

A local historian commented that Greek Catholic clergy nowadays feared the 'stealing of souls' by the Roman Catholic Church less than they did during the socialist years. Because of the unavailability of Greek Catholic services during socialism, many Greek Catholics attended Roman Catholic services instead, and large numbers of them did not return to Greek Catholicism after 1990. But Greek Catholic priests now felt a growing threat from Orthodoxy, the historian said. As I was told several times in Przemyśl, a mutual, historically rooted tension existed between the clergymen of the two churches – I observed it myself in the behaviour of Greek Catholic and Orthodox priests at the Pikulice war ceremony and elsewhere on patriotic occasions – and a hidden competition over believers lived on. During the socialist years, the Orthodox Church took over many *tserkvy* as well as believers after the Greek Catholic Church *de facto* ceased to exist. There are still several villages in south-east Poland, including Kalników, Szczawne, and to some extent Komańcza, that opted for Orthodoxy not only in order to keep their eastern faith but also to attempt to escape expulsion. It might be counterproductive, a local observer claimed, for the Greek Catholic clergy to support a complete return to the pure eastern Christian practice. It was more convenient for them to keep the Latin elements that people liked most and if possible to give believers a new eastern rite with Catholic form and meaning. Although this process was progressing among younger and better-educated Ukrainians, for older Greek Catholics, as I show in the next section, it remained essential that the church maintain Latin practices and interpretations.

7.4 Popular Greek Catholicism

While waiting in the corridor of the Greek Catholic cathedral office in Przemyśl one day, I noticed pictures of first communions on the walls. The children were eight or nine years old; the girls wore white dresses. In Orthodox churches, children are allowed to take Holy Communion together with adults while still very small. After the Union of Brest, Greek Catholic children gradually were guided towards the Roman Catholic practice and began to take part in First Holy Communion at eight or nine. Along with the Greek Catholic bishops, the Jesuit fathers helped to introduce this new practice. This Roman Catholic inspiration took hold not only because clergymen wanted to control the form of worship but also for a much simpler reason: people liked these Latin elements, regardless of their location on the east-west scale.

Mr Wowk, age sixty-eight, lived in a socialist city block near the San River. A devout Greek Catholic, he moved to Przemyśl in the 1970s because of its functioning Greek Catholic parish. Before he retired he worked as a clerk in a state firm. For him, 'all the Christian religions are the same; only the liturgy is different', and Greek Catholicism was, first of all, an eastern-rite Catholicism of Ukrainian provenance. Although he thought the Greek Catholic cathedral did not fully conform to the pure Byzantine form, he felt the interior decoration was eastern enough. 'The former Jesuit history of the cathedral does not matter,' he said. 'I am concerned with God's things inside.' A retired woman who moved to the city in the late 1960s claimed: 'Our service [*nabozhenstvo*] is richer and longer than the Roman Catholic one; the funeral service also takes more than an hour. It is a deep and extraordinary ritual, but it is still first of all a Catholic religion.' My Ukrainian friend Maryjka once mentioned that her mother often jokingly commented that an organ – a Latin feature – was needed in a Greek Catholic *tserkva* to strengthen the singing of the old women and the cantor and make it proper.

One of the most visible Latin elements that is accommodated in Greek Catholic churches is the cult of the Holiest Heart of Jesus, which was widely accepted by Galician Greek Catholics towards the end of the nineteenth century (Pospishil 1989: 210; Stępień 2000: 95). This Roman Catholic observance was given a Byzantine flavour by making it the day of 'Christ, the Lover of Man', an angle propagated especially by Metropolitan Sheptyts'kyi. *Akatyst* (praying) dedicated to the Heart of Jesus was introduced for the third Sunday after Pentecost. Sheptyts'kyi argued that because the cult was unknown in Orthodoxy, giving it a Byzantine content would not only help to strengthen Greek Catholic identity but also provide a basis for further ecumenical activities with regard to Orthodoxy and its possible union with Rome (Stępień 2000: 97). Especially during the inter-war period, Latin pictures of Jesus with a 'burning' heart became common in *tserkvy* and private houses (Stępień 2000: 97). Because there are few apparent differences between Orthodox and Greek Catholic iconography, these paintings of burning hearts of Jesus, as well as paintings of the Mother of God, remain the easiest recognizable sign distinguishing a Greek Catholic *tserkva* or home from its Orthodox counterpart.

One elderly man, a choir leader for many years, explained the cult of Heart of Jesus in Greek Catholic practice in the following way:

> It is a Latin element. The holy father sacrificed the whole of the East [eastern-rite Catholics] to the Heart of Jesus and to the Holiest Virgin Mary, so why not accept it? There was a Bishop Kotsylov'skyi who officially introduced the cult of the Heart of Jesus to us. This is valid up to the present day. There are services and prayers to the

> Heart of Jesus. It has been like this in the past and it should stay the same today. I told our priests that they do not recite the parts of liturgy to the Heart of Jesus as long as they used to. They just mention Christ, the Lover of Man, as if it were the same as it used to be ... The liturgical form of the Heart of Jesus is there, I can recognize it, but the cult of the heart as such is not propagated as much as it used to be. [The Greek Catholic priests] cannot fully eliminate it, thank God, because people would start a revolution.

Maria, an older Greek Catholic woman considered very devout, would certainly have taken part in a revolution if the Latin practices she liked most were to disappear from the Greek Catholic liturgy. Before Easter 2004, I wanted to check on certain Greek Catholic procedures about which I was unsure, so I decided to visit Maria. She led a Marian circle (*Maryiska druzhina*), the Greek Catholic equivalent of the rosary circles of the Roman Catholic Church, which some Greek Catholic intellectuals see as a Latin element that should be eliminated.[111] Surprisingly, she was not fully able to help me, even though she consulted a Greek Catholic prayer book. She apologized by pointing out the underground position of the Greek Catholic Church and her frequent attendance at a Roman Catholic church while she lived in the north of Poland during the socialist years.

As a frequent listener to Radio Maryja, which most of my Ukrainian friends found unbearable because of its Polish nationalism, Maria was fully aware of current political issues but tuned in mostly because of the station's religious content. She listened to sermons and prayed when prayers were broadcast, kneeling at home and meditating even in the middle of the day. Although she nowadays attended *tserkva,* she remained open to and conscious of the universality of Christian devotion regardless of confession.

Pictures of Jesus with the Holiest Heart and of the Latin Virgin Mary hung on the walls of Maria's house. I asked about these pictures, pointing out that the Christ in them looked completely different from those in the icons in the Greek Catholic cathedral. She replied that Christ simply showed himself to a painter and the painter painted him according to what he had seen. This was why Christ in these pictures looked like the handsomest man on earth, with blue eyes and nice legs, she said. The same thing happened with the Mother of God, which made her look the way we know her from similar kinds of pictures – the fragile virgin, a girl with blue eyes dressed in white and perhaps a blue habit.

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[111] Marian circles, as well as Catholic Action – meant to attract laity into church life – were introduced in both branches of the Catholic Church at the beginning of the twentieth century (Stępień 2000: 98).

Some weeks later, on a Sunday, as we were on our way to see the house where Maria was born, we stopped in Chotyniec. After visiting the apparition site and the Chapel of Reconciliation there (see chapter 5), where the visionary took us for Roman Catholic pilgrims because of Maria's 'Latin' pious behaviour, we went to the ancient Chotyniec *tserkva.* Maria wanted to take a photograph of the Mother of God on the iconostasis. She said she was collecting photos and stories about miraculous Greek Catholic icons in the Przemyśl eparchy and planned to publish a book about them. I understood her proposed book as a kind of pilgrimage guide that would include stories and prayers, something my younger Greek Catholic friends would have disapproved of as another Latin borrowing.[112] Maria expressed enormous piety towards the icon. She stood in front of it for some time, crossed herself, and then meditated for a while, kneeling under it, something my Przemyśl friends would not have done. Kneeling was too strong a sign of Latinization for them.

Maria was also one of the older Greek Catholic women who liked the stations of the cross tradition. She and her devout women friends took part in rituals dedicated to the stations in the city. In Przemyśl these rituals were impressive public events organized by the Roman Catholic parishes. They included processions, enactments of the stations of the cross in the park, and theatrical dramatizations of the Via Dolorosa. In the Greek Catholic cathedral, the stations of the cross were installed around the walls, and a liturgy was held near them during a period of fasting. The service was attended mostly by old women, but pupils from the Ukrainian school also came with the order sisters who taught their religious classes. The stations of the cross were installed in the cathedral at the demand of believers and the priests. My friends the restorers of *tserkvy* saw them as a Latin disturbance of eastern theology.

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[112] In the eastern Christian tradition, miracles have never been as strongly regulated by church authorities as they have been in the Roman Catholic Church. Virtually every Greek Catholic village in south-east Poland has its own miraculous icon. One of these is on the iconostasis in the Chotyniec *tserkva.*

Plate 23. Decoration of the entrance to a private house before the Virgin Mary veneration.

Some Greek Catholics in Przemyśl, including Maria, wanted to follow the Roman Catholic practice of carrying and showing a copy of the icon called the Mother of God of Częstochowa in a house-to-house procession called a *peregrynacja*. These followers of Latin practices asked their priest to request that the Roman Catholics stop at the Greek Catholic cathedral, too, and then continue the *peregrynacja* to their houses. After being refused by their Greek Catholic priests, they asked at least to be able to bring their 'own' Greek Catholic Mother of God from Ukraine, to make a pilgrimage through the city, and to display it in private houses. A *peregrynacja* of the Mother of God from the Greek Catholic monastery in the village of Zarwanica, near Tarnopil, Ukraine, took place in Poland in 2002.[113] Such Mater Boza worshipping began in Ukraine in 1991, but the inspiration came from the *peregrynacja* of the Matka Boska Częstochowska, the Polish Roman Catholic Virgin. In western Ukraine, icons of the Mother of God of Częstochowa are popular not least because they are considered to have an eastern origin.

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[113] According to tradition, when Tatars attacked Kyiv in the thirteenth century, a monk from the Pecherska Lavra, a well-known eastern Christian monastic centre, escaped from Tatar captivity and took the icon with him. After a long walk westward, he fell asleep in a forest. The Virgin Mary came to him in a dream. Frightened, he awoke and saw a water source in front of him, and next to it an icon of the Mother of God with the little Jesus. As he under-

Another practice considered Latin that I observed in Przemyśl was the use of a bell during the Greek Catholic liturgy. The old choir leader whom I quoted earlier disliked the liturgy without it and helped keep bell-ringing alive at his *tserkva,* whereas some of my friends complained that it was a Latin relict. In other *tserkvy* of south-east Poland it was uncommon, partly because the bells failed to survive the socialist years. Although locals who remembered how things were before the war claimed that the use of bells was common in the Przemyśl eparchy, even there the practice was not universal. I was told that even in Ukraine, bells were used only in some *tserkvy,* mostly in cases in which people had kept the bells at home while the *tserkvy* were Orthodox. It seems that bell-ringing will die out in Przemyśl after the old cantor dies, but as one local said, 'Who knows whether another "granddad" from among his colleagues will not continue the tradition?'

The same might be said of the monstrance that was once used in processions and displays of the Holy Sacrament, another strongly Latin practice in the Greek Catholic churches. At the time of my fieldwork, few monstrances were being used in Greek Catholic *tserkvy,* and they were considered unnecessary for Greek Catholic worship. They are supposed to be made from gold and silver, so they are expensive, and people preferred to collect money for the renovation of *tserkvy.* The practice of kneeling during portions of the liturgy, too, was unsettled in Przemyśl. In villages such as Hrebenne, everybody followed the pre-war tradition of kneeling, which many young Greek Catholics saw as Latin. In Przemyśl the situation was confusing. Some people, especially the older ones, kneeled during the appropriate parts of the service, but others remained standing. Other everyday Latinizations appeared in the use of rosaries and the spread of Latin-style holy pictures. The clerical and lay leaders tolerate these elements, but younger and better-educated Greek Catholics increasingly find them unsuitable for Byzantine practice.

The devotional practices of people such as Maria and her fellow Greek Catholics of the older generations, from kneeling and bell-ringing to *peregrynacja,* represent an old form of syncretism that is slowly vanishing. Some Greek Catholics accommodated to these Latin practices during the communist years, when Greek Catholic services were unavailable, and some practices are the remains of pre-war syncretism into which people have been

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stood it, this was a sign that he stay and build a *tserkva* and monastery. I thank Stanisław Stępień for information about the history of the Mother of God of Zarwanica.

socialized. It appears that many of the practices I have mentioned, such as *peregrynacja,* were welcomed equally by Roman and some Greek Catholics both before World War II and during the socialist years. In the socialist period, a relative 'uncontrolled' image of Greek Catholic worship apparently existed in the parishes.

Today, the notion of what constitutes purity in Greek Catholicism is changing. In the case of *peregrynacja,* for example, instead of following the old practice of taking part in the procession of the Roman Catholic icon, the faithful bring in a 'pure' Greek Catholic icon from Ukraine. This trend towards insistence on the exclusivity of eastern practices is related not only to the effects of nationalist tensions, especially those of the early 1990s, but also to the new generations of Greek Catholics having been educated in the wake of the Second Vatican Council. The Catholic Church simply recognizes and defines more clearly nowadays what eastern-rite Catholicism is supposed to be. Nevertheless, the practice of 'Latin' rituals by older Greek Catholics is still widely tolerated, and all Greek Catholics, devout older woman and young intellectuals alike, claim that they look for true tradition as the source of inspiration. This means that 'purity' and 'syncretism' are not precise, discrete phenomena but elements in an ongoing discursive competition over the current religious synthesis. In this competition, institutionally determined power relations play a crucial role, as can be seen in the example of celibacy.

The 1891 Synod of L'viv introduced to the Greek Catholic Church the obligatory daily recitation of the breviary by priests, the preservation of the western Eucharistic rite, and the emphasis on a celibate secular clergy (Pospishil 1989: 212). Although celibacy might have been seen as an internal reform of the Greek Catholic Church, believers often perceived it to be an element of Latinization (Stępień 2000: 98). Celibacy was introduced de jure, but in practice it spread only gradually, depending on the local bishop. In the Przemyśl diocese, Bishop Josafat Kotsylov'skyi (1867–1947) introduced it as compulsory in 1925, whereas in L'viv, Sheptyts'kyi chose to persuade clerics to subscribe to it voluntarily, via education (Stępień 2000: 99). In the L'viv archdiocese only 5 per cent of priests were celibate in 1918, and only 23 per cent in 1938 (Stępień 2000: 99).

During the socialist years the Greek Catholic Church in Poland mostly adhered to the practice of celibacy, but some young priests married. My Greek Catholic friends were concerned about recent pressure from the Vatican and the Roman Catholic Church in Poland for stronger adherence to celibacy among Greek Catholic priests. Some young Greek Catholic priests avoid celibacy by travelling to Ukraine and eventually coming back married. This creates controversy, especially between Roman and Greek Catholics.

Some years before I started my fieldwork, a scandal arose when a Greek Catholic priest in the Przemyśl archdiocese had an illegitimate child with a local woman and was sent to Ukraine, away from the pressure of the Roman Catholic Church, where it was possible to sweep the matter under the rug. Another well-known story was that of the head of the Basilian order in Warsaw, who fell in love, left the order, and married. As a friend told me, this was a big stigma on the order and the entire Greek Catholic Church. This friend also mentioned a high-ranking Przemyśl clergyman, a celibate Greek Catholic priest, who was intolerant of his colleague's wives and of the marriage of priests in general.

Nevertheless, at the time of my fieldwork, the archbishop metropolitan tolerated married priests, and the majority of Greek Catholic believers appreciated them, seeing them as different from the Latin clergy. Several times I heard my Ukrainian friends refer to celibacy as 'sick' and the marriage of priests as 'normal'. But although a majority of Greek Catholics would likely see compulsory celibacy as a Roman Catholic dictate, some Greek Catholic believers, especially women, seemed not to deny it in their rite either. Subscribing to the common Roman Catholic interpretation, they argued that a priest should be married to his church and not be made vulnerable by having a family, which might prevent him from fully serving Christ.

Clerical celibacy will probably remain a questionable issue in Poland for some time to come. Taking into account the trend among Greek Catholics towards anti-syncretism and resistance to pressure from the Roman Catholic Church, I suspect that celibacy will slowly vanish from Greek Catholic practice in Poland. This will put Greek Catholicism squarely between Roman Catholicism and Orthodoxy, in which married secular priests form the overwhelming majority of the clergy. Whatever the future holds, this brief discussion of celibacy remind us that larger, institutionally determined features exist that do not leave local practices of syncretism or anti-syncretism on their own. If we consider another factor that operates at the local level but is influenced by forces coming mostly from 'above' – the factor of the nation – the picture gets even more complex.

The founders of the old faith of Kievan Rus, Princess Olga and Prince Volodymyr, whose statues stand next to the Greek Catholic cathedral in Przemyśl, link Ukrainian national mythology and eastern Christianity. This linkage marks the greater strength of the relationship between Greek Catholicism and Orthodoxy than of that between Greek Catholicism and Roman Catholicism. It also marks a complex set of relationships between Ukrainian nationality and Greek Catholicism. Because eastern Christianity is congruent with Ukrainianness, some Greek Catholic clergymen feel an increasing need to balance the two and avoid identifying their practice with Orthodoxy.

The contemporary Greek Catholic religious synthesis works in a way complementary to the politics of commemoration. Slow progress towards purification is evident, but elite-driven anti-syncretism can complicate religious practice for ordinary people. One example is Stepan, an accountant in his late forties who grew up in a religiously mixed family and was baptized in his father's Roman Catholic rite. Growing up, however, he felt closer to his mother's Greek Catholic practice. When he was young, a Greek Catholic priest told him that because he had initially been educated in the Latin rite, he could not feel the spirituality of the East. This saddened him, but he continued to practise eastern-rite Catholicism and still attended a *tserkva,* although he felt a certain stigmatization. His belonging in terms of East and West would have gone unquestioned during the inter-war period, but nowadays people like one of my neighbours, a teacher at the Ukrainian school, clearly perceive him as a Roman Catholic and a Pole.

Like a modern nation, so institutional religion operates within a framework of structural and narrative changes in society (van der Veer 1994a). As in the case of ordinary and artificial tolerance, the possibility exists for overcoming national exclusivity through syncretism in Poland, but so does the possibility for strengthening purity at the expense of plurality. That is, syncretism can be positively valued as a sign of tolerance or negatively valued as the corruption of purity (van der Veer 1994b: 209). The more syncretism in religion, the more tolerance and plurality in the nation. Essentialism in south-east Poland comes in part from structurally determined power relations that are expressed and negotiated through the politics of commemoration. This means that even potentially tolerant syncretism is not free of essentialism (see also Stewart and Shaw 1994: 22). The power relations in the postsocialist years, including the roles of the institutional churches within the state, the roles of the national intelligentsias, and discourses and policies concerning minority rights, help to create an essentialist view of religious-national cultures.

7.5 Conclusion

The politics of religious synthesis and the politics of commemoration help clarify what it means to be Greek Catholic in Przemyśl in the early twenty-first century. Syncretism in the Greek Catholic Church in Poland can be seen as the expression and practice of tolerance, and anti-syncretism, as a predominantly institutional attempt at purification. The dialectic between the two results in a new religious synthesis. Despite elite-driven efforts towards anti-syncretism, many features of religious syncretism remain alive among

Greek Catholics in Przemyśl. Although younger and better-educated Ukrainians tend to hold stronger opinions about what Greek Catholicism should be, for the moment this seems not to threaten the existence of mixture on the ground.

These universalistic claims, however, seem to be gaining little prominence among church leaders, either lay or clerical, who believe they see more clearly what proper tradition is supposed to be. Although syncretism will survive, it will probably be pushed aside in the dominant view of tradition. During the socialist period, as in Mohyl'nyts'kyi's and Sheptyts'kyi's times, greater syncretism existed on the ground than exists nowadays, when a novel synthesis is appearing. As a result of the new synthesis, with its anti-syncretic trend, the differences between what is considered Roman and Greek Catholic practice and tradition are now perhaps the sharpest they have ever been. As I show in the next chapter, a Ukrainian Greek Catholic 'culture' is appearing in Przemyśl, and it is nurtured by much greater forces than church politics and intellectuals.

Chapter 8

Tradition, Culture, Nature: Ethno-Revivalism and Social Change

> The defence against post-modernism is the return to romanticism.
>
> A Ukrainian poet in Przemyśl, July 2004

The negotiation and maintenance of boundaries is partly internal to religious-national groups, as we just saw in the dialectic between syncretism and purification within the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. But broader social processes in Poland and Eastern Europe also underlie the formation and maintenance of group boundaries. Complementary to the religious-driven essentialism described in the preceding chapter is what might be called a process of ethnic differentiation, in which a minority acquires value for its 'authentic tradition', 'distinctive culture', and 'closeness to nature'. In the 'ethnification' process, a once neglected and proscribed religious-national group may become a commoditized national minority. In south-east Poland, the organic narrative, nurtured by the politics of commemoration, fits well with Europe-wide and Polish state policies and discourses on national minorities, as well as with the demands of ethno-business and tourism.

To explore this ethnification process, I examine two consecutive versions, held in 2004 and 2005, of an annual ritual called Kupaly Night (*Nitsh Ivana Kupaly*). This adaptation of an ancient, pagan, summer solstice celebration, associated with St John's Day, has become an ethno-revivalist ritual in south-east Poland. As the two versions of the event show, broader political-economic forces related to tourism, heritage preservation, and the roles of the state and the media help to essentialize the Ukrainian religious-national minority in south-east Poland. Ordinary Ukrainians perceive the changes in the ritual with considerable ambivalence.

8.1 Kupaly Night 2004

Posada Rybotycka is a village some thirty kilometres south-west of Przemyśl, situated in the Wiar Valley amid the beautiful Przemyśl Hills (Pogórze

Przemyskie). It lies just an hour's walk from the pilgrimage sanctuary known as Kalwaria Pacławska, the Sanctuary of the Lord's Calvary and Mother of God of Kalwaria (Matka Boska Kalwaryjska), and a Franciscan monastery. The entire Wiar Valley was heavily Ukrainian before 1947, as several 'post-*tserkva*' churches in the area attest, and both Roman and Greek Catholic pilgrims saw Kalwaria Pacławska as their regional pilgrimage site. During and after World War II, partisans of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) operated in the forests of the Przemyśl Hills. Because of post-war international agreements and ethnic cleansings, most of the original Ukrainian inhabitants of the valley were moved to the area around Tarnopil in contemporary Ukraine, and the rest left during Action Vistula. They were replaced by Poles from inside Poland and from the western parts of what is now Ukraine.

Posada is now greatly diminished from its pre-war size. The wooden houses of Ukrainians were buried, and several dispersed cooperative dwellings replaced some of them during the socialist years. Only the ancient *tserkva,* the parish house, and the cemetery reveal the location of the old Greek Catholic village. Nevertheless, some of my Ukrainian friends said that Posada Rybotycka lay exactly in the heart of Zakerzonie, the part of Poland that had always been Ukrainian for them. These 'Ukrainian' mountains, together with the Bieszczady Mountains to the south, represented their homeland, especially because they were 'different from the Polish plains'. One friend explained: 'The Ukrainians in Poland have mountains in their genes. They are depressed if they live in the plains.' In his eyes, this was why so many of them decided to return to their mountainous south-east Poland, regardless of its painful memories.

In the 1950s these sparsely populated hills, with their ruined villages and *tserkvy* and their new settlers, indifferent to the land, became known as the 'wild east'. Today signs of increasing tourism are everywhere. The remains of *tserkvy* and cemeteries are being preserved and information plaques installed next to them. The region has been discovered for its 'authentic' tradition and 'wild' nature. A trainee working for an EU project in cultural heritage preservation said optimistically, 'The Podkarpacie region opted for tourism and history, and we will make a lot of money out of it.' This was to be achieved not only through preservation of the natural environment but also through the rich multicultural heritage of the region. I was told several times by Ukrainian friends that the EU would 'demand adherence to minority rights' in south-east Poland.

Increasingly since the 1980s, Posada Rybotycka and the surrounding area have become a tourist destination. Walking trails crisscross the area, and bicyclists like to ride there because traffic is light on the barely repaired roads. Two Przemyśl Ukrainians bought the old cooperative building, opened a pub in it, and offered accommodation to tourists. Another rented the former Greek Catholic presbytery and turned it into a tourist hostel. These people, active members of the Przemyśl Ukrainian community with economic interests, have been involved in reviving the village ritual called Kupaly Night. Together with young Ukrainians from Przemyśl and the Przemyśl branch of the Association of Ukrainians, they have since 2000 organized this annual event on the weekend before or after St John's (Ivan's) name day (the day of St John the Baptist, according to the Greek Catholic calendar). In 2004 it took place on the weekend after 7 July – on Saturday and Sunday, 10 and 11 July.

The festival has a clearly pagan origin. After the region became Christianized, St John's day merged with the old pagan summer solstice celebration. The eastern-rite churches were particularly relaxed about the pagan contents of the holiday. There is some evidence that at the beginning of the twentieth century, Kupaly ceremonies were also organized in Przemyśl, probably by the awakening Ukrainian intelligentsia. They were held annually in villages like Posada until the end of World War II. The ritual took place at sundown and involved people's singing folk songs and dancing folk dances around bonfires. It ended with participants' bathing in the creek; the term *Kupaly* is derived from the Slavic word for 'bathing'. Kupaly Night was supposed to be a night of love in the outdoors, and unmarried young men and women were expected to start relationships then.

The weekend before Kupaly Night in 2004, some young men from Przemyśl went to Posada to collect wood for bonfires, dam the creek with stones to create a small, temporary pond, and cut the grass in a nearby field where people would gather. They also prepared a campsite and set up a mobile bistro. Some weeks before, several organizational meetings had been held at the Przemyśl Ukrainian National House to settle financial and logistical matters. Leaflets had been printed and distributed, and the office of the Greek Catholic bishopric was asked to send a priest to conduct a Sunday service (*nabozhenstvo*). Two music bands were hired, one a world music group from the city of Krosno and the other a brass band from the village of Mostyska, Ukraine, just across the border. They were paid by the Ukrainian club – that is, with state money received by the Association of Ukrainians from its Warsaw headquarters.

On Friday some of the organizers returned to Posada to make final preparations, and on Saturday morning the participants began arriving. A stage and amplifiers were set up for the bands and other entertainers. Near the creek, benches arranged under a large tent awaited the guests, and next to it, a caravan offered fast food and beer. The bar in the former cooperative building was also open, serving beer, soft drinks, and ice-cream. Teenage girls from the Ukrainian school in Przemyśl, who would be the main actors in the nighttime ritual, collected wildflowers and practiced singing and dancing for their performance. Young men cut additional wood, drank, and sang folksongs nearby.

Besides the local Ukrainians and a few young Poles who probably had close relationships with Ukrainians, a group of men with TV equipment walked around and chatted. They had come from Kraków regional television to film the event for the TV series Ethnic Climates (*Etniczne klimaty*), a monthly program for and about the national minorities and ethnic groups in Poland. Among the journalists was the dark-skinned moderator of the program, Brian Scott. He described himself by saying, 'I am the only black Polish journalist. I have done a lot for the coloured people in this country. I am their guy in the Polish media.'

Scott had come to Poland twenty years earlier from one of the African countries friendly to socialism. He studied journalism in Kraków, married a Polish woman, and stayed. Before jumping into public television, he said, he had been a pioneer in commercial radio in Poland after 1989. Since 2000 he had been a freelance journalist. He produced Ethnic Climates together with the initiator of the series, the experienced journalist Waldek Janda, whom he characterized as 'an engine of ethnic programs in the public media and of programs about minority and ethnic groups in Poland'. These programs, transmitted throughout Poland as well as regionally, were about 'Slovaks, Kashubs, Bielorusyns, and other minorities and ethnic groups'. As Scott stressed, he and his colleagues worked to help minorities keep

> their identities, their culture, their religion, cultural events, sport, etc. [We are interested in] young people, old people, places of tradition, maybe their past. [We focus on] things like monuments, cemeteries, [and] schools. [We want to know] in what ways the national minorities in Poland are keeping their identity. Who is helping them? Is the Polish state doing enough for them? And the local authorities, municipalities … what do they do for them?

The journalists saw their role in the program about Kupaly Night in a similarly 'ethnographic' way, as Brian Scott put it. This time it was the Ukrainian minority they were going to 'do a lot for'. When I spoke with the journalists, Waldek Janda opened a discussion of Ukrainians in Poland by saying: 'Because the system of singing in *tserkvy* is multi-vocal, the Ukrainians are extremely musical.' Scott added his impressions: 'Ukrainians and Lemkos sing beautifully! My wife and I spent an Easter with some Lemkos. These people were happy when I arrived and showed my respect to them, to their culture … I observed how they made a circle around the *tserkva,* how they sang. The old women kept asking me what I had come for, and I just replied that I wanted to spend their Easter with them and to know their culture.'

Almost every regional radio station broadcast a program the journalists characterized as 'ethnic'. These programs were usually transmitted in Polish, but with parts presented in the language of the minority on which the program was focussed. A Ukrainian-Lemko program was broadcast from Kraków every day, and the Kashubs had their own program on a station in the north of Poland. As Janda explained, however, the 'Kashubs are just an ethnic group, not a minority, because they mostly feel they are Poles'.

After this discussion, the journalists got to work. For the rest of the day, everything that happened in connection with the Kupaly celebration was adjusted to their wishes. While the participants continued their preparations, Scott and Janda interviewed some of them. One was a professional restaurateur from Przemyśl, age thirty-eight, who explained her view of 'culture':

> I come from Podlasie, and we all have eastern roots there. I am a woman of the east … My husband is Tatar and Muslim, our son is a Pole, but he was baptized in a *tserkva.* He likes *tserkvy* very much, but churches too. With me it is the same. I am a conglomerate of cultures and I am enjoying it. Because of this I have a different perception of the world. I feel that I have a different sensitivity. I have nothing against 'otherness' … On the border there are two types of people, those who see 'otherness' as an obstacle and those who draw an advantage and inspiration from it. I belong to the second category. I draw from other cultures the best they can offer. It is a source of inspiration for me.

Later that afternoon one of my Ukrainian friends, age twenty-three, also talked about being 'other' in Poland. 'It is fine to be different,' she said. 'You have more possibilities, you speak another language, know another culture. It is an advantage.' These were the sorts of replies Scott usually got to his question about what it was like to live in 'two cultures'.

While the journalists and I discussed Ukrainianness, the young men next to the creek had begun grilling sausages. Two middle-aged women in folk dresses put the finishing touches on an exhibition of Ukrainian folk dishes, and some folk artists set up tables near the creek where they would sell folk dresses and hand-made artefacts of straw and wood. Some older men prepared a banner in Ukrainian promoting Kupaly Night and hung it over the road. They also raised a Ukrainian flag. Other men helped to herd some goats from a van into the middle of the field, where, together with some chickens and dogs, they were supposed to be the living part of the folk exhibit. People who were not engaged in the preparations enjoyed their drinks. Other people, some of them in folk costumes, played games in the water with the children. The picnic was gradually warming up, and more and more people, Poles and Ukrainians alike, were arriving from the city. People sang folksongs near the creek. Old and young ate and drank together.

Plate 24. Presenting Ukrainian dishes on Kupaly Night in Posada Rybotícka, 10 July 2004.

The presentation of Ukrainian food started with a butter-making competition. A woman of around forty then introduced the national cuisine. Another woman asked the men who were observing to help with the cooking, and two agreed to help prepare the Ukrainian soup *borshch.* A microphone and camera followed the presenter as she cooked and commented on how to prepare the dish:

> Now we will show how to prepare Ukrainian *borshch,* the basic dish cooked in Ukraine since the old times. The basis is fermented beet or rye juice. On feast days the *borshch* was boiled in the broth; on work days it was cooked with fried bacon with onions. In addition, it can be combined with cabbage, beans, or peas. The soup is supposed to be dense, and the spoon should stand up in it.

She further explained: 'The fermented juice [in *borshch*] is as important in our cuisine and tradition as lard [*salo*]. Wherever there was a rich family, they consumed a lot of lard; where there were poor people, they did not.'

When the *borshch* was ready, the crowd waited in a queue for Brian Scott to arrive. The food was left untouched until, smiling into the camera, he began to eat. People generally perceived this part of the event to have been made for a television audience, and some young men, encouraged by alcohol, made fun of the journalists.

In the parish house several hundred metres away, children and adults took part in a workshop in icon painting on wood and glass.[114] The organizers stressed that while painting, the participants learned about the old, vanished Ukrainian tradition. All the while, folk or folk-like music was being played, either from a tape recorder or by the live bands. As evening approached, the crowd grew larger. People came by car, bus, or bicycle. Many of them pitched tents, planning to stay until Sunday. Local journalists from both the print media and the regional TV Rzesów stood ready to do their jobs. After sunset, everything was ready for the Kupaly ritual, and several hundred people awaited the performance.

The signal came when the young men participating in the ritual lit bonfires. Once the fires were burning, the young women performers, standing on the opposite side of the creek, began singing songs about love and nature. They wore folk dresses and had garlands of wildflowers on their heads and chests. Camera flashes began to light up the dark valley. One girl appeared from the dark and sang, and the others answered. Holding hands, they made a queue and moved closer to the water, leaving a space for the girl coming out of the dark. She walked to the middle of the circle the girls made after approaching the creek, and all the girls danced slowly into the water.

The young men, in folk dress, helped with the singing and were supposed to make their own circle around the girls. Some people recognized that there were too few boys to surround the girls – they were either too shy or too drunk to take part in what some of them saw as a dull, old-fashioned ceremony. The boys who did take part approached the girls' circle, broke it apart, and began to chase individual girls. When a boy caught a girl, he took her hand and they stepped back into the dark. According to pagan myth, they should have jumped over the fire together, sung a song about the time of Kupaly, and then gone into the forest, where, under the St John's moon, they would have had sexual intercourse and produced a child to be born in March of the following year.

As enacted in 2004, the ritual took between thirty minutes and an hour. Near the end, the girls threw their garlands into the water, and the boys were supposed to collect them as they flowed along the creek. Instead, the boys playfully attacked the girls and pushed them into the water. All this was accompanied by interrupted singing, the girls' screaming, and erotic tension. The observers smiled, made joking comments, and began to leave as the ritual fell apart. Some of them covered their drenched girlfriends, daughters, or sisters with towels. The regional journalists ran to their offices to prepare the news, and most people went home to Przemyśl. Those who stayed continued to sing and drink. The men moved to UPA songs about shooting, heroic military life, and tragic love, going on until sunrise. Those who stayed in Posada went to their tents or hostel rooms.

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[114] An icon painting school known as the Rybotycze School was located at the medieval Orthodox monastery in Posada (see Aleksandrowycz 1994: 284).

The next day, Sunday, was St John's Day, which was celebrated with a religious service in Posada's old stone-walled *tserkva*, dating to the fifteenth century. Unlike many other *tserkvy* in the valley, the one in Posada had never become a Roman Catholic church. After several years of dilapidation, it was taken under the supervision of the National Museum of Przemyśl Land and turned into an open-air museum. In the late socialist years the museum began to repair the building, but for lack of money, the work was never completed. After 1989, although no Greek Catholics lived permanently in the village any longer, the former Greek Catholic presbytery was given back to the Greek Catholic Church. In 2005 the *tserkva* was given back as well. On several occasions throughout the year, Greek Catholics from Przemyśl attended services in one of the empty *tserkvy* across the region; after the annual Kupaly Night, they came to Posada. For these people the *tserkva* and the entire valley were among the most important signs of their Ukrainian roots. One of my friends explained that they could feel the ancient tradition and rich eastern Christian culture in this special place for Ukrainians.

On Sunday morning, buses and private cars began arriving at the *tserkva* from Przemyśl. The attendees were all Ukrainians, mostly older people and young families with children. The youths who had stayed overnight either slept in or started partying again. Because the campground and the Kupaly field lay several hundred metres from the *tserkva,* the silence around the old building was broken only by the sounds of people chatting under the trees. After we entered the *tserkva,* one member of the tiny Orthodox community in Przemyśl said to me quietly, 'It smells of Orthodoxy here … the Greek Catholics moved away from Orthodoxy, but they did not accept Catholicism either.' Looking around, he commented, 'We [Ukrainians] do not know how to make money. There are buses of tourists coming here, and even on this occasion we could have sold some publications, collected money for reparation of this *tserkva.* The Roman Catholics know how to do it, but we do not.'

The young priest who was officiating apologized for the absence of the Przemyśl parish priest and the archbishop; they were accompanying the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, Major Archbishop and Cardinal Lubomyr Husar of L'viv, on a visit to a Greek Catholic community near Lublin. If they had been in Przemyśl, the priest said, they would probably have come to Posada that morning and joined their parishioners' picnic in the afternoon. Then he began singing the liturgy. During the sermon, he avoided speaking about the previous night's Kupaly ceremony. Instead, he stressed the importance of the ancient *tserkva* for Greek Catholic Ukrainian identity. In his interpretation, this *tserkva,* 'built on Peter's stone', symbolized the 'living faith of our ancestors'. Man was nothing without faith, he said, and believers should take inspiration from the lives of men of faith such as Cardinal Sheptyts'kyi (1865–1944) and Cardinal Husar (b. 1933).

After the service, people chatted in front of the *tserkva.* Music sounded from the veranda of the parish house, where the journalists from Kraków shot additional footage for their documentary after filming in the *tserkva.* Music also came from the field near the Wiar, and people walked back and forth between the two places. Onstage at the field, the cultural program was starting, with performances by the music bands. From inside the pub one could hear the 'Wild Dances' song of the Ukrainian pop star Ruslana, winner of the 2004 Eurovision song contest. Many families held picnics; men drank beer and vodka. It was Sunday afternoon outdoors, and people enjoyed being together. They sang repeatedly, and some of them danced to the music being played onstage. In the late afternoon people slowly left the village. Only some young people stayed until the next day, and some of the drinkers even longer. The organizers began cleaning the field.

Some days before Kupaly Night I accompanied one of my informants, a pious neighbour, to the Basilian *tserkva* in Przemyśl. After the service we stopped at the information table. Because we had talked that morning about the forthcoming Kupaly ceremony, she asked a nearby monk why there was no advertisement for it on the table, in case, as she put it, 'our people plan to go there and want to prepare for it'. The priest answered that Kupaly was a pagan ritual and priests did not take part in it. My neighbour replied, 'But your job is to bring people to the faith, and that occasion offers an excellent opportunity to do so.' She tried to convince the monk that because the holiday was the name day of John (Ivan), it was a Christian holiday that reminded people about St John the Baptist.

She failed to interest the hurried monk, however, and could not understand his negative reaction. For her the seemingly pagan aspect of the event was unproblematical, as indeed it was for most other ordinary Greek Catholics in Przemyśl. It was an authentic ceremony rooted in the traditions of the ancestors. Some days later another informant, a thirty-five-year-old woman, explained the tension over the Kupaly ritual in the following way: 'It is a festival of vitality, life, energy, a festival of the body, even the affirmation of the body. I like that. It is the opposite of what the church's holidays are about. The church does not like the body; the church deprecates it.'

Clearly, some tensions exist between clergymen and secular intellectuals over their perceptions of the two separate but interrelated festivals, the pagan Kupaly Night and St John the Baptist Day. This tension confirms that the once relaxed position of the Greek Catholic Church towards popular forms of religiosity has changed. It reflects the doctrinal consolidation of the church and its more restrictive view of popular religious traditions nowadays, a view sometimes at odds with that of an independent body of ordinary believers, many of whom, as I discussed in chapter 5, are outspokenly anticlerical. Nevertheless, the two groups find some common ground in the view that both festivals are close to nature, a part of ancient traditions, and representative of a distinctive culture. Some intellectuals, having investigated the origin of the Kupaly ritual, take the ideological view that the tradition should be resurrected 'as it used to be' and employed to give meaning to the collective existence of Ukrainians.

One such intellectual was Oleg, the forty-year-old activist, journalist, and poet I introduced in chapter 3. He was one of the main initiators of Kupaly Night celebrations in the Przemyśl area. Oleg said:

> The greatest number of problems in eastern Europe appear in the borderlands … There is nothing to be studied: it is clear – it is about the human psyche – people need to hate someone … People cannot learn not to, it is naturally inside them – they need to hate, even though they know each other very well and are neighbours. Learning about tolerance is a naïve enterprise and an obsession of Western scholarship.

According to this view, human behaviour is innate and cannot be rationally explained; it can only be felt. One finds this view in various modern ideologies, not least in nationalism. It offers an explanation of who the Ukrainians are, what they feel or should feel, and what their authentic tradition is.

Referring to the Kupaly ceremony, Oleg said that it had been known from ancient times 'in our westernmost Ukrainian lands, and the ceremony had survived, especially in its most natural sites – [along] the river San.' The ceremony had died out after World War II, he said, but not for long. In 2000 it took place in Posada Rybotycka for the first time since 1947. As he wrote in a leaflet describing the ritual, it appeared 'in the same form and style as in ancient times … The return of Kupalo [the old pagan god] was natural and pleasant. The love ceremony of the Ukrainian ancestors was warmly welcomed by contemporary Ukrainians, and they sang to Kupalo with love!'

According to Oleg's interpretation, Kupalo was an ancient god of Ukraine, and Kupaly Night was

> the most beautiful of the pagan nights … it is the night of love of our ancestors … Kupalo is the god, the time [of year], and the power. On the forefront is power, because Kupalo is the most beloved power of our ancestors. It has its greatest strength on 7 July [24 June], the day of midsummer. It is a specific time: the Sun-Yarilo bends over Mother Earth with its most intense heat. Then it dies towards the autumn. People behave like the sun and the earth. They feel them and in their human way reflect the cosmic pair of lovers. The ceremony of Kupaly Night is an attempt to reconcile interior and exterior sides – the cosmos of the world and the cosmos of the individual … It is the most voluptuous and fertile period in the yearly cycle – the plants grow well, the days are longest, the earth becomes the warmest. The plants, water, and dew become magic … A very long time ago our ancestors did not know a better wedding time than Kupaly Night. On this night, during the love games over the water and in the woods, they used to meet in couples … and sixteen-year-old girls used to come home with lovers. They carried in their wombs the foetuses that would be born in March the coming year, when on the horizon the sunny young Yarilo appeared again.

Oleg's style may be uniquely poetic, but his description sheds light on the narratives that underpin the construction of Ukrainian identity in south-east Poland. This construction is full of rural features, unbounded wilderness, natural virility, and an authentic 'culture' relying on ancient tradition.

Oleg also offered a less metaphorical interpretation of the Kupaly ritual:

> It is an attempt to return to the ancient traditions that were present in these areas. It is not an activity against polonization, it is an attempt to exist, to continue being as we once used to be … Everything was mutated after Action Vistula. We try to remember if we can. There are still people who took part in Kupaly Nights before 1947, and they say everything we do here is fine; they commemorate that time with us … We keep in touch with the old rhythms of nature. This is a nice event; the young people do not need to be addicted to a consumption life-style but celebrate their beauty in the rhythm of great old traditions … The event is open, as the entire cosmos is open … In Poland and in Ukraine in recent years the Kupaly traditions have been revived. Something is in them … They give something to us … Only the girls change [each year]; the ritual remains the same … It is

> the same time, the same tradition, and the same rhythms across the ages.

Another friend of mine, a forty-year-old co-organizer of Kupaly Night, made it clearer how this old Ukrainian tradition was being rediscovered:

> There are certain centres such as schools and *tserkvy* that take care of one's nationality. But there are also informal activities like this one in Posada. I myself have observed that even people who did not grow up aware of their Ukrainian origin, who were not taught by their parents about their Ukrainian history, now search for it themselves ... Most of the people here come from the Przemyśl region, but gradually people from all of Poland learn about this event ... This is not a national ghetto. We want to show outsiders how rich Ukrainian culture was and what its range was and in this way break some stereotypes.

A twenty-three-year-old male student of Ukrainian philology at the Jagellonian University in Kraków contributed a similar thought: 'We live in Poland, among Poles, in their culture. At the same time that we are Polish citizens, we are Ukrainians. We create our own culture, keep our own old traditions. We have fun, drink beer, dance with girls seemingly in the same way as Poles do, but a bit differently.'

Several weeks after Kupaly Night in 2004, on Ukrainian Independence Day (24 August), I recorded a discussion held by some young Ukrainians who were celebrating in Posada Rybotycka. One of my friends, a thirty-four-year-old woman, criticized her boyfriend, whom she called 'my UPA soldier', and his friends for 'ghetto-izing' their group:

> I grew up independently, outside of your closed community. There is unanimity [among you]; all of us should think the same. Ukrainians expect an apology [from Poles for their injustices], but I do not expect it. I do not feel it. We are expected to wear folk shirts, go to *tserkva,* sing Ukrainian songs, speak Ukrainian at home, attend boring Shevchenko academies in the Narodnyi Dim ... and I would like to be a Ukrainian atheist, for example. I do not want to fit into all these expectations, and at the same time I do not want to be excluded from this community. Allow me to be a Buddhist Ukrainian, if I decide to; allow me to be original ... There is a feeling in our community that if you do not conform, you are not 'ours'. You are a traitor instead.

The young men around the table tried to explain that it was important to keep the traditions alive, or the nation would die. Places like Posada were to them the most suitable places for celebrating these traditions and strengthening 'our identity'. One of them replied to the woman, 'I could have made a career in Toruń, but I decided to come back. I returned to my roots. I grew up in this culture, in this ancient city. You, too, returned here; you also have your roots here.' The woman's boyfriend added, 'There is a foundation [in tradition], something you can build on.' She replied: 'You are like a herd! … We have roots here, but nothing good grew up from them. I am nervous because of the Zakerzonians. Those who did not suffer have the most hate.' She was referring to her generation of Ukrainians in Poland, who could not remember Action Vistula but nevertheless subscribed to commemorating it.

The discussion went on, covering the role of tradition, its authenticity, and how it should be seen and celebrated today. The woman represented an exception to the view of most conscious Ukrainians about their national collective, a view that indeed conforms to her image of an inward-looking ghetto. After several years of living in Przemyśl, a teacher who had moved there from L'viv characterized the Ukrainian community in Przemyśl as existing between two poles. One was life as if in an 'open-air museum' (*skansen*) emphasizing folklore, language, and religious exclusivity. The other was assimilation – that is, polonization – which the community feared. For her, the example of the old-fashioned names that local Ukrainians gave their children, such as Oksana, Orest, Olga, and Overian, confirmed that they had chosen the former option. Contemporary Ukrainian culture did not exist in Przemyśl, she said; it was a 'culture of the nineteenth century'.

This 'nineteenth-century culture' exists not only in Przemyśl. It is observable elsewhere among populations recognized as national minorities in Eastern Europe, and I believe it is an inherent part of nation-state and European heritage. As I discuss shortly, it reflects the changes contemporary Europe is undergoing. First, however, I want to look at the ambivalence the Kupaly ceremony raises.

During and after the Kupaly ritual in Posada in 2004, many of my friends characterized it as 'the end of romantic times'. They were referring particularly to the increasing commercialization and 'media-ization' of the event. Although people wanted to show their rich Ukrainian culture to a Polish audience and welcomed journalists to the festival, at the same time many felt offended by the publicity and noted a loss of authenticity in the once intimate community celebration. One participant, age thirty-six, commented:

> I take part in Kupaly every year. I like to go there. I liked it most at the beginning, when everything was fresh; the emotions were authentic … I liked that it was not an artificial resurrection of folklore but an authentic experience and a kind of fun with that folklore … After a couple of years, however, I grew to like the event less – the routine, schematic activities, the tape players as the basis for the

> girls' singing, and so on. Also, a lot of beer showed up … But I still go there. It is one of the few [Ukrainian] events also attended by Poles … They go there because they really want to go; it is interesting for them, and I like it that they integrate with us, even if only to have a beer with us. Apart from that, there are the beautiful natural surroundings. Activities like this should be organized in such post-Ukrainian places.

The husband of my pious neighbour in Przemyśl also acknowledged the changes. He remembered Kupaly Night as the 'feast of love, a kind of combination of pagan-Christian tradition … when youths jumped over the fire'. Now everything seemed less authentic to him. Many young Ukrainians said that Poles attended the ritual only because it was 'an attraction'. Ola, age twenty-three, remarked that it was 'an artificial party now; everybody is filming it just because it looks exotic'. Many other people commented that each year the event had become more commercialized. Food, drinks, and folk artefacts had begun to be offered for sale, and the event was now advertised and covered in the media.[115]

Kupaly Night is one of the newly revived ethnic celebrations observable across Eastern Europe. In nationally homogeneous Poland, such celebrations are usually valued by the few remaining groups of non-Poles, but 'Polish' local traditions, folklore, and rustic images of the countryside are also undergoing a significant revival. The Polish state, a member of the European Union since May 2004, emphasizes the importance of minority 'cultures' and applies a 'cultural policy' promoting the celebration of diversity. Although events like Kupaly Night are often perceived as strengthening multiculturalism in Poland, they have also become excellent commodities for sale to tourists. They 'folklorize' and 'organicize' distinctive collectives and thus construct them as natural. In this way Ukrainians live 'close to nature' and have a distinct culture and an ancient tradition. As the Kupaly ceremony in 2005 reveals, many actors in the ritual were aware of its commercial development and attempted to change it.

8.2 Kupaly Night 2005

On 2 July 2005, Kupaly Night was organized near Przemyśl's city centre, next to the city's best-known hotel and near camping facilities and a sports stadium. In the afternoon, Przemyśl's new 'Švejk's tourist path' was officially opened. A part of the open-air re-enactment of 'Švejk's Manoeuvres', it was intended to serve as a reminder of old Austrian times and to become a magnet for tourists. The Kupaly ritual, performed by a student folklore ensemble from Ukraine, took place in the evening around a bonfire in a large field in the San River floodplain. A covered stage with lights and technical equipment was erected next to the hotel and was surrounded by kiosks offering folk crafts, folk dishes, and books. Farther in the background were two fast-food tents. The hotel sold beer and hosted an icon-painting workshop for children.

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[115] An older, bigger, and better-known event, the Lemko bonfire (*Lemkivska vatra*) – the twin of Kupaly Night – corroborates the observation that popular ethnic festivities are becoming increasingly commoditized in Poland. The annual Lemko festival, held since the 1980s at the end of July in the village of Zdynia in the Carpathians, attracts sponsorships – big breweries compete over the monopoly for selling beer at the festival, for example – and is also financed by the state.

Plate 25. Men in World War I Austrian uniforms at the exhibition of the Museum of Przemyśl fortress.

This year the newly elected leaders of the Przemyśl branch of the Association of Ukrainians had managed to get organizational and financial support from the Przemyśl city council. The mayor himself opened the festival, stressing the need for Christian understanding of St John's Day instead of the pagan holiday. The program was moderated by a local journalist and the new head of the Przemyśl Association of Ukrainians. Unlike in 2004, the main language of the event was Polish, though Ukrainian was also used. Several thousand people were present at the climax of the ritual. The crowd was so large that only a few dozen people were actually able to observe the performance around the bonfire and in the river.

Plate 26. The stage on Kupaly Night in Przemyśl, 2005.

Before the nighttime ritual, as a choir performed artistically arranged Ukrainian folksongs onstage, I asked one friend, an immigrant from Russia who had lived in the city for several years, why he thought the Kupaly celebration had been moved from Posada to Przemyśl that year. He replied:

> It is the fashion today; Ukraine is in the headlines … The city council gave money for it, [whereas] before they did not. If there had been no Orange Revolution [the change of regime in Ukraine in 2004–2005], they [local Ukrainians] would have been sitting in Posada all the time. They were there among their own; nobody intervened in what they did. Here, you know that they [local Ukrainians] want to show up … They might wish to include it [Kupaly Night] in the Galician Festival next time, and then it will move quickly, you will see! You know, everything is about politics.

Plate 27. The Kupaly ritual in Przemyśl, 2 July 2005.

Later I met two young women from Sanok wearing folk dresses and waiting to go onstage. They criticized the performance given by students from the Przemyśl Ukrainian school, which they saw as artificial and lacking authenticity because it included folk music from a synthesizer, percussion from loudspeakers, and well-prepared choreography. They told me the students had performed dances from 'the steppe', that is, from eastern Ukraine. The two women said that they themselves sang proper Carpathian songs in an authentic form, without electronic instruments.

At that moment the moderator introduced two national dances that were about to be performed, clearly differentiating between the Polish polonaise and the Ukrainian *kopak*. One of the women commented that the event had seemed much more 'alive' and natural the previous year in Posada. What we were observing seemed to her more like a folklore festival. Meanwhile, students from the Ukrainian school began dancing onstage, watched carefully by their choreographer, who was from Ukraine. After this performance, the icons made by the children in the icon-painting class were auctioned off, the money earmarked for charity. The highest bids were made by a local entrepreneur and a visitor from Canada who, like many other Canadian Ukrainians every summer, had come to see his homeland.

My Ukrainian friends observed that more Poles attended the event in 2005 than the year before. They appreciated this, arguing that it helped to strengthen mutual sympathies between the two nations. Olga, age thirty-five, said that in this way, 'reconciliation is actually coming'. Nevertheless, some of my friends also remembered the intimate atmosphere of Kupaly Nights of previous years. In Posada they used to bring their own sausages and grill them and drink their own beer and vodka. Here, food and drink were for sale, and the event seemed impersonal. Oleg attributed the lack of intimacy to the fact that the stage was distanced from the people. Olga suggested that the best thing would be to organize two Kupaly Night celebrations – an official one in Przemyśl and a private one in Posada. One elderly man remarked simply that in Posada the atmosphere was better, but he believed that most Ukrainians saw the event in Przemyśl as successful. They particularly liked the public presentation of their Ukrainianness in a city that, owing to its nationalist tensions, had not long before been called a 'dark fortress' (*ciemnogród*).

Late the next afternoon, Sunday, I sat with some local Polish intellectuals in a pub on the main square and talked about Kupaly Night. They agreed that it was the best thing that could have happened for Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation in Przemyśl. One of them commented: 'It was all a horribly artificial performance – the worse disco music I ever heard – but we will not tell [the Ukrainians]!'

In Posada Rybotycka, late on the night of 2 July, the atmosphere was depressed. The grass had been cut in just a small area near the road, and only about twenty young people were gathered around a fast-food caravan selling beer and sausages. The old wooden stage from previous years was half-covered by a tent, and music sounded from a tape-recorder. The entire night was a drinking session, and no performance took place. On Sunday morning people shared food and the remaining drinks, and during the day they bathed in the creek. The boys continued grilling, and some played football; others dragged the girls into the water – to remind them of Kupaly Night, they said. These people called their event the 'concurrent' Kupaly. Anka, age twenty-two, explained: 'I can have fun in Przemyśl every day. Here there is fresh air and nature. What can you do in the centre of the city? I hope next year Kupaly Night comes back to Posada.' Aska, age twenty-five, added:

> Posada is itself a magnet. In Przemyśl there is nothing to be attracted by, and after 10 PM one must remain quiet. Two or three women in the Association of Ukrainians decided in favour of Przemyśl because in their opinion everybody wants just to get drunk in Posada. In addition, they think it has less effect here than in Przemyśl. But not all Poles want us there. Last week there was a concert by a Ukrainian

> band on the main square, and drunken Poles made silly comments about Ukrainians.

People had got used to Posada, she said, and every year more and more people had attended the event there.

Around noon on Sunday, two friends from Przemyśl arrived by bus and joined the group. They brought the news that an excellent party had been held in Przemyśl, but the atmosphere of Posada was missing. Andryi was the only one of the original Kupaly Night organizers who decided to hold the event in Posada that year. He said his friends had betrayed him when they agreed to hold the ritual in Przemyśl. He still hoped that the following year he would be able to bring Kupaly Night back to Posada: 'They [the new leadership of the Ukrainian Association] were saying that people just drink here. But it is a pagan festival – people have to drink! It turned out so well last year – two thousand people attended. The old inhabitants of Posada from Ukraine were planning to come this year, but they could not [because of the change of venue].'

To Andryi it was unfair to move the event to Przemyśl. He remembered that in 2000 the Kupaly celebration had been a voluntary event, and no one asked for a salary. Today, professional organizers and professional ensembles were hired. A company even contracted to supply toilets, he said. In Posada, one of his friends from a nearby village had come to cut the grass with a tractor, and Andryi had bought food and beer to sell at his small hostel in the former parish house at almost no mark-up. He lost not only his illusions about the intimacy of Kupaly Night, he remarked, but also some modest earnings and possible publicity for his hostel.

Andryi and some of the others believed that the Kupaly celebration had moved permanently to Przemyśl, 'the emotional centre for Ukrainians'.[116] Business in Posada seemed to be over and would never come back. One of the two people who had turned the former cooperative dwelling into a hostel was planning to sell out his share, and the two had closed their pub. I heard some gossip that Ukrainians with economic interests had caused the Kupaly location to be changed, but Andryi did not want to talk about it.

It seemed certain that in future, the costs of advertising and subsidizing the event would grow. The city would contribute to the costs, as would the central office of the state-sponsored Association of Ukrainians in Poland, which included Kupaly Night on its official calendar of activities. Kupaly Night was no longer a spontaneous, voluntary, local ceremony but an ethno-festival organized by professionals. Many individual Ukrainians felt ambivalent about this kind of development. They were annoyed and disturbed by the growing ethno-business, the activities of the media, and the way their rustic tradition attracted Poles. In this sense, as Jon Mitchell (2002) observed for Malta, the Kupaly ritual expresses and accommodates the dilemmas and ambiguities inherent in modernity itself, which also has a tendency to divide the world into 'modern' and 'traditional'.

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[116] In 2006 the event took place in Przemyśl, but still, ten to fifteen friends met in Andryi's hostel in Posada the night before.

8.3 Multiculturalism and Tourism

Virtually all my Ukrainian friends appreciated the political side of the event in Przemyśl, the presence of numerous Poles, and the city council's interest in co-organizing it. Unlike Andryi and a few of his friends, the vast majority of Ukrainians I talked to wanted to keep the event in Przemyśl and show their 'rich Ukrainian tradition' to a wider Polish audience. They believed that more consumers and tourists would attend the festival in Przemyśl and that more politicians, who would be deciding on subsidies for national minorities, would notice it there. Kupaly Night in Przemyśl indicated not only the consolidation of Polish-Ukrainian relations and an artificial tolerance resulting in multiculturalism but also the growing importance of the ethno-business and heritage industry. As a friend reminded me, people in the villages of south-east Poland nowadays thought differently from the way they used to: 'There is a lack of *tserkvy,* and it would be nice to have some more, to show them to tourists.' The commodification of tradition offered a means to achieve greater prosperity.

The return or revaluation of tradition in Europe is connected to the decentralization of policy-making and the increasing role of regionalism and cultural policies (Boissevain 1992) as parts of the 'People's Europe' model promoted by the European Union (Shore 1993). The revival of ethnic rituals is explained as a response to various social-structural changes in European societies. Among these are tourism, people's reactions to new cultural models introduced from above, commercialization, liturgical changes after the Second Vatican Council, and the growth of the electronic media (Boissevain 1992: 16, 1996). South-east Poland intends to build its modern European future on tourism, for which a distinctive regional culture is particularly valuable. Increasing numbers of new members of the intelligentsia are being produced in high schools and universities in Poland where Ukrainian philology and regional studies (*regionalistyka*), for example, have been introduced, and these people will care about 'culture'. Although they are seen as necessary for assisting in the growing commerce between Poland and Ukraine, many of them will certainly end up in tourism, one magnet of which will be 'exotic' Ukrainian culture.

What does this culture look like? In chapter 6 I mentioned a discussion among some intellectuals about the exceptional level of spirituality and emotionality that supposedly characterized Ukrainians because of their religious socialization in *tserkvy*. To repeat a quotation from chapter 4, another Przemyśl intellectual claimed that 'the Slavic nations think with the heart, not with the head'. I often heard from my Greek Catholic friends that the straightforward mentality of Ukrainians contrasted sharply with the Polish mentality, which was more calculating and utilitarian. Similarly 'natural' seems to be the view of church art and liturgy that I described in chapters 5 and 7. One painter explained that the eastern Christian icon originated in Constantinople but 'became warmer' in a Slavic environment. Once I was told that the renaissance of *tserkvy* and of interest in eastern Christianity in Poland came from 'nostalgia for what has passed away'. Ukrainians are a 'strong nation', and Poles are 'Slavs with an eastern soul'; they look for spiritual inspiration from the East, a Polish restorer said. This person also observed that the *kościół,* the Roman Catholic sanctuary, was *chłodny,* 'calm', and the *tserkva* was *ciepla,* 'warm'. The Greek Catholic ex-seminary student I mentioned in chapter 7 characterized this difference using the oppositions 'military' and 'mysterious'. A former Greek Catholic cleric described the major deficiency of his community as that of 'lacking a writer who can … write what is in our souls!'

I heard many times, from Poles as well as Ukrainians, that eastern Christianity represented continuity and a return to tradition, to an original, 'natural' Christianity characterized by purity, authenticity, and archaism. Throughout the postsocialist world, people are enchanted with forms of spirituality (Potrata 2004), and in south-east Poland this enchantment manifests itself in the special popularity of eastern Christian images and practices. As Jonathan Friedman wrote (1994: 243), 'traditionalism is expressed in the desire for roots, the ethnification of the world, and the rise of the "fourth world", the return to religion and stable values'. This search for identity in the face of rapid social change – something that Boissevain (1984) and Mitchell (2002) observed on Malta – might have been behind the growing political significance of religious-nationalist festivities in postsocialist Przemyśl. Nowadays, non-religious festivals such as Kupaly Night are also gaining popularity in south-east Poland. They reflect the way 'modernity is now generating the pressures that give rise to play' (Boissevain 1992: 15), and their traditionalism is dispersed among ideas and practices of fashionable multiculturalism.

8.4 Conclusion

The changing ethno-revivalist ritual of Kupaly Night unites two themes linked to the politics of commemoration. On the one hand, it incorporates a traditional narrative of Ukrainian existence in south-east Poland that is complementary to the narrative driven by religious professionals and religiously committed intellectuals, which I presented in chapter 7. In this vein the celebration reflects a move away from religious-supervised national rituals and towards more popular ones, outside of the religious domain in south-east Poland. On the other hand, the church remains involved in the business of ethno-revivalism, directly through its ongoing supervision of the nation and indirectly through its architectural artefacts and 'exotic' eastern practices, which attract tourism. The common ground between these two sides of the Ukrainian ethno-revivalist movement is a narrative based on exclusive tradition, deep spirituality, bounded culture, and closeness to nature. The revival is nurtured by Europe-wide and nation-state policies and discourses on 'culture' and national minorities, as well as by demands from the growing ethno-business and tourism sector. As I summarize in the next chapter, the politics of commemoration in the post-peasant setting of south-east Poland feeds and is receptive to what I call post-peasant populism.

Chapter 9

Conclusion: Post-Peasant Society, Populism, Multiculturalism

> A historical consciousness will be the foundation of the Fourth Polish Republic. The awareness of history is one of the characteristics differentiating the Fourth Republic from what has been before.
>
> The speaker of the Polish Sejm, March 2006

The historical city of Przemyśl is important for two religious-national collectives, Roman Catholic Poles and Greek Catholic Ukrainians. Despite the history of ethnic cleansing and the dominance of Polish Roman Catholicism in south-east Poland, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic community managed to emerge from a clandestine existence into the public sphere after 1989. Despite structural modernization, peasant memories have not been erased in the region, and some social practices, relations, and ideologies reminiscent of the agrarian era were even reinforced during socialism and the subsequent decade and half. In Przemyśl, post-peasantism has been strengthened by the prevalent perception of the city, as lying on the margin of the state both locally and throughout the country. The politics of commemoration is enacted in an everyday social setting consisting of these rural social structures, identity narratives, and rural imaginary. Reflecting this setting and building upon it, an ideology and political practice that I conceptualize as post-peasant populism appears in the larger Polish society.

Ethnic violence during and after World War II left its strong imprint on the people of the city and the region. In the 'community of memory' on which I have predominantly focused, that of Greek Catholic Ukrainians, the war and its aftermath strongly defined the villagers expelled from south-east Poland and their heirs as Ukrainians and nourished a nostalgia for the lost peasant world. This made the Ukrainian community inward-looking, grounded in family memories and church-driven commemorations. Public commemorations of ethnically defined events have grown steadily in vitality since 1989. To understand the politics of these commemorations in south-east Poland, one must equally explore the micro level of everyday commemorative practices and the macro level of nationalist narratives of history. In other words, from peasant memories of violence and oppression one moves towards the invention of tradition nurtured by nation-state commemorations of suffering and patriotic cults of military acts. Doing so reveals that the past that is remembered and commemorated in south-east Poland is predominantly the peasant past.

Partly because institutional religion remained crucial in safeguarding family and national memories in Poland throughout the socialist years, the Catholic Church was able to consolidate its power quickly after 1989 and retain its strong presence in the public sphere, despite the critical opinions many people voice today about certain practices of the church and its clergy. I believe the church's leading role results not only from Catholicism's preservation of traditional power relations and supervision of memories and tradition but also from the fact that the church offers development projects alternative to those of contemporary capitalism. It takes care of 'the people' as they face postsocialist hardships. On the peripheries of post-peasant, postsocialist Eastern Europe, where the secular social democratic tradition has been largely absent, social criticism takes the form of what I call post-peasant populism. In this way the church not only supervises society's past and influences present moral policies and discourses but also provides a future-oriented program.

9.1 Tolerance

The strong position of the church in politics is also visible in processes that promote tolerance in south-east Poland. Even though religion can be a source of tension between religious-national groups – especially because church employees supervise commemorations that foster mutual exclusivity – it nevertheless remains crucial in facilitating tolerance. In south-east Poland this tolerance has developed into a celebration of diversity, but with boundaries between the two religious-national groups strictly drawn. Even multicultural narratives and policies strengthen nationally defined cultures. But in addition to the elite-driven artificial tolerance that operates within the framework of grand narratives, ordinary tolerance softens people's suspicions towards others in everyday life. Postsocialist power holders largely ignore the role of ordinary tolerance, either within the religious sphere or outside of it. The multiculturalism they promote remains locked in national cultures. Multiculturalism is thus appropriated into a model of civil society that is structurally and normatively dominated by the middle classes.

Like artificial tolerance, religious rite appears to be an object not only of older, high church politics but also of relatively recent elite appropriation.

The politics behind a new synthesis of competing discourses about and policies towards religious mixing and ethnic commemorations helps to clarify what it is to be Ukrainian Greek Catholic in Przemyśl. Younger and better-educated Ukrainians participate in an elite-driven anti-syncretism in the Greek Catholic Church, claiming to see clearly what pure Greek Catholic tradition should consist of. Although many features of religious syncretism remain alive in Przemyśl, the nurturing of purity predominates politically, creating a discursive congruence between religion, nation, and culture.

The politics of commemoration is obviously related to broader societal changes, and those changes are reflected in the ethno-revival movement in south-east Poland. Ukrainians, a once proscribed religious-national group, are becoming a commoditized national minority valued for their cultural specifics and their alleged deep spirituality and closeness to nature. The essentialist narratives surrounding this shift are fostered by local nationalists and priests and indirectly nurtured by Europe-wide and nation-state policies and discourses on multiculturalism, as well as by the growing demands of ethno-business and tourism. The politics of commemoration, therefore, strengthens the cultural fundamentalism on which post-peasant populist politics is based, and conversely, post-peasant populism influences the politics of commemoration in south-east Poland.

9.2 Post-Peasant Populism

After 1989, analysts and liberal intellectuals perceived populism in Eastern Europe as an intermediate stage between communism and liberal democracy. Like nationalism, populism became a catchword for both the media and the scholarly community in dealing with Eastern Europe (see Mudde 2000: 33–34). Various forms of populism, particularly those linked to social reform and promoted in socialist or religious discourses, were treated with suspicion, especially by intellectuals who espoused the economic rationality of neo-liberal reforms and a secular-individualist ideology of civil society. Studies of populism indirectly implied that if the problem of nationalism receded, then populism would be marginalized.

Nevertheless, in the quickly changing environment of twentieth-century south-east Poland, people's understandings of nation, religion, family, and community seem to have been stable, and they have not vanished in the early twenty-first century. These understandings entail a set of practices and ideas hostile to some aspects of secular modernity. Certain pre-modern, agrarian-era images, social practices, relations, and narratives survive, even though the actual peasantry has been substantially reduced or died away. At the same time, the ruptures and insecurities of the postsocialist and ongoing European transformations have fuelled new attitudes based on a romanticized, nostalgically imagined peasant past. The combination of two types of practices, identity narratives, and memories related to the recent peasant past – those determined by continuity and those determined by rupture – creates in the post-peasant setting of south-east Poland and other parts of Eastern Europe a particular populist way of doing and perceiving politics. Catholicism is an important component of this post-peasant populism.

I discern two broad types of post-peasant populism. Both reflect present-day economic development, and both ground their legitimacy in nation, the rural family, and Catholicism. One, however, is exclusivist, xenophobic, and potentially racist, whereas the other, nurtured by multiculturalism, is likely to be used in the building of local civility – although it, too, is vulnerable to exclusivist political mobilization. The intolerant type of populism is spread through media such as Radio Maryja, propagated from pulpits across the country, and mobilized by many successful politicians. This narrow ideology reflects much larger structural and ideological connections between contemporary Roman Catholicism and capitalist modernity. Despite accepting electoral democracy, its adherents stress the cultural boundedness and mutual exclusivity of human collectives and approach the social world by using organic, primordial categories. They aim to defend 'the fortress of Europe' against 'less civilized' Muslims, relativist Masons, proselytizing Jewish capitalists, leftist liberals, and immigrants from different civilizations with which the Christian West will inevitably clash.

Douglas Holmes (2000) called this 'integralist' politics, linked it to the European Counter-Enlightenment, and explained it as a reaction to neoliberal capitalism and multiculturalism, an economic arrangement and an ideology that threaten organic, bounded group identities. In south-east Poland, however, multiculturalism works ambivalently, and populism is not necessarily a response to it. Rather, multicultural policies and discourses complement a view of society and civilization based on rural myths, notions of pre-industrial morality, the alleged defence of parochial tradition, and an organic concept of the nation, features also common to the populist agenda.

The neighbouring regions of south-east Poland and eastern Slovakia offer an excellent opportunity for comparison. Formerly Galicia (part of Poland after 1918) and the north-eastern part of the Hungarian kingdom (part of Czechoslovakia after 1918 and Slovakia since 1993), respectively, they had similar social bases for the development of populist politics until the mid-twentieth century. By that time, populist politics was mobilizing and often also socially emancipating the actual peasants, who formed the bulk of voters in the newly independent states. Major differences appeared after World War II, when Slovakia was more successfully collectivized and its countryside substantially modernized, especially in the 1970s and 1980s. Poland, particularly its border regions, remained underdeveloped and characterized by a peasant economy and way of life. Slovakia, although its Jews were exterminated and its Carpathian Germans and many Hungarians were expelled, remained much more multi-ethnic and multi-confessional than war-torn Poland, not least because of its growing Roma (Gypsy) population. Nowadays it is one of the most ethnically and religiously heterogeneous countries of Eastern Europe, and certainly the most heterogeneous among its neighbours except for Ukraine. Poland, in contrast, after its unprecedented war-time ethnic cleansings, is a country in which 95 per cent of the inhabitants refer to themselves as Roman Catholics and even more people consider themselves Polish.

Perhaps an even more important difference was the position of the Roman Catholic Church, which, although strong in Slovakia, never achieved the powerful status there that it has enjoyed in Poland. Even Slovak nationalism has never been only Catholic; as in the case of Ukrainian and Hungarian nationalisms, non–Roman Catholic religious minorities have contributed significantly to its success. In Slovakia, unlike in south-east Poland, eastern Christianity can be fairly linked to the dominant Slovak nationality, in addition to Ukrainian and Rusyn ethnicity.

In short, despite similar historical-structural conditions in south-east Poland and north-east Slovakia, different policies and forms of violence affected these neighbours during and after World War II, as did different policies under state socialism, especially in the late socialist decades. Consequently, inhabitants of the two areas have different perceptions of the recent past. In eastern Slovakia, memories of the relative stability and affluence of the late socialist years, juxtaposed against the postsocialist decline, nurture a positive nostalgia for the earlier time. In Poland, people more often thoroughly reject the communist past.

Although populist politics have been embraced in both Slovakia and Poland, the different courses of structural development and different sorts of narratives of the past in the two areas suggest different prospects for post-peasant populism. Whereas Slovakian post-peasant populism in the 1990s reflected the tremors of postsocialist insecurity, in south-east Poland it seems to have a more durable social, narrative, and commemorative basis. Populism has been less strongly driven by Catholicism in Slovakia than in Poland, and a significant part of Polish politics is not only reminiscent of pre–World War II populist politics but also mobilizes actual peasants, who still amount to more than 15 per cent of the country's population.

As an anthropologist, I observed locally grounded practices of and ideas about politics in south-east Poland that were driven by and depended on commemorations. They ranged from practices surrounding patron-client relationships, including relationships involving churchmen, to ideas about the rural intelligentsia and its role. They also included ideas expressed in narratives rooted in the past that cast economic development within a Catholic moral framework. Because of its historical precedent in the inter-war period, I defined this politics on the ideological level of society as post-peasant populism. Recent developments in the countries of Eastern Europe, especially the insertion of nationalist and populist agendas into high-level politics in Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary since their entry into the European Union, shows that we should look at populist mobilization at the grassroots. In a way, by focussing on the social basis of populism, I, too, have contributed to the shortage of empirical studies of populist praxis in Eastern Europe, a deficiency noted by some political scientists (Mudde 2000: 53).

Post-peasant populism grows not only in south-east Poland and Eastern Europe. Rurality is embedded in Europe's very structural and narrative background. Tom Nairn (1998: 124) insightfully remarked that even EU institutional modernity 'remains deeply weighed down by the ball and chain of the Common Agricultural Policy ... [The EU] remains deeply compromised by the very ruralist inheritance which has in the past so often nourished ethnic nationalism'. As Jeff Pratt (2003: 190–91) emphasized, the problem is not the persistence of some peasant practices and relations in Europe but the complex way rurality is invoked in political discourse. In Poland the discourse incorporates post-peasants into populist and national movements that are substantially nurtured by Catholicism.

A populism that appeared some decades before World War II and survived socialism in some form is likely to continue to survive, if not gain prominence, under the ongoing European transformations. The durability of this post-peasant populism has been created by complex structural, narrative, and commemorative processes of rapid transformations in Eastern Europe, and Catholicism has played an important role in them. The dividing line between, on the one hand, the peaceful symbolism of the rural world and the emancipatory strength of socially sensitive populism and, on the other, the potential for that populism to be mobilized destructively for national purposes is fuzzier than might be expected by experts who do not study politics anthropologically. This finding confirms the importance of understanding notions of tolerance in the post-peasant setting.

9.3 Multiculturalism

The new tolerance in Europe is often called multiculturalism, which in Eastern Europe is predicated on the existence of distinct religious-national 'cultures'. But those cultures do not merely exist; instead, intellectuals, state policies, and the market push people to claim their rights to them. Writing about Lemkos in south-east Poland, Chris Hann (2002a) commented on the 'totalitarian usage' of culture, which relies on a conflation of culture, ethnicity, and identity and is closely linked to nationalist projects. Pamela Ballinger (2004) discussed the Croatian regionalist movement in Istria, which, through a discourse of hybridity and purity, re-inscribed nationalist logic with an emphasis on autochthony, rootedness, and territory (see also Stolcke 1995). This ideology is similar to what Elizabeth Rata (2003, 2005), writing about the shift from class-based politics to identity politics under neo-liberal capitalism among the Maoris of New Zealand, labelled bi-culturalism and neo-traditionalism. This neo-traditionalism fostered the politicization of Maori culture and a fundamentalist 'blood and soil' ideology. Even multiculturalism served to strengthen a neo-tribal elite that was developing separatist ethnic politics (Rata 2005). Studying a border region of the Austrian Burgenland, Andre Gingrich (2004) showed that although xenophobia and racism were vanishing from official political language, the emotional continuities of nationalism – in his example related to war commemorations – remained concealed behind the official discourse.

Applying all these findings to south-east Poland, I argue that the political rhetoric of multicultural tolerance conceals rather than eliminates a nationalist logic based on a totalitarian usage of culture. Although the intolerant nationalism of the 1990s appears to have been successfully suppressed in political discourse, concepts of nationalism persist in politics. The new multiculturalism takes the form of either multinationalism, in which one national 'culture' (Polish) is, in terms of nation-state patriotism, superior to other, tolerated national cultures, or a romanticized blend of images of an idealized peasantry and the good old days of the upper classes. These two societal phenomena – post-peasant populism and multiculturalism – are both nurtured and reflected by the politics of commemoration in south-east Poland.

Considering the limited applicability of this multiculturalism, one can see the potential for problems that might eventually develop as Eastern Europe moves to what Ralph Grillo (1998: 16) conceptualized as a postmodern, post-industrial configuration of state and society. Regions such as south-east Poland are no longer isolated as they were during the socialist years. Thousands of migrants enter Poland nowadays, but the country is no longer a place of transit between Eastern and Western Europe as it was after the collapse of communism. The newcomers increasingly decide to settle down in 'European' Poland, and they will be difficult to fit into fixed cultures tied to post-peasant religious nations. Economic developments in Eastern Europe related to the increasing need for foreign labourers, as well as consumption by the increasingly affluent elites and consumers of postsocialist, post-peasant societies and by western tourists attracted to the ethno-industry, will strain the multicultural ideology in the region. Increasingly strict immigration policies and public discourses related to non-Christian immigrants and strict legislation favouring 'traditional' Christian churches, which are popular among post-peasant elites in Eastern Europe, are so far the most visible signs of this development.

9.4 The Anthropology of Politics in Europe

Despite the dramatic transformations that followed the collapse of socialism in south-east Poland, feelings of continuity and even of desire for a return to the past are expressed in narratives associated with the politics of commemoration there. Such expressions predominate in political rhetoric and in conversations among ordinary people. But despite the dominance of the past in the politics of south-east Poland, as an anthropologist I challenge the prevalent view of conservatism, stasis, and resistance to change that is usually applied by analysts using idealist, Western-centric approaches. To rely on this gravitational paradigm, I believe, is to orientalize the postsocialist peripheries.

It remains to be seen what effects EU regional politics will have on the Eastern European countryside and on urban development, the two spheres that still show porous boundaries in Eastern Europe, but careful anthropological observation indicates at least some of the complications it might bring. By focusing predominantly on relations among religion, politics, and uses of the past nurtured by the politics of commemoration and mobilized by post-peasant populism, I challenge a common conviction held by some analysts and promoters of civil society, the conviction that the fundamental condition for democratic political development is the separation of religion from politics. This supposedly can be achieved through the simple separation of church and state, leaving religion in the private sphere. Not least because religion, nation, and politics are rooted in and legitimated by the past in regions such as south-east Poland, and because strong institutional connections between 'historical' Christian churches and the postsocialist states have been established, they are actually inseparable from one another. Nor can people's understandings of political institutions and social values be separated from the realm of religion.

The sociologist José Casanova (1994), in his de-privatization thesis, proposed analyzing the roles religion might play in the public sphere in modern societies. Such an analysis might lead to a rethinking of the dominant social theories of religion and the liberal or civic republican models of the public-private distinction. From the perspective of the de-privatization of religion thesis, many Poles, Ukrainians, and Europeans fail to perceive even Europe as a secular entity. The role of religion in modern politics should, therefore, be taken into account more seriously if one wants to better analyze contemporary European transformations.

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Juraj Buzalka is a lecturer in social anthropology at Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia. In 2003–2006 he was a doctoral candidate at the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle/ Saale, Germany.

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