



Halle Studies in the Anthropology of Eurasia

General Editors:

Chris Hann, Richard Rottenburg, Burkhard Schnepel

Volume 16

LIT

Stéphanie Mahieu and Vlad Naumescu (eds.)

Churches In-between

Greek Catholic Churches
in Postsocialist Europe

LIT

Cover Photo: Icon of Josaphat Kuntsevych (d. 1623), the first martyr saint of the Greek Catholics (Lutowiska, Southeast Poland, early twentieth century).



Gedruckt auf alterungsbeständigem Werkdruckpapier entsprechend
ANSI Z3948 DIN ISO 9706

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek
The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche
Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at
<http://dnb.d-nb.de>.

ISBN 978-3-8258-9910-3

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

©LIT VERLAG Dr. W. Hopf Berlin 2008

Fresenstr. 2 D-48159 Münster

Tel. +49 (0) 2 51-620 32 22 Fax +49 (0) 2 51-922 60 99

e-Mail: lit@lit-verlag.de <http://www.lit-verlag.de>

Distribution:

In Germany: LIT Verlag Fresenstr. 2, D-48159 Münster

Tel. +49 (0) 2 51-620 32 22, Fax +49 (0) 2 51-922 60 99, e-Mail: vertrieb@lit-verlag.de

In Austria: Medienlogistik Pichler-ÖBZ GmbH & Co KG

IZ-NÖ, Süd. Straße 1, Objekt 34, A-2355 Wiener Neudorf

Tel. +43 (0) 22 36-63 53 52 90, Fax +43 (0) 22 36-63 53 52 43, e-Mail: mlo@medien-logistik.at

In Switzerland: B + M Buch- und Medienvertriebs AG

Hochstr. 357, CH-8200 Schaffhausen

Tel. +41 (0) 52-643 54 85, Fax +41 (0) 52-643 54 35, e-Mail: order@buch-medien.ch

Distributed in the UK by: Global Book Marketing, 99B Wallis Rd, London, E9 5LN

Phone: +44 (0) 20 8533 5800 – Fax: +44 (0) 1600 775 663

<http://www.centralbooks.co.uk/html>

Distributed in North America by:



Transaction Publishers

New Brunswick (U.S.A.) and London (U.K.)

Transaction Publishers

Rutgers University

35 Berrue Circle

Piscataway, NJ 08854

Phone: +1 (732) 445 - 2280

Fax: +1 (732) 445 - 3138

for orders (U. S. only):

toll free (888) 999 - 6778

e-mail: orders@transactionpub.com

Contents

	Preface	vii
	Acknowledgements	xiii
1	Introduction: Churches In-between <i>Stéphanie Mahieu and Vlad Naumescu</i>	1
PART ONE: Historical and Contemporary Overviews		33
2	Greek Catholics: Historical Background <i>Paul Robert Magocsi</i>	35
3	Developments since 1989	65
3.1	Hungary <i>Bertalan Pusztaí</i>	67
3.2	Poland <i>Stanisław Stepień</i>	85
3.3	Romania <i>Lucian Turcescu and Lavinia Stan</i>	99
3.4	Slovakia <i>Stanislav Konečný</i>	111
3.5	Ukraine <i>Mariya Horiacha and Svitlana Hurkina</i>	125
3.6	North America <i>Peter Galadza</i>	143
PART TWO: In Search of Tradition: Internal Processes of Institutionalization		155
4	Continuities and Ruptures of a Religious Tradition: Making 'Orthodoxy' in the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church <i>Vlad Naumescu</i>	157
5	Syncretism among the Greek Catholic Ukrainians in Southeast Poland <i>Juraj Buzalka</i>	183

6	(Re-)Orientalizing the Church: Reformism and Traditionalism within the Hungarian Greek Catholic Church <i>Stéphanie Mahieu</i>	207
PART THREE: External Reordering: Property, Memory and Religious Competition		231
7	'Real Men' in Postsocialist Transition: The Greek Catholic Ethic and the Spirit of Neoliberalism in a Transylvanian Village <i>Filippo M. Zerilli</i>	233
8	Collective Memory and Religious Transmission: A Greek Catholic Example in Western Ukraine <i>Jacek Nowak</i>	255
9	'Religion in Motion': Routes of Identification among Hungarian Greek Catholics in Subcarpathia <i>Bertalan Pusztai and Erzsébet Pilipkó</i>	273
PART FOUR: Exceptional Moments: Pilgrimages and Apparitions		297
10	Greek Catholics of Zemplin: Dilemmas of Contemporary Identity Politics <i>Agnieszka Halemba</i>	299
11	The Land of the Virgin Mary: A Greek Catholic Ukrainian Pilgrimage to Lourdes <i>Valérie Kozłowski</i>	319
	Contributors	333
	Index	335

Chapter 9

‘Religion in Motion’: Routes of Identification among Hungarian Greek Catholics in Subcarpathia

Bertalan Pusztai and Erzsébet Pilipkó

This chapter examines processes of identification among Hungarian Greek Catholics who live within the Carpathian Basin but in Ukraine. During 1990–2000 we conducted ethnographic fieldwork among Hungarian Greek Catholic communities in the Uzhhorod, Vynohradiv, and Berehove regions. Greek Catholics who identify themselves as Hungarian are a very distinctive minority. First, they constitute a religious minority vis-à-vis the mainstream, Roman Catholic, Reformed, and Orthodox Churches in the Carpathian Basin. Second, their Rusyn and Romanian origins but Hungarian identity have placed them in an intermediary situation and given them a multiple belonging, which renders them suspicious to all nationalities in the area. Hungarian Greek Catholic identity emerged and stabilized in the century between 1850 and 1950 (Pusztai 2005, 2007). However, only the Greek Catholics living within the borders of Hungary could enjoy relative tranquility after the end of the Second World War. In all other parts of the region Greek Catholics were forced to continue their struggles for identification. Our chapter shows the various routes of identification Hungarian Greek Catholics have taken both as a religious minority among Hungarians and as a national minority in Ukraine. Although their total number is not very large, members of this once-unified group now belong to three different religious communities.

We begin with a review of the post-1920 history of the Greek Catholic Church in Subcarpathia. We then present ethnographic descriptions of the two possible identifications – Roman Catholic and Orthodox – available in recent decades to ethnic Hungarians who belonged traditionally to the Greek Catholic Church in Subcarpathia. First, we describe the evolution that led certain former Greek Catholic communities to join the Roman Catholic Church after the 1940s. Second, we describe the route that has led other communities into the Orthodox Church. This material is based on fieldwork

conducted by Erzsébet Pilipkó in the region of Vynohradiv throughout the 1990s.

Until 1918, the four counties of Subcarpathia (*Kárpátalja* in Hungarian) belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. In the Hungarian 'national landscape imagery' (Häyrynen 2000) this area had no independent existence and no unified regional identity. At the end of the First World War, Hungary declared it to be the semi-autonomous region of *Ruska Kraina*, but in 1920 the Trianon Peace Treaty allocated it to Czechoslovakia. Thus began its territorial reorganization as *Podkarpatska Rus*, which led in turn to modifications of its ethnic composition. In 1938–39, with the dissolution of Czechoslovakia, this territory was returned to Hungary. At the end of the Second World War the area came under the jurisdiction of the Soviet Union as the *Zakarpatska Oblast*. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Subcarpathia now constitutes a county (*oblast*) of an independent Ukraine.¹

One-fifth of the nearly 600 settlements in Subcarpathia have significant numbers of Hungarians living either in continuous blocks or mixed with other ethnic groups.² Hungarians are the majority in about 80 villages and in the town of Berehovo. In Ukraine's total population they form a minority of no more than half of 1 per cent (Dupka, Horváth and Móricz 1990: 4–5).

The Greek Catholic Church in Subcarpathia

The 1920 border changes had little effect on the area of the Greek Catholic Eparchy of Mukachevo: apart from one parish and two affiliated churches that remained in Hungary, it was transferred to Czechoslovakia in its entirety (Botlik 1997: 229). The new Czechoslovak government discriminated against the Greek Catholics, dubbing their Eparchy 'Hungarophile'. Instead, the authorities supported the Russian Orthodox Church in the region (Bonkáló 1996; Botlik 1997), and in 1931 an Orthodox diocese was established in Mukachevo. This administrative act had antecedents in the 'Schismatic Movement' of the 1910s, which had significantly helped spread Orthodoxy in the region (Mayer 1997). Organized from a distance, this move-

¹ These frequent political changes had a critical effect on cultural perceptions of the region. Before 1989 nomenclature was highly politicized. *Zakarpatska* means Transcarpathian; when seen from Moscow or Kiev, the region certainly is beyond the Carpathians. However, when seen from Budapest (or Prague), these villages and towns are at the feet of the Carpathian Mountains, and the use of the term Subcarpathia implies even today a protest against the official order (Fejös 1996: 127–128; Balla 1998). This chapter uses the term Subcarpathia because it is concerned with the Hungarian minority, among whom this term (*Kárpátalja*) has remained the standard designation.

² According to the 2001 census, they constituted 76.1% of the population of Berehovo, 26.2% of Vynohradiv, and 33.4% of Uzhhorod districts (Molnár and Molnár 2003: 91–94.).

ment had been a Russian Orthodox propaganda campaign, but its influence can be explained by deep social reasons. The appearance of Russian Orthodoxy disrupted the religious unity of Rusyns.³

Events after the Second World War resulted in no minor tribulation for the peoples in the Carpathian Basin. Until 1944, the Eparchy of Mukachevo had 350 priests, 320 churches, and 450,000 followers, with an overwhelming majority of Rusyns but also including 28,000 Hungarians, 16,000 Romanians, 3,000 Slovaks, and others (Ortutay 1993: 48). The diocese had its own seminary, women's and men's teacher training colleges, an orphanage, boarding schools, and an archive. In October 1944, the Soviet Army occupied the Theological College in Uzhhorod Castle (Bendász 2001: 100). As early as 1946, Soviet authorities took a secret decision to close the institution, 'the hotbed of the Uniates', but for tactical reasons, they postponed it to a later date. In 1945, however, church property was nationalized and religious education in schools was prohibited. In addition, Greek Catholic priests began to be induced by promises and threats to reunite with the Orthodox.⁴ The Stalinist regime aimed to wrench the Eparchy of Mukachevo out of the jurisdiction of the Pope, thereby eliminating Vatican influence and Western orientation. Already in March 1946 the L'viv Synod decided to dissolve the four Galician Greek Catholic dioceses.⁵

Bishop Theodore Romzha of the Eparchy of Mukachevo sought to ensure the personal continuity of the diocese by secretly consecrating two priests, Sándor Chira and Péter Orosz, as bishops (Bendász 1994: 128; Bendász 2001: 100). On 1 November 1947 Romzha was murdered.⁶ Teaching at the seminary continued under the leadership of Sándor Chira until his arrest in February 1949. Thereafter, the Eparchy of Mukachevo was liquidated and church services conducted by Greek Catholic priests were completely prohibited. According to church historical records, 129 (Hungarian and Rusyn) priests were declared 'enemies of the Soviet people' for refusing to participate in reunification.⁷ The Greek Catholic parish churches were either transferred to the Orthodox Church or closed and used as warehouses. The Eparchy of Mukachevo, as well as the other Greek Catholic Eparchies,

³ For the Russophile and the Ukrainophile movements, see Bonkáló 1996: 81–101.

⁴ Between 1945 and 1948, 35 Greek Catholic priests lost their lives in the religious persecution (Bendász and Bendász 1994: 9).

⁵ By reference to the testimony of István Bendász (Riskó 1995: 181).

⁶ On 27 October 1947, Bishop Theodor Romzha was seriously hurt in a car accident arranged by the Russian secret services. He survived the attack and on 1 November was poisoned in the Mukachevo hospital. He was beatified as a martyr in 2001 (Riskó 1995; Bendász 1999).

⁷ Of the 129 priests, 30 never returned. The survivors were freed in the amnesty of 1955–56, but were not allowed to practise, and, if caught, were liable to another five years of forced labour (Ortutay 1993: 50; Botlik 1997: 287).

were thus deprived of all their rights until December 1989. In spite of this, the Mukachevo Episcopacy never lost its continuity. In the course of these four decades, it lived on as a catacomb church, much as early Christianity had done. Some of the priests who had refused 'reunification' left their homes and went into hiding – thereby evading state retribution – and continued practising their religious vocation. Outwitting the secret police, they performed liturgical, baptismal, and funeral services in private, family circles to uphold the essential sacraments of their faith communities. In 1952, when arrests stopped, forty-seven priests were still secretly serving the faithful. These outlaw priests were monitored and pursued by the authorities. An interlocuteur described the capture and murder of a parish priest, Péter Orosz:

Father Péter Orosz ... was serving at Bilke [Ukrainian: Bilki] in 1949, and would not subscribe [to Orthodoxy]; so he had to go into hiding in various villages; he'd celebrate mass in the middle of the night; if need be, he'd baptize, confirm, marry couples, administer the Sacraments to the ailing, confess, and bury. He was in hiding between 1949 and 1953, the *bespeak*⁸ had been after him, and one night he was called to a sick person ... he started out, but when he took the train at Beregkiszfalud [Ukrainian: Siltse] station, a railwayman recognized him, and reported it to the militiaman on the train, who immediately arrested him and wanted to take him to Ilosva [Ukrainian: Irshava]. On their way, at a cross just outside Beregkiszfalud, the father asked the militiaman to let him say a prayer, which he did. Then the father knelt down at the foot of the cross, and then militiaman took out his gun and shot him in the back of the neck. He is a martyr (Field interview from Kvasove, 2001).⁹

Employing sophisticated organizational tactics, the underground Mukachevo Eparchy continued to train and ordain priests for the ministry (Bendász 2001). Upon returning from prison, parish priests lacked textbooks and thus had to teach their successors with their own hand-written notes. Even in the late 1970s, tutors often had to endure long hours of house searches, the confiscation of their notes, and the turning of their homes upside down. The novices visiting the flats of their teachers took similar risks, as they were well aware of being followed. Nevertheless, the Mukachevo Eparchy managed to maintain even its institutional continuity: Sándor Chira, the bishop

⁸ The popular Ukrainian name of the various Soviet secret agencies, such as NKVD and KGB, which the Hungarians took over and use to this very day.

⁹ Since the topic is very sensitive and the communities discussed are small communities, easily recognizable the authors have chosen to use only place and date to identify the interviews.

consecrated *sub rosa*, and later the vicar apostolic, Miklós Murányi, ensured the continuity of church leadership (Chira 1994; Botlik 1997). Several decades of tribulation prepared the ground for great popular respect for the church. Bishop József Holovács stated that the underground activity 'explains why our churches, as soon as the Greek Catholic Church was reauthorized (1989), were immediately filled with believers' (Holovács 1997). Presumably, the four-decade catacomb existence of the Greek Catholic Church provided indisputable legitimacy for starting anew in 1989; nonetheless, the masses of believers have returned to the Greek Catholic church for reasons not directly related to this.

On 13 December 1989 the Soviet government issued its decree reestablishing the rights of the Greek Catholic Church in Subcarpathia. After the initial euphoria about regaining rights, these changes in church policy led to ongoing conflicts in parishes. The Greek Catholic Church, prohibited in 1949, regained its legitimacy, and its reorganization began soon after. The law provided for the restitution of Greek Catholic property seized by the state and given to the Orthodox Church. This involved many churches and manses. In practice, however, the provision proved far more complicated than expected. 'Return' was not unequivocal, even in Hungarian Greek Catholic or both Greek and Roman Catholic settlements, not to mention Rusyn areas. Communities could vote as to whether they wanted to belong to the Greek Catholic or the Orthodox, or, in some cases, the Roman Catholic Church. Based on such a decision, property was restored to one or the other churches. In cases of a divided community, the use of the church often led to verbal or physical aggression. The church-owning communities at the time of the political transformation, in other words, the Orthodox in the central parts of the southern belt of Subcarpathia and the Roman Catholic in the western parts, would not only refuse to restore churches to their original owners, but would not even share them with Greek Catholics. Most communities would not accept a compromise of temporarily using an alternate church. This uncooperative attitude was driven by suspicion and fear that, should the 'other' be let in; they, the proprietors for the past decades, would be driven out of their church. Thus, the first legal Greek Catholic mass in forty years in many cases was celebrated in village churchyards in the biting cold of winter 1990.

Hungarian Greek Catholic Survival Strategies during Soviet Times

After the banning of the Greek Catholic Church, Rusyn and Hungarian parish communities no longer had any chance of unobstructed Greek Catholic life. In the following section, we shall attempt to outline the possible modes of Greek Catholic existence, and reveal why former Hungarian Greek Catholics practise their faith in vastly divergent communities, often in grave conflicts with one another. Our study focuses exclusively on the Hungarian-speaking communities, a minor portion of the Greek Catholic population in the region.

Besides the small-scale clandestine existence, Greek Catholics could choose from two other options: escaping into the Roman Catholic Church or remaining within the Byzantine rite, but in the Orthodox Church. A conscious and hidden Greek Catholic religious life, a 'catacomb church', was the choice of the few and could hardly gain a widespread following. Escape into Roman Catholicism or a formal change to Orthodoxy involved far larger portions of the population. The Hungarian Greek Catholic communities of the westernmost part of southern Subcarpathia practised their faith in the Roman Catholic Church already from the end of the 1940s. By contrast, Orthodox parishes providing a latent mode of Greek Catholic existence emerged in the central and easternmost parts of the Hungarian belt (the areas around Vynohradiv and Berehovo).

During Soviet times catacomb existence was an option for only a few small Greek Catholic groups in Subcarpathia. The Greek Catholics of the southwestern parts of the Hungarian belt of Subcarpathia, the region around Uzhhorod, joined the Roman Catholic Church. Their decision brought about fundamental changes in the life of the villages south of Uzhhorod, as our fieldwork in the villages of Sislivci, Halocs, and Komarivcihas demonstrated. These villages are still predominantly Hungarian settlements south of Uzhhorod, near the Ukrainian and Slovak border (Pusztai 2001).¹⁰

¹⁰ The three settlements are situated 10–20 kilometres south of Uzhhorod, close to the Ukrainian-Slovakian border. All three villages were part of the mainly Hungarian inhabited Nagykapos district (today Veľké Kapušany in East Slovakia) prior to the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Halocs (Hungarian: Gállocs) has a population of 545, with about 400 ethnic Hungarians; Sislivci (Hungarian: Sislóc) has 330 inhabitants, of whom approximately 70% are ethnic Hungarians; Komarivci (Hungarian: Palágykomoróc) has a population of 925, of whom roughly 80% are considered Hungarian. The Greek Catholic Rusyn population migrated to the region in the eighteenth century. In course of the nineteenth century, this population changed their mother tongue while keeping their denomination. After the mid-twentieth century, a second wave of emigration started. These villages are situated on the Hungarian-Rusyn linguistic border.

According to late eighteenth-century censuses, 25 to 40 per cent of the population of the three villages was Rusyn, and hence Greek Catholic. However, by 1806, Rusyns had assimilated into Hungarians, so that in certain Greek Catholic parishes, religious homilies were preached in Hungarian more than Rusyn. At the turn of the nineteenth century, villagers identified themselves as fully Hungarian and remained so even at the 1941 census.¹¹ Besides their 'Magyarization', Greek Catholics also went through a process of 'Latinization', in which both their domestic culture and their church services were influenced by those of the Roman Catholics.¹²

As Greek Catholics began to speak Hungarian as their mother tongue, strong inter-denominational ties developed. People remember a lively connection between the two Catholic denominations between the two world wars: the Roman Catholics sometimes attended Greek Catholic mass, and when only a Roman Catholic mass was celebrated, the Greek Catholics would participate in it. Inter-marriages were also quite regular.

After the Second World War, Greek Catholic ministers and communities were given a chance to practise their religion, but only within the bounds of the Russian Orthodox Church and according to its rite. Priests not conforming to this were deported. The Hungarian-speaking Greek Catholics of the region did not opt for the Orthodox rite in Church Slavonic. Thus, one of the Greek Catholic churches was turned into a training hall, another one was closed down and then transformed into a museum, and the third one became the gymnasium of a nearby school.

The Roman Catholics of all three villages were bereft of both priest and church. But the circumstances of the two Catholic Churches were entirely different: even though some Roman Catholic priests were deported, their theological seminary was closed, and priests were not replaced, the Roman Catholic Church at least *existed formally*. Although it was far away (in Uzhhorod), the church still functioned, and its followers could worship according to their creed and receive the sacraments. The Hungarian Greek Catholics of the region also went to worship, to be baptized, and to marry in the same Uzhhorod Roman Catholic church.

In the period following these changes the two Catholic communities sharing the Roman Catholic in Uzhhorod gradually merged into one. The dividing line between them slowly disappeared because of the sense of being

¹¹ On the process of assimilation with Hungarians in Halocs, see Pusztai 1993.

¹² In the settlements we studied, the Reformed population formed the religious majority, while the number of Roman and Greek Catholics was roughly the same. However, only the Greek Catholics possessed a church of their own in all the three villages examined, with one priest residing in each of them. In addition, the Roman Catholics lost their parish, as it was annexed to Slovakia in 1945.

endangered and of the acquiescence in the immutable. Those who knew only the Roman Catholic Rite were in their fifties when the changes came, but it was also for fifty years that their elders practiced this faith and observed its holidays. Between 1949 and 1990 the ethnic composition of Subcarpathia also altered fundamentally and the entire microregion was transformed from this point of view.

The late 1980s brought with them a political relaxation that created the possibility for Greek Catholics to reclaim their churches. However, as the Russian Orthodox Church had a dominant position in the Soviet Union at the time, closed churches could only be reopened as Roman Catholic ones. Naturally, all three villages immediately reclaimed their churches, and an old Roman Catholic priest, serving several affiliated churches and traveling 50 kilometres, conducted liturgies in all three villages. The possibility of regular masses brought about a new group formation among the villagers: all those who thought of themselves as Catholics after so many decades started to take part in the Catholic mass and helped restore and furnish the church, thereby showing their affiliation to this church. In order to supply worship conditions, a churchwarden and other responsible persons had to be chosen. Churchwardenship and membership in local church councils were increasingly seen as new sources of social prestige in the 1990s. Seeking these church offices was a natural and primary goal of people with a propensity to partake in public life, if they had not achieved their aims in the newly elected municipalities or in the leadership of the local schools, in other words, in the newly legitimate organizations.

In 1991 word spread in these villages that the Greek Catholic Church existed, and that it could reclaim its former church buildings.¹³ However, the emerging Roman Catholic communities were already administering the former Greek Catholic churches. From the outside, the changes would have seemed to have no effect on these village communities, as no underground Greek Catholic Church had existed, and as a result of the dissolution of denominational differences all Greek Catholics and Roman Catholics saw themselves as members of one church.

The first local crisis broke out when the Greek Catholics of Sislivci attempted to take possession of their former church. As a result, the Roman Catholics began to build their own church, and soon the newly completed church became a vivid symbol of community discord. The Greek Catholics would have been ready to share their church with their Roman Catholic brethren, but they insisted on it being a Greek Catholic church again. Instead, the Roman Catholics decided they would rather build their own new

¹³ Although the Greek Catholic Church had been permitted to function again in the Soviet Union already in 1989, in the villages studied the problem only surfaced in 1991.

church, and thus left the Greek Catholics alone to renovate the old church. When the Greek Catholics speak of the time-consuming and painstaking renovation of their church, they always note that they never received so much external help as the Roman Catholics did. In truth, the Roman Catholics were given a lot from Hungary. The Roman Catholics, on their part, have nowadays a different account of the same story. They say that the Greek Catholics – according to them, a handful of old people – forcefully demanded the church back, practically reoccupied it, and did not allow Roman Catholics to enter the church again. All this, of course, happened when the renovation of the church, to which they had significantly contributed, neared completion. The conflict in this village has now more or less abated. The construction of the new church has pacified opinion and clarified what rights people are entitled to and where. The Roman Catholics, by deciding to build a new church, assigned themselves a new goal that has come to symbolize their community.

In Komarivci, the church was returned to the Greek Catholic Church without any crisis, and the two Catholic communities continued to share it. However, tension over its use can be clearly observed. During one of our field trips we witnessed how Roman Catholics preparing for Sunday mass moved the altar to the centre of the church because it had been placed to the side by Greek Catholics. They found it irritating to have the altar placed at the side between Roman Catholic masses. We were still present when the Greek Catholic vicar arrived and emphatically warned the movers of the altar that in the future this could only be done with his permission. He believed this Roman Catholic practice was mere 'table-worship', not the worship of God.

The greatest conflict emerged in Halocs, when the Roman Catholic churchwarden refused entry to Greek Catholic minister and his followers on the second day of Christmas so they could hold their first Holy Liturgy.¹⁴ He said that the village's Roman Catholic priest had not notified him and that therefore he could not open the church. The Greek Catholic mass was thus held in the cemetery in the late-December cold. So far, the Roman Catholic Church possesses the building and the Greek Catholic community attends worship in the very same church. Greek Catholics have accepted that their Roman Catholic colleagues at present own the church building, but they still hope for a more viable solution. The two groups have different perspectives: while Roman Catholics are convinced that only a few old people consider themselves Greek Catholics, the others believe only a few people have

¹⁴ According to local informants, this happened in 1990. Legalization occurred in 1989 and became widely known in 1990–91. Conflicts around former Greek Catholic ecclesiastical properties are still not completely resolved.

remained Roman Catholic and that the majority is, in fact, Greek Catholic but attends mass according to the Roman Rite out of mere nostalgia.

Roman Catholics believe that the majority of Greek Catholics in Subcarpathia are Rusyn. After fifty years of propaganda and prohibition Greek Catholics consider themselves Ukrainian. Neither public opinion nor the political elites recognize the meagre Hungarian Greek Catholic population. The common belief is that wherever a Greek Catholic church exists, the community must be Ukrainian. Roman Catholics doubt whether the Mukachevo Eparchy, under the direct supervision of the Holy See (*ecclesia sui iuris*), will be able to maintain its status. They are positive that in the long run the will of L'viv will prevail and the eparchy will lose its independence and be incorporated in the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.¹⁵

According to the story circulated in Roman Catholic circles in nearby Sislivci, the few old Hungarian Greek Catholics practised the Latin mass for fifty years but they wanted their church back primarily because of individual ambition and self-assertion and not because they so much remembered the Byzantine Rite. And Rusyns have already appeared claiming the sermon and the Gospel readings in their mother tongue during the mass celebrated in Hungarian. It is expected, then, that Rusyns will soon outnumber Hungarians and take over the church, thus also changing the liturgical language.

The Roman Catholics in the neighboring villages to Sislivci refer to this as a warning example. In fact, of the three villages studied, Sislivci was where the most Rusyns have settled; the church is affiliated with the highly 'Ukrainianized' Sztoroznicja. Sislivci is a good example of how the churches can come to be involved in, and even cause, ethnic conflicts. Because neighbouring Sztoroznicja has a Rusyn majority, they use the Julian calendar. Naturally, the affiliated churchgoers in Sislivci also follow this practice. The Roman Catholic Hungarians who use the Gregorian calendar and who live here as well as in the neighbouring villages regard this as evidence of forced 'Ukrainization', since these Greek Catholic Hungarians have to observe holidays together with Greek Catholic Ukrainians and not the more familiar Roman Catholic and Protestant Hungarians.

The former Greek Catholic Hungarian communities around Uzhhorod thus split apart. Currently, those from former Greek Catholic families are either re-establishing Greek Catholic parishes or belong to Roman Catholic parishes. Although no clear statistics are available, probably the number and proportion of Hungarians in formerly significant Greek Catholic communi-

¹⁵ In the case of such a change, Elemér Ortutay, a Hungarian Greek Catholic priest, expresses similar fears on limiting the rights of non-Rusyn speaking minorities: 'If we were to give up our status, the Hungarian, Romanian and Slovak [i.e. Greek Catholic] believers would necessarily be thrust into the background' (Bottlik and Dupka 1993: 49).

ties has decreased, but the Rusyn population that moved in recent decades has strengthened these groups. According to our observation, the different choices of Greek Catholic Hungarians have been influenced primarily by different visions of Hungarians as a national minority in Ukraine. One of our interviewees, active in the Hungarian political movement, naturally did not support the reorganization of the Greek Catholic parish, while his politically inactive elder brother, who had had childhood experiences with the Greek Catholic Rite, became a leading proponent of its reorganization. Apart from this, one cannot overlook the personal reasons, generational differences, and individual motives that have influenced such decisions.

The Attraction of the Byzantine Rite: 'Reunification' and the Making of Hungarian Orthodoxy¹⁶

Several groups of Hungarian Greek Catholics in Subcarpathia, especially around Berehovo and Vynohradiv, where there had been no viable Roman Catholic community outside towns, refused to give up their Byzantine Rite in the past decades. This led to conflicts even more vehement and complicated than those around Uzhhorod. In order to understand these, we have to examine how these parish communities reacted to political changes. We will illustrate the case of communities upholding their Byzantine Rite with the example of two settlements, Salanki and Bobove.¹⁷

Life without Priests – Rejecters of Reunion

Most Greek Catholic communities were related to the forced reunification with the Orthodox Church through the choice of their parish priest (Pilipkó 2004). In most cases the priest formally accepted the reunion, 'subscribed to it', and thus could continue his ministry in the parish. There were, however, cases in which the priest refused to accept, thereby facing twenty-five years of forced labour. Following the deportation of these priests, most communities in the Berehovo and Vynohradiv regions decided for passive resistance:

¹⁶ Apart from the Serbian, Greek, and Romanian Orthodox communities in Hungary, there is also a small Hungarian Orthodox community but this is rather an elite tradition in Hungarian culture, which has no roots in Subcarpathia.

¹⁷ Bobove (Hungarian: Tiszabökény) is situated south of Vynohradiv on the bank of the River Tisza. Greek Catholic Rusyn migration started in the eighteenth century to the Reformed Hungarian Bobove. In the predominantly Hungarian environment, the Rusyn language disappeared in the nineteenth century, whereas Greek Catholicism remained. According to the 1989 census, 2,550 of the 2,600 inhabitants identify themselves as ethnic Hungarian. Salanki (Hungarian: Salánk) lies north of Vynohradiv. Salanki has 3,160 inhabitants with 97% ethnic Hungarians.

they refused to accept the Orthodox priest using Church Slavonic imposed on them, but rather celebrated their liturgies under the guidance of their cantor. Nonetheless, there was profound uncertainty about the future of their church life: 'Well, we would just go because we're used to going to church, we would need no new priest ... you can't go without a priest, our father told us, but it was to be an Orthodox priest, and that would not do ... So we began going without a priest' (Field interview from Bobove, 1999).

Religious teaching and practice intertwined all aspects of parish life with a traditional order of values. Without a priest, the daily routine could not be maintained: community arrangements related to life and death – the baptism of a newborn and a funeral for the dead – called for urgent solutions. Parishes without priest found a solution in asking the 'subscribed' priests of neighbouring parishes to celebrate services for them: 'We heard the Greek priests weren't carried off here and there, the neighbouring villages, so we called them to bury, baptize, and marry' (Field interview from Bobove, 1999).

After a while, these 'reunited' priests were asked to administer not only the occasional but also the regular rituals, and they would 'serve across' in various parishes. Judging from what these parishioners said in 1999, they did not regard these 'reunited' priests as 'Orthodox': 'well, them poor men, they subscribed to save their hides, but deep in their hearts, they were Greek all right, and we knew that' (Field interview from Bobove, 1999). Another parishioner noted: 'My sons, none of them are Orthodox, they were all baptized by such "subscribed" priests, because the priests of Salanki, Vynohradiv, Vilok were never Orthodox' (Field interview from Bobove, 1999).

The priests who rejected the reunion with Orthodoxy have tried to provide their flocks with guidance for the future. Before being forced to leave they tried to make clear to their communities that the Greek Catholic church in the parish would cease to exist and an Orthodox priest would come to replace them. Some recommended that their parishioners should not go to the Orthodox church but practice their deep piety and hold on to their Catholicism in private. This naturally led some parishioners to choosing the Roman Catholic churches functioning under much constraint but at least legally in some of the nearby towns. Other priests let their parishioners decide for themselves. In practice, however, it was not so much these recommendations that determined the decisions but the self-organizing capacities of each community. A vivid example is the village of Salanki where the 'mightily faithful' priest, who had served in the village for thirty-three years, would not hear of any compromise in cooperating with the Orthodox

Church, either by his parish or himself. Given the circumstances he could not evade internment, and the parish was left to itself.

The Formal Acceptance of Reunion – The Latent Mode of Greek Catholic Existence

In communities where Greek Catholic priests subscribed to reunion with Orthodoxy, church buildings were automatically reregistered as Orthodox parishes. However, most parishioners did not realize that they attended services in Orthodox churches, and that, in fact, they themselves had become Orthodox. Some came to realize it much later, and hence withdrew from the community, deciding not to take up the new confession of their 'apostate' priest (e.g. the village of Deda). The majority of the Greek Catholic population, however, came to live in a sort of latent Greek Catholicism.

Mentioned previously as an example of resistance, Salanki developed a rather paradoxical situation; after the elderly priest had been incarcerated, the village community arranged for a new 'reunited' priest to lead the parish, who was actually the imprisoned priest's son, a young man who had served in another parish. The cantor of Salanki, well-versed in church matters, recognized that the religious homogenizing policy of the new 'state religion' was also driven by ethnic homogenization. So, getting the whole parish involved, he arranged to move the young priest into the parish, thereby ensuring the continuity of religious practice and preservation of the mother tongue: 'He too had been imprisoned [like his father], but the villagers looked him up, and talked him into it, they told him they'd do justice to him before God and man, but he must stand up for his people because they were going to saddle us with some Slavic-speaking priest and that would be the end of us and our Hungarianness' (Field interview from Salanki, 1992).

The 'reunited' priest had served afterwards for thirty-nine years in the parish practising a latent mode of Greek Catholic existence. In the eyes of his parishioners, he upheld an authentic Greek Catholicism and, thus, apart from a few formal elements, their religious life, their customs, and language remained the same.¹⁸ In spite of the ideological pressure and the formal turn

¹⁸ All over the region in communities where the parish priest could be convinced 'locally' to accept 'reunion', the shift to the Orthodox Church was smoother. The necessary formal changes were rather superficial: e.g. images of the Sacred Heart of Jesus were repainted onto cloth, images of St Anthony were changed to St Michael, or sculptures were removed from churches. There were also places, however, where all was left untouched. One significant element changed in the liturgy; specifically, the pope's name was left publicly unsaid. In order not to state the Moscow patriarch's name aloud, 'reunited' priests would whisper the insertion on the 'superiors' within the liturgy. Of course, the laity noticed these changes, but accepted them as a compromise.

to the Orthodox Church, this upholding of religious and ethnic identity through everyday practice made possible Greek Catholic continuity in local communities.

The End of the Latent Mode of Greek Catholic Existence – The Dying Out of the Reunited Priesthood

In the following years the number of believers shifting to Roman Catholic churches increased in parishes where the 'apostate' priests could not remain working (as a result of old age or death). In such cases, the old, formerly Greek Catholic priests were replaced by Orthodox priests. The new priests made fundamental changes in the community life by changing the liturgical order and even the liturgical language. This was a most traumatic experience for parishioners, and brought about vehement protests in most parishes. In no such rebellious parish could Orthodox priests stay for extended periods, and, thus, they had to be continually replaced. The Orthodox priests who kept Hungarian as the liturgical language were received with more benevolence by parishioners. Furthermore in such cases, locals tried to *train* priests into local customs.¹⁹ Orthodox priests usually did not rule out such requests, (Pilipkó 1997), and they even fulfilled special requests, such as healing and exorcism. In Salanki, when the 'reunited' priest who had maintained a latent mode of Greek Catholic existence died in 1988, the parish community rejected and forced out any succeeding Orthodox priests who knew no Hungarian and wished to introduce Church Slavonic in the liturgy. Because of the frequent changes and the living memory of Greek Catholic identity, the community unanimously stood up for the reorganization of the Greek Catholic parish at the time of the political transformations. The exact content and form of Greek Catholicism in the village, however, was to become the subject of heated debates.

In the 1980s, the Orthodox Church had two Hungarian-speaking priests who had serious chances of defending Hungarian communities in Subcarpathia. One had studied to be an Orthodox priest and was appointed to the Greek Catholic parish of Bobove in 1982. The village had had no permanent priest for over three decades and considering religious policies of the time, they were lucky to receive a Hungarian priest, even if he was Orthodox. However, nobody knew then that because of the Hungarian Orthodox priest the Orthodox Church would prevail in the parish when laws allowed re-establishment of the Greek Catholic Church:

¹⁹ Generally meaning that the person closest to the priest, usually, the sexton, who was also the ministrant, would advise the priest on the parish's customs and expectations, making clear to him that he could stay as long as he took these into consideration.

So, then [in 1982], we would receive him, of course we would, he was Hungarian, the young priest, he was from Jánosi [Ukrainian: Janosi] nearby ... We couldn't know that the state of religion would change, could we? That we would one day be Greeks again, that religion would turn back to proper (Field interview from Bobove, 1999).

After decades of abandonment the arrival of the Hungarian Orthodox priest in the 1980s created a chance to practise the Eastern Liturgy in Hungarian. The locals overlooked the fact that the new priest was Orthodox and as the liturgies are similar they thought to practise Greek Catholicism while apparently taking part in forming an Orthodox parish. As a result the latent mode of Greek Catholic existence in Bobove came alive. The rebirth of church life and the use of Hungarian in liturgical services concealed the fundamental fact that an Orthodox parish was being organized.

New Trends in the 1990s

The peace that the arrival of the Orthodox priest brought to the village was short-lived. With the revival of the Greek Catholic Church all over the region local communities started to reclaim their churches to Greek Catholicism. In Bobove, however, most Eastern-Rite believers remained Orthodox (see also Geszti 2001; Pilipkó 2002a). The local council passed a resolution ordering the Orthodox priest to leave the village within two weeks and transfer the church to the newly reorganized Greek Catholic parish. In its resolution, the council referred to the referendum in the Greek Catholic community, and the parishioners voted for the Greek Catholic Church. However, the Orthodox priest refused to accept the result of the referendum and stated that the people loved him and the referendum had been falsified, nothing but 'Communist manipulation'. Thus, Bobove remained the only registered Hungarian Orthodox community in all of Subcarpathia.

In other villages, the Rusyn Orthodox clergy that had, either of their own accord or under slight pressure, learned to speak Hungarian, resigned from their posts at the head of the newly re-established Greek Catholic parishes, and founded Rusyn-language Orthodox parishes. The Orthodox priest of Bobove, as an ethnic Hungarian, realized he had little chance to find another parish and decided to fight for this one.

The village leadership in Bobove was composed mostly of members of the Roman Catholic and Reformed churches, but most of them because of their positions were party members and therefore formally atheists.²⁰ After

²⁰ Local surveys indicate that the past decades' discriminatory social policies encouraged social groups with a secondary or higher education, especially professionals, into formal

the changes, the local elite returned to their forbears' churches, and, as village leaders, decided to put into practice the law on re-establishing the Greek Catholic Church. They were, however, caught unaware by the tough resistance offered by the local Orthodox priest. The latter felt it unjust that after almost ten years of service he should leave the village, where '*people have loved him*', so he went around his parish canvassing for signatures to prove the peoples' affection for him. Thereafter the village community split in two: one group insisted on their priest, while the other subjected his staying to the condition that he '*shifts*' to Greek Catholicism. The priest could not manage the '*shift*', but managed very well to keep half of his flock Orthodox.

The Motives of Identification after 1990

The massive reorganization of Hungarian Greek Catholic parishes in the 1990s demonstrates that the forty-year religious hegemony of the Orthodox Church could not function as a force capable of shaping a group's identity. The social-psychological conditions for creating such an identity were missing in the first place. First, personal life stories preserved the memories of the forced reunification of the Greek Catholic Church, the internment of its priests, the capricious fate of its churches. Second, the Orthodox Church in Subcarpathia was generally associated with the 'coming in of the Ruskiés' and the painful memories of *malenky robot*,²¹ to which Hungarian Greek Catholics felt victim just as much as their Reformed or Roman Catholic brethren, were connected to Russians. Third, and perhaps most important, the use of Hungarian in church services had a role in maintaining ethnic identity in both individual and community consciousness. These Hungarian-speaking Greek Catholics by preserving their language and culture deemed themselves members of the larger Hungarian nation. By choosing to provide them with Hungarian-speaking priests, the Orthodox Church recognized the usefulness of this ethnic identity. This attempt proved so successful in Bobove that the majority of the Greek Catholic community remained Orthodox even after the changes of the early 1990s.

Bobove was a rather peculiar case because, officially, the whole community had been Orthodox for forty years. Nevertheless, this was not enough time for a cohesive Orthodox identity to take root among the parishioners, who always thought of themselves as Greek Catholics. When faced

irreligiosity. After the changes in 1990 and the end of official antireligious ideology, several members of these groups reaffiliated with their parishes (Pilipkó 1999: 7–9).

²¹ The manner of speaking of the Soviet military, meaning literally 'little work', when collecting people for labour camps.

with the choice of remaining Orthodox or returning to Greek Catholicism, the parishioners must have reflected on the differences between the two confessional identities. However, only a very small group of people in Bobove, mainly the members of the parish council, the cantor, the sexton, the curator (the 'Orthodox core'), felt it as their duty to motivate their choice. The village community was quite differentiated on their motives in belonging to a particular church identity. The majority continued to profess that they are 'Greek Catholics but go to the Orthodox priest'. They were the so-called undecided. The third group was the 'unconscious Orthodox', who not only did not admit that they are Orthodox but said: 'we go to the Greek Catholic church, so we can only be Greek Catholics'.

The 'Orthodox core' belonged to the middle generation born after 1949, and their first and most firm ground of reference was that they were 'baptized by the Orthodox priest and so can hardly be anything but Orthodox'. They renounced their forbears' Greek Catholic tradition; history for them began in the 1950s when they were 'born into' the Orthodox Church.

When this Soviet system came in, with it came the whole Orthodox religion, and, from then on, whoever was born was [baptized] Orthodox ... we're all born after that, and we can't help that, why would we deny our religion ... we don't mind what religion there had been here before 1949 (Field interview from Bobove, 2000).

Identity is relative to some other identity: in this given case, the entity brought into comparison is the community of Greek Catholic parishioners. According to the interpretation of the 'Orthodox core', several Greek Catholics – about 20 families – did not *persevere* with their community, because, with the coming of the Orthodox priest in 1982, they left it, and began going to the Roman Catholic church in the neighboring village, Vilok. Members of the 'Orthodox core' say that those villagers indicated by their behaviour that they refused to partake in the duty of maintaining the parish, which fell to the ones remaining at home, the nowadays members of the Orthodox parish. As the Greek Catholic Church was legalized again in the beginning of 1990s, these 'deserting' families were the most ardent supporters and organizers of the local Greek Catholic parish. They were the ones who felt they persevered in their principles and held on to their Catholic identity.

The second group consisted of the 'undecided', their attitude being the most ambivalent. They, particularly the elderly, consciously professed their Greek Catholicism in spite of attending Orthodox services: 'We're Greek who go to the Orthodox priest', people in the village say. In the course of the conflicts between the Greek Catholics and the Orthodox, these people were so deeply offended that they felt their only choice was full dissociation from the Greek Catholic side: 'How would I go with them when they'd sent me

out of the church – me, the cantor'. In the community's daily routine, these negative attitudes between the opposing groups have mellowed, lost much of their aggression and fervour, but not their distance.

The third, 'unaware Orthodox', group deems itself Greek Catholic but not by conscious decision. They thought of themselves as Greek Catholics because they 'used to go to the Greek Catholic church', to the priest they had gone to before (i.e. the Orthodox priest of the village since 1982), and they therefore were 'Greek Catholics as always, and remained so, and did not go running to other churches or priests'. This reflects a particular connection between space and identity, hinted at by the Orthodox priest's behaviour when he was forced to return the formerly Greek Catholic church building. He insisted on building his independent church on the very site next to the present Greek Catholic church, which had been chosen as the site of a future Greek Catholic church with foundations already laid. This is quite an extraordinary 'continuity-shaping' solution by the newly organized Hungarian Orthodox community.

For the new Orthodox church, village authorities had chosen a site in the centre of the village still used for agriculture. The Orthodox priest, however, categorically rejected this site, arguing that this would put the newly organized community in a peripheral situation. The location of the site in the village centre was not peripheral geographically but in a sacral sense. It was further away from the upper quarter of the settlement, the location of all the religious spaces: not only the Greek Catholic, but also the Roman Catholic and the Reformed churches. Thus, the village's new Orthodox church would have not only been 'far' from its current religious centre, but, due to the large expanse of the village, it could even have attained a central position. Nevertheless, the Orthodox priest would not accept the proposal. In a neutral location, the new Orthodox church as a physical object would embody Orthodoxy, and this exclusivity itself would keep many villagers away from it, not to mention the 'unconscious Orthodox' group whose individual Orthodox religious lives were connected to the old Greek Catholic church. The Orthodox priest had to decide: he could either build a new church for a community of smaller size or hold on to his parishioners and postpone the construction of the church. The Orthodox community built its own church in the end (in 2000), but not on the site offered by the local council, which continued to be seen as peripheral. Instead they are building it on the grounds of a shop they acquired close to the Greek Catholic church. The impressive church building will certainly bring about important changes in the village sacral structure.

The Liturgical Order

After the forced reunion of 1949, Greek Catholic churches in Subcarpathia were ordered by higher ecclesiastical authorities to remove certain objects that bore Latin associations (e.g. statues), while certain devotions of Latin origin (the cults of the Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph in rosary societies) were not only tolerated but taken over by Orthodox priests in certain parishes. For instance, the Novena to Saint Joseph was introduced in the Bobove parish by the Orthodox priest installed in 1982. He had known this devotion from the Greek Catholic village of his birth, and, sensing its community-preserving potential, he adapted it to his own parish.

Greek Catholics who withdrew from the Orthodox communities after 1990, however, lost these particular devotions. The newly reorganized Greek Catholic parishes were served by 'circuit' priests from a distance; these priests had no time for supplemental devotions. Many of these priests, often coming from Hungary or having studied there, were influenced by the Second Vatican Council resolution that prescribed the revision of the self-interpretation of the Eastern Churches, fostered the rediscovery of their values, and encouraged a return to their traditions (Pirigyi 1990: 164; also Buzalka, Mahieu, this volume). This recommendation consciously sought to remove Latin elements from the liturgy, and shorten it in accordance with the requirements of modern times. This attitude had already taken root in the Hajdúdorog Episcopacy in Hungary. Thus, the Subcarpathian priests who had studied in Hungary returned to their parishes with the aim to put these ideas into practice. Parishioners, however, objected to this process of 'Byzantinization'.

Although in the reorganized Greek Catholic parish in Bobove this process did not face any resistance, in communities that fully returned to Greek Catholicism it encountered strong opposition (Pilipkó 2002b). The changes in the liturgy, its shortening, and the removal of Western (but here customary) elements from it provided a good pretext for parish communities that held on to Orthodoxy to prove that they took the right way, that they 'held on to Catholicism', because the liturgy presented by the Orthodox priest was closer to the older Greek Catholic liturgy as they knew it.

Indeed, based on the 'Byzantinization' proposed by the Second Vatican Council,²² the Orthodox and Greek Catholic rites (excluding certain motifs of dogma) should have come closer to each other. Paradoxically, however, the Orthodox liturgy retained certain elements of Latin origin familiar to believers (e.g. the Novena to Saint Joseph), while the Greek Catholic liturgy was shortened and excluded customary Latin elements.

²² Reinforced by the release, in 1990, of the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*.

Conclusion

The emergence of confessional conflicts in Subcarpathian villages was a result of the more general sociopolitical transformations. Conflicts arose from collisions of identity within the Greek Catholic Hungarian community in Subcarpathia. Some people wanted to re-establish their former church, and this was deemed harmless in certain regions, where people thought they were returning to the true order of things by re-establishing institutions that had been violently destroyed. Others believed that mere nostalgia or personal ambition fed the desire for religious reorganization and, thus, it was dangerous for the whole community. Villages became divided, with at least two groups with different sets of values emerging in this process; they verged on seeing one another as enemies. In fact, some quarrels descended into mob-law. For decades, otherness had had no chance of manifesting itself in these communities. Conflicts could only surface with the help of a newer, large-scale social change, which modified social relations to such an extent that everyone had to redefine his or her position.

The confessional conflict, as far as we see it, constitutes the symbolic struggle for high-prestige positions, or the process of the apparently homogeneous village communities falling apart into several communities of different views and interests. Formerly important and prestigious elements of identity either disappeared or became causes of negative discrimination (e.g. Communist Party membership), and formerly disparaged public roles (churchwardenship and activity in the Hungarian Cultural Association of Subcarpathia) and conditions (church membership) now acquired valuable elements of identity for everyone. The struggle is symbolic because the different 'parties' did not openly attempt to gain one another's positions or to question one another's honesty. Everyone was fighting for the church and the legitimacy springing from the possession of the church. Even today the most important source of legitimacy and power, indeed, the most important resource, is the church.

The conflicts described previously were mostly characteristic of Hungarian communities in the vicinity of the Hungarian-Rusyn language border. We argue that they cannot be regarded as simple ethnic conflicts. The notions of the 'other' appearing in the eyes of the community as dangerous clearly point out that, in the final count, the various outbursts of temper were rooted in the different interpretations of reality held by communities with different identities. In all the communities studied, the participants with the most 'Eastern' background were regarded as suspect, namely: in southwest Subcarpathia, the Greek Catholics and in the central and eastern regions, the Orthodox. The dominant groups in Hungarian communities always identified

the most Eastern participants with the majority Ukrainian society. This clearly points to the referential basis of local elites (Pusztai 1997).

In approaching the end of our analysis, we have to turn back to the widely acknowledged phenomenon that ethnic and religious identities, in most cases, support each other in Central Europe (e.g. Roman Catholic Croats vs. Orthodox Serbs, Roman Catholic and Protestant Hungarians vs. [mainly] Orthodox [and partly Greek Catholic] Romanians in Transylvania). Because we have reported about conflicts between ethnicity and religion, this chapter, at first, seems to suggest just the contrary. However, the motives of those attempting to obstruct the rebirth of Hungarian Greek Catholicism in the Uzhhorod region can, in fact, be explained by the former, seemingly disproved principle. Those fighting against Hungarian Greek Catholicism in Subcarpathia want to equate religion and ethnicity exactly because they want them to support each other, because they do not want local Hungarians, as they say, to 'pull apart'. Religion, that is, the preference for 'Hungarian [= Western] religions', as opposed to the suspect Greek Catholicism, is, in fact, the primary means of preserving an ethnic group in this situation (Gans 1994: 584).

The complexity of the situation is well demonstrated by the fact that these tensions only occur in the western parts of the areas inhabited by Hungarians. In more eastern regions, especially around Vynohradiv, Hungarian Greek Catholics had always thought of the Byzantine Rite as part of their identity. This is why the authorities tried to integrate the Hungarian parish communities in Orthodoxy by permitting Hungarian as the language of the Eastern liturgy, as the introduction of Church Slavonic never met with success.

The legalization of Greek Catholicism in Subcarpathia fuelled two parallel developments: the revival of religious traditions and the formation of modern religious life. These two processes harshly collided in contemporary Subcarpathian Hungarian Greek Catholicism, which is overwritten with generational conflicts. Old and new attitudes and identities came into conflict. The clergy defined the content of tradition divergently. For the older generation, pre-1949 Latinized Greek Catholicism is the legitimate heritage; whereas for the younger generation, educated in Hungary, the post-Vatican II revival of the Eastern traditions should be considered the true tradition. The contradictory interpretations of the clergy over what is the legitimate tradition have practical effects in parish life. Ordinary believers without detailed knowledge of church history were both witnesses and victims of the seemingly insoluble contradictions surrounding Greek Catholic tradition.

In examining the reawakening of Greek Catholicism, quite obviously the heart of the debate is over its authentic form. We can observe tradition

and modernity competing and the social construction of mutually supporting arguments. Which is the truly authentic form of Greek Catholicism: Following the Julian or the Gregorian calendar? Using the traditional, Latinized liturgy, as sometimes done by Orthodox priests, or using the modernist, shortened, Byzantinized, and locally repelling forms, which young priests from Hungary try to introduce? Who will be faithful to their forbears' faith, the ones who go to the Orthodox priest forced on them earlier, or the ones who attend imported Greek Catholic liturgies full of innovations? Broken traditions have clearly proliferated systems of arguments appealing to authenticity; each system of arguments bases itself on the tradition, which bewilderingly calls attention to the fundamental, ontological, intermediacy of Greek Catholicism.

References

- Balla, G. 1988. Kárpátaljai magyarság 1918–1988 [Hungarian in Subcarpathia 1918–1988]. In A. A. Kovács et al. (eds.), *Jelentések a határon túli magyar kisebbségek helyzetéről [Reports on the Situation of the Hungarian Minorities Outside the Borders]*, pp. 317–334. Budapest: ELTE/Medvetánc könyvek.
- Bendász, D. 1999. Romzsa Theodor vértanú püspök, a Munkácsi Egyházmegye papjai helytállásának és hitvallásának ihletője és mintaképe [Theodore Romzha Martyr Bishop, Model for the Priests of the Eparchy of Munkachevo]. *Görög Katolikus Szemle Kalendáriuma a 2000-es esztendőre* 1999: 117–120.
- . 2001. Legális és illegális papképzés a Munkácsi Egyházmegyében [Legal and Illegal Training of Priests in the Eparchy of Munkachevo]. In G. Janka (ed.), *Örökség és küldetés 1950–2000 [Heritage and Mission 1950–2000]*, pp. 99–106. Nyíregyháza: Szent Atanáz Görög Katolikus Hittudományi Főiskola.
- Bendász, I., and D. Bendász. 1994. *Helytállás és tanúságtétel. A munkácsi görög katolikus egyházmegye hitvalló és meghurcolt papjai [Firmness and Testimony. Confessor and Defamed Priests of the Greek Catholic Eparchy of Mukachevo]*. Ungvár: Galéria.
- Bonkáló, S. 1996. *A rutének (A ruszinok) [The Rusyns]*. Basel-Budapest: Európai Magyar Protestáns Szabadegyetem.
- Botlik, J. 1997. *Hármas kereszt alatt. Görög katolikusok Kárpátalján az ungvári uniótól napjainkig (1646–1997) [Greek Catholics in Subcarpathia from the Union of Uzshhorod to the Present (1646–1997)]*. Budapest: Hatodik Síp Alapítvány–Új Mandátum.

- Botlik, J., and G. Dupka. 1993. *Magyarlakta községek ezredéve Kárpátalján [The Past Thousand Years of Hungarian Inhabited Settlements in Subcarpathia]*. Ungvár–Budapest: Intermix-Patent.
- Chira, S. 1994. Visszaemlékezés 1958 [Recollection 1958]. In I. Bendász, and D. Bendász (eds.), *Helytállás és tanúságtétel. A munkácsi görög katolikus egyházmegye hitvalló és meghurcolt papjai [Firmness and Testimony. Confessor and Defamed Priests of the Greek Catholic Eparchy of Mukachevo]*, pp. 131–147. Ungvár: Galéria.
- Dupka, G., S. Horváth, and K. Móricz. 1990. *Sorsközösség. A kárpátaljai magyarok a 80-as évek végén [Common Fate. Subcarpathian Hungarians at the End of the '80s]*. Ungvár: Kárpáti.
- Fejős, Z. 1996. Kollektív emlékezet és az etnikai identitás megszerkesztése [Collective Memory and the Construction of Ethnic Identity]. In L. Diószegi (ed.), *Magyarságkutatás 1995–96 [Research in Hungarian Studies 1995–96]*, pp. 125–142. Budapest: Teleki László Alapítvány.
- Gans, H. J. 1994. Symbolic Ethnicity and Symbolic Religiosity: Towards a Comparison of Ethnic and Religious Acculturation. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 17: 577–592.
- Gesztai, Z. 2001. 'Mi és a másíkok'. Felekezetek közötti konfliktus és vallási identitás Tiszabökényben ['We and the Others'. Interdenominational Conflict and Religious Identity in Bobove]. *Tabula* 4: 34–59.
- Häyrynen, M. 2000. The Kaleidoscopic View: The Finnish National Landscape Imagery. *National Identities* 2 (1): 5–19.
- Holovács J. 1997. Vallomása életéről, pályájáról [Testimony of Life and Career]. *Hajdú-Bihari Napló* 5 April 1997.
- Magocsi, P. R. 2002. *Historical Atlas of Central Europe*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Mayer, M. 1997. *The Rusyns of Hungary: Political and Social Developments 1860–1910*. Classics of Carpatho-Rusyn Scholarship, No. 9. East European Monographs Series. Boulder and New York: Columbia University Press.
- Molnár, G., and J. Molnár. 2003. A kárpátaljai magyarság népességföldrajzi viszonyai a 2001-es ukrainai népszámlálás eredményeinek tükrében [Ethnogeography of Subcarpathian Hungarians According to the Ukrainian Census of 2001]. *Pro Minoritate* 5 (3): 91–94.
- Ortutay, E. 1993. ... *Holnap is felkel a nap [... The Sun Will Rise Again Tomorrow]*. Ungvár–Budapest: Galéria-Écriture.
- Pilipkó, E. 1997. Görög katolikus-ortodox ellentét egy kárpátaljai magyar görög katolikus egyházközségeen belül [Greek Catholic Orthodox

- Conflict in a Hungarian Greek Catholic Parish in Subcarpathia]. *Posztbizánci Közlemények* III: 52–62.
- . 1999. Az emberélet fordulóihoz kötődő szokások identitás-meghatározó szerepe [The Role of Rites of Passage Customs in Defining Identity]. *Kárpátaljai Minerva* III (2): 5–52.
- . 2002a. Magyar ortodoxok a kárpátaljai Tiszaháton [Hungarian Orthodox at the Bank of the Tisza in Subcarpathia]. *Tabula* 5: 171–197.
- . 2002b. '... a hagyományt nem lehet átállítani ...' (Közösségek viszonya Kárpátalján a görög katolikus egyházak keleti szertartásának nyugati elemeihez) [... 'this Tradition Cannot be Reconfigured...' The Relation of Subcarpathian Communities to the Western Elements of the Eastern Rite of Greek Catholic Churches]. *Posztbizánci Közlemények* V: 108–121.
- . 2004. A 'nemlétező' görög katolikus egyház működése Kárpátalján 1949-től 1989-ig' [The Functioning of the 'Nonexistent' Greek Catholic Church in Subcarpathia from 1949 to 1989]. In S. Lackovits, and V. Mészáros (eds.), *Népi vallásosság a Kárpát-medencében [Popular Religion in the Carpathian Basin]* 6, pp. 267–278. Veszprém: Veszprém Megyei Múzeumi Igazgatóság.
- Pusztai, B. 1993. Gálóc történeti etnodemográfiája [The Historical Ethno-Demography of Halocs]. *Magyar Egyháztörténeti Vázlatok - Regnum* 3–4: 27–44.
- . 1997. Collision of Identities. *Acta Ethnographica* 1–2: 149–163.
- . 2001. Worlds Upset: Identity Conflicts after Socialism with Special Reference to Subcarpathia. In J. Kloczowski, W. Lenarczyk, and S. Lukaszewicz (eds.), *Churches in the Century of Totalitarian Systems*, pp. 205–213. Lublin: Instytut Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej.
- . 2005. Discursive Tactics and Political Identity. Shaping Hungarian Greek Catholic Identity at the Turn of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. *National Identities* VII (2): 117–131.
- . 2007. Discoursing Boundaries: Hungarian Greek Catholic Identity Creation in the Inter-war Period. In M. Lamberg (ed.), *Shaping Ethnic Identities. Ethnic Minorities in Northern and East Central European States and Communities, c. 1450-2000*, pp. 35–69. Helsinki: East-West Books.
- Riskó, M. 1995. A kárpátaljai görögkatolikus egyház kálváriája 1944-től a legalitás visszanyeréséig a visszaemlékezések tükrében [Recollections on the Calvary of the Greek Catholic Church of Subcarpathia from 1944 to the Regaining of Legality]. *Magyar Egyháztörténeti Vázlatok - Regnum* 1–2: 177–197.