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It could be argued that the Ukrainian identity proved to be dominant in Eastern Galicia, when West Ukrainian People's Republic was proclaimed in November 1918 and agreed to unite with the rest of Ukraine the following month. However, the Ukrainian identity, understood as a national identity laying claim to statehood and encompassing a linguistic community stretching from Carpathians to the Caucasus, was not widely accepted in Galicia until the first decade of the twentieth century and even then it coexisted with alternative Russophile and Old Ruthenian identities.[1] David Little suggested that religious belief interacts with nationalism in a number of complex ways[2] with no clear causal relationship between the two[3] but with religious beliefs leaving "their own peculiar stamp on the form and shape of nationalism."[4] Similarly, Fox emphasized the importance of religion in its own right and as a factor separate from other cultural features in the context of minority discrimination.[5] Thus it seems that an examination of religion as a separate factor in the rise of Ukrainian identity in Galicia is entirely justified. Galician Ruthenians make a particularly interesting case, as they belonged to the Greek-Catholic or Uniate Church, which set them apart not only from the Catholic Poles but also the Ukrainian Orthodox population in the Russian Empire. The essay attempts to analyze the role of religious belief in the formation of

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1 Paul Robert Magocsi, *The Roots of Ukrainian Nationalism: Galicia as Ukraine's Piedmont* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 100.
2 David Little, "Belief, Ethnicity and Nationalism," *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* 1:2 (1995), 292.
3 *Ibid.*, 293.
4 *Ibid.*, 298.
5 Jonathan Fox, "Causes of Discrimination against Ethno-Religious Minorities," *International Studies Quarterly* 44:3 (2000): 430.

Ukrainian identity with reference to three functions of religion in Galician identity formation. First, the essay examines the exclusionary role of religion. Religious difference could foster Ukrainian identity by setting the Uniate population apart from the Catholic Poles but it could also provide an obstacle to a shared identity with Orthodox Ukrainians. Secondly, the inclusionary role of religion is discussed to show how certain aspects of religious practice could build bridges between Orthodox and Uniate Ukrainians, while other encouraged communality with Poles. Finally, the essay analyses the role of religion in creating both the national culture and language among the Ukrainians of Galicia, and in fostering cultures that distanced themselves from the Ukrainian national program.

If we accept that nationalism often depends on exclusion and demarcation of the "other" group, as suggested by Anthony W. Marx,[6] then religion could be seen as a powerful source of such "demarcation" in Galicia. Initially, confessional lines did not always clearly divide Galicia's population into "national" groups, as conversions were common[7] and religion remained more important as a marker of group identity than language until mid-nineteenth century.[8] In the second half of the nineteenth century religious difference increasingly provided means to demarcate national-linguistic boundaries. The Greek-Catholic communities used the symbol of the three-barred cross, which was erected in many villages in 1880s, despite official repressions, as a mark of "national-religious self-differentiation" from the Poles and Polish-dominated institutions of Galicia.[9] This demarcation could be seen as a manifestation of new consciousness and organization of peasantry, that, according to Magocsi, began in 1870s following abolition of serfdom and increase in levels of education and literacy in previous decades.[10] Furthermore, Polish publicists emphasized religious factors in explaining the Ukrainian movement since its appearance in 1848.[11]

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6   Anthony W. Marx, *Faith in Nation: Exclusionary Origins of Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 21.
7   Ostap Sereda, "From Church-Based to Cultural Nationalism: Early Ukrainophiles, Ritual Purification Movement and Emerging Cult of Taras Shevchenko in Austrian Eastern Galicia in the 1860s," *Canadian-American Slavic Studies* 40:1 (2006): 23-24.
8   *Ibid.*, 24-25
9   John-Paul Himka, *Religion and Nationality in Western Ukraine* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 122.
10 Magocsi, *The Roots of Ukrainian Nationalism*, 16.
11 John-Paul Himka, "The Construction of Nationality in Galician Rus': Icarian Flights in Almost All Directions," in *Intellectuals and the Articulation of the Nation*, ed. Ronald Grigor Suny and Michael D. Kennedy (Ann Arbor:

Thus, the dominant Polish culture was partially responsible for both politicizing and nationalizing the difference in rite. However religion alone, especially in the context of formal subordination of the Uniate Church to Rome and to the Catholic Habsburg Empire, could provide grounds for confrontation and assertion of both national and religious independence. The attempts by the Vatican to promote the idea of celibacy among Greek-Catholic clergy at Lviv Provincial Synod of 1891 met with strong resistance based on both the Church tradition and doctrine,[12] and on the fact that it would undermine the Ruthenian intelligentsia and thus harm the nation.[13] One speaker against official promotion of celibacy, used the term "Ruthenian Catholic Church"[14] arguing that married clergy led the national movement and educated Ruthenians were largely sons of priest. Thus, the national character of Greek-Catholic Church in Galicia was strongly emphasized within the Church by the end of the century. Religious difference allowed not only for a symbolic demarcation in Galicia but also for real struggle against Catholic impositions in matters of faith which was also being increasingly perceived in national terms. The Greek-Catholic faith thus set both Ruthenian villagers and clerical intelligentsia apart from Poles and Habsburg administration which could eventually enable a stronger group identity, including the Ukrainian national identity.

Yet, just as Greek-Orthodox rite separated Ruthenians from the Catholic Poles, so could it raise walls between them and Orthodox Ruthenians in the Russian Empire, thus becoming an obstacle to a wider Ukrainian identity. In fact, in 1768 during the so-called Koliivschyna rebellious Orthodox Ruthenians murdered thousands of Uniates in lands East of Galicia, despite shared language and economic status.[15] The Uniate-Orthodox tensions were not only at the source of hostilities but remained significant throughout disturbances.[16] Considering such dramatic signs of division among Ruthenians on the basis of religion present in the eighteenth century, it is perhaps surprising that religious difference had little impact on unity between Uniate Galicians and

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University of Michigan Press, 1999), 115.

12 Himka,, *Religion and Nationality*, 108.

13 *Ibid.*, 109.

14 *Ibid.*

15 Barbara Skinner, "Borderlands of Faith: Reconsidering the Origins of a Ukrainian Tragedy," *Slavic Review* 64:1 (2005): 89.

16 *Ibid.*, 113.

Orthodox Ruthenians in the Russian Empire in the 1800s. This is not to say that there was no conflict between Galicians and other Ruthenians, for example in 1890s the debate around standardization of language divided Galicians and Dnieper Ukrainians,[17] but those conflicts were rarely based on religious difference. When Uniate inhabitants of Chełm in tsarist Russia were forcefully converted to Orthodoxy with active help of Russophile Greek-Orthodox clergy from Galicia in 1875, only the Church hierarchy protested seeing it as a threat.[18] Ukrainian press and political organizations were seemingly willing to accept conversions to Orthodoxy as such, and merely opposed the means by which conversions were brought about by the Russian government.[19] Thus, by the late nineteenth century the significance of religious difference between Uniate and Orthodox Ruthenians was not emphasized, while the separateness from the Catholic Church was maintained by Uniate opposition to Catholic influence. As the following paragraphs demonstrate, such conditions actually allowed for a sense of unity with Orthodox Ruthenians to be expressed in the religious sphere within and outside of Uniate Church in Galicia. On the other hand, the formal unity between Catholics and Uniates simultaneously undermined the strict demarcation of Catholic Poles and Uniate Ruthenians as completely separate groups.

If one follows Anderson's argument that national consciousness depends on shared field of communication that enables individuals to imagine themselves as members of a national community,[20] cultural and literary exchange between Galicia and tsarist Ukraine was indispensable for inclusion of two populations separated by borders into one shared culture, language and national identity. However as late as 1890, almost 65 per cent of Galicia's population was illiterate, with illiteracy concentrating in Ukrainian-speaking lands.[21] If the idea of cultural unity of all Ukrainians was to become popular, it had to be communicated through a more accessible medium of religion and intermediated by the clergy. The Greek-Catholic clergy played this role, although sometimes

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17 Magocsi, *The Roots of Ukrainian Nationalism*, 97.
18 Himka, *Religion and Nationality*, 62-63.
19 *Ibid.*, 63-64.
20 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 44.
21 John-Paul Himka, *Galician Villagers and the Ukrainian National Movement in the Nineteenth Century* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1988), 60.

unwillingly. One example of practice in religious context which was meant to create a sense of connection to population of tsarist Ukraine among Galicia's masses was the issue of commemoration, or perhaps cult, of the national poet Taras Sevchenko. In 1862 a celebration of requiem mass in honor of Orthodox Shevchenko in an Orthodox church in Lviv provoked a scandal, as it turned into a patriotic gathering of Ukrainians, many of them devout Uniates.[22] The Orthodox celebration of Shevchenko in Lviv turned into an annual event[23] but Ukrainians in other towns also defied Catholic and Uniate attempts to prevent services in honor of Shevchenko on account of his anti-Catholicism and ordered requiem masses for "father Taras" pretending the poet was their father.[24] The struggle over commemoration of Shevchenko could be seen as an aspect of the broader ritual purification movement that encouraged transconfessional contacts between Galicians and East Ukrainians.[25] Some advocates of purification went beyond cleansing Uniate Church of Latin influences and travelled to Chełm in the Russian Empire to participate in conversions of Uniates to Orthodoxy there.[26] Other satisfied themselves with propagation of "Oriental" appearance in the Uniate churches of Galicia by successfully promoting *kolpaks* among clergy and arguing for the right to wear beards and venerate certain Orthodox saints.[27] One Uniate priest, father Naumovych, aided villagers of Hnylychky in their unsuccessful attempt at mass conversion to Orthodoxy in 1881.[28]

Support for the Eastern character of Church was expressed not only by religious dissenters among clergy, but also those loyal to the Uniate Church. Hierarchy feared that too much Latin influence would reduce the appeal of Eastern Rite Catholicism and thus limit the potential for extension of union with Rome to the East.[29] Thus, the significance of boundary between Orthodox East Ukrainians and Uniate Galicia was repeatedly undermined in the religious life of Galicia. Whether through conversions or support for the "Oriental" character of the Uniate Church, the

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22 Sereda, "From Church-Based to Cultural Nationalism," 35-36.
23 *Ibid.*, 38.
24 *Ibid.*, 37.
25 *Ibid.*, 39.
26 Himka, *Religion and Natinality*, 59.
27 *Ibid.*, 66.
28 Himka, *Religion and Nationality*, 75.
29 *Ibid.*, 116.

depth of religious breach between communities was called into question. This was partially made possible by the very nature of the Uniate Church originally devised as an institution straddling the divide between Orthodoxy and Catholicism. However, as Koliivschyna demonstrated, such an outcome was by no means certain. It was the efforts of Uniate clergy and faithful that turned the religious practice into a vehicle for promoting the idea of cultural and religious proximity with Ukrainians in the East. Religion allowed this idea to reach people who otherwise had little access to the emerging national literary culture developed among intellectual elites and thus complemented other processes leading to the development of a national identity among Galician Ukrainians.

Religion's impact on relations between Galician Ukrainians and Poles was somewhat more complicated. The difference in rite fostered group demarcation but formal unity of Catholic and Uniate Churches also allowed for certain ambiguity and bridge-building across national divisions. This could potentially weaken the Ukrainian national identity, which depended on a fixed and clear boundary separating speakers of Ukrainian from other groups. The so-called Liberation Festival celebrated by the Uniate Church in villages across Galicia in commemoration of the abolition of serfdom was just one example of religious practice uniting different linguistic groups. The festival was held annually sine 1849 and in the first decades many Polish Catholic peasants joined the Uniate processions and celebrations to commemorate the event of crucial importance to the peasantry, which was nevertheless not officially observed by the Polish Catholic Church.[30] Only in the late 1890s the celebrations acquired a decisively national and increasingly secular character, which resulted in the exclusion of Polish peasants from the celebration and transformed the date into a Ukrainian national holiday.[31] The two churches gradually accepted the nationalist rhetoric and were increasingly perceived on national terms, so that continued participation of Polish peasants in Uniate festivities was unlikely. This abandonment of universalistic principles and "nationalization" of religious matters is best seen in the case of Andrei Sheptytsky's career in the Uniate Church. Sheptytsky's nomination for bishop of Stanyslaviv in 1899 was initially opposed by Ukrainians and

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30 Kai Struve, "Peasants and Patriotic Celebrations in Habsburg Galicia," in *Galicia: A Multicultured Land,.* ed. Chris Hann and Paul Robert Magocsi (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2005), 106-07.
31 Struve, "Peasants and Patriotic Celebrations," 109.

supported by Galicia's Poles for the same reasons. Sheptytsky was a Polish aristocrat, of Polish culture, Latin rite and French mother tongue who converted to Eastern rite only upon entering Basilian monastery, and whose career could appear to lead to Polish control over the Uniate Church.[32] Eventually the new bishop became extremely popular among Ukrainians and a disappointment for the Poles. During his consecration, he reinvented himself as a descendant of Ruthenian nobility, supported Ukrainian grievances and encouraged the clergy to take part in the new national movement by establishing reading clubs in the villages.[33] Sheptytsky's success and reception depended on his adoption of Ruthenian identity and genuine conversion to Eastern rite. This demonstrates that bridge-building between the Poles and Ukrainians was increasingly difficult on purely religious grounds, and a dual religious and national identity was necessary for becoming recognized as a member of a given group. Nevertheless, some mobility between those groups was still possible, as demonstrated by Sheptytsky's case, and religious conversion was crucial for allowing it. Furthermore, Chris Hann suggested that in some mixed communities around Przemyśl, the ethnic and religious barriers remained fluid for much longer, as intermarriage and hybridization of cultures continued well into the twentieth century.[34]

The impact of religion on the formation of Ukrainian identity in Galicia clearly cannot be reduced to its role in group-building by inclusion of some and exclusion of others. Religion in Galicia could help separate Ukrainians from Poles and connect them to Ukrainians in the Russian Empire but it also had the potential to draw the Poles and Ukrainians together, while alienating Uniates from the Orthodox East. It is possible, however, that religion fostered Ukrainian national identity by carrying and propagating national culture, which nationalist movements build upon. There is some evidence for that. The Greek-Catholic metropolitan of Lviv, Mykhailo Levyts'kyi, was one of the first to propagate the idea of a Ruthenian language as distinct from Russian in the

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32 Himka, *Religion and Nationality*, 129-30.
33 *Ibid.*, 131.
34 Chris Hann, "The Limits of Galician Syncretism: Pluralism, Multiculturalism and Two Catholicisms" in *Galicia: A Multicultured Land* ed. Chris Hann and Paul Robert Magocsi (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2005), 220.

1820s and 1830s[35] and such an idea was the first prerequisite for Ukrainian identity. The participation of clergy was necessary for any early political movement as it was the only educated group among Ruthenians. Only in the late 1860s the almost-exclusively clerical intelligentsia was somewhat augmented by secular intellectuals of peasant origin who benefitted from Habsburg education system.[36] However, clergy's involvement continued, as young would-be priests were influenced by Ukrainophile culture in seminaries.[37] Some Greek-Catholic priests actively participated in the national movement by organizing national populist reading clubs in villages, thus attracting criticism from Catholic Poles and more conservative sections of Uniate clergy.[38] The participation of clergy in village reading clubs was in the end officially endorsed by bishop Sheptytsky, as mentioned before, despite obvious danger of politicization of the Church. It could be argued that the Greek-Catholic Church, its educated clergy and educational institutions such as seminaries constituted a cultural and intellectual fundament upon which the Ukrainian national identity could be built. This is hardly surprising, as in the context of the rural and illiterate population virtually any political movement had to rely on the clergy. However, it is worth remembering that clergy's national and political involvement did not necessarily meant endorsement for the Ukrainian national idea as such.

One possible orientation that rejected Ukrainian identity in its modern sense was Russophilism, and it could be seen as a competition to the Ukrainian national program. The Polish administrators were willing to exaggerate the threat and influence of Russophilism, quoting both emigration of Galician clergy to Chełm province and attempted conversion of Hnylychky in Galicia as evidence.[39] On the other hand, the trial of those responsible for Hnylychky affair revealed that at least two influential Uniate priests, fathers Naumovych and Levytsky were harboring pro-Russian and pro-Orthodox views.[40] This seemed to confirm that Russophilism was a threat, as Naumovych

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35 Magocsi, *The Roots of Ukrainian Nationalism*, 89.
36 *Ibid.*, 87.
37 Himka, *Religion and Nationality*, 145.
38 *Ibid.*, 159-60.
39 *Ibid.*, 87-8.
40 *Ibid.*, 95-6.

was not only the leader of Hnylychky's conversion but also one of the founders and leaders of a prominent "Kachkovsky's Society" organizing thousands of Ruthenians since its establishment in 1874.[41] However, the reactions to the Hnylychky trial, proved the Polish administrators wrong. The loyal pro-Habsburg Ukrainian peasants responded by cancelling their dues to "Kachkovsky's Society" and the new Greek-Catholic metropolitan in Lviv refused to tolerate pro-Russian leanings of the clergy any longer.[42] This, according to Himka, demonstrated that many followers of the Russophile leaders were unaware of the exact content of the ideology, as the leadership concealed it in fear of repercussions.[43] However, it also shows that sections of the Greek-Orthodox clergy were refusing to adopt the Ukrainian identity and preferred to see themselves as members of the greater Russian nation, distinguished by merely "Little Russian" characteristics. This presented the state with a threat and provoked repressions as early as 1874.[44] It was perhaps the state repressions that ultimately put Russophilists at a disadvantage and allowed Ukrainian identity to triumph both among the Uniate clergy and the general population.

The third and oldest form of Ukrainian identity in Galicia, which in the second half of the nineteenth century gave rise to both Ukrainian nationalism and Russophile tendencies, while also surviving as a separate phenomenon until the First World War, was Old Ruthenianism.[45] It was a regional identity of Galician patriots whose loyalties did not go beyond the borders of the Austrian Empire.[46] It was also inspired by religion to a much greater extent than the Ukrainian national identity of late nineteenth century, which had some secular characteristics. Emerging before 1848, its initial leadership consisted almost entirely of Greek-Catholic clergy united by their opposition to Poles.[47] Perhaps the most important issue that eventually led both Ukrainophiles and Russophiles to split from the Old Ruthenian orientation was language. While Ukrainophiles proposed standardizing and codifying the Ruthenian vernacular and Russophiles encouraged the use of Russian, the Old

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41 Magosci, *The Roots of Ukrainian Nationalism*, 135.
42 *Ibid.*, 139.
43 Himka, *Religion and Nationality*, 139.
44 *Ibid.*, 50.
45 Magosci *The Roots of Ukrainian* Nationalism, 103.
46 *Ibid.*, 105.
47 *Ibid.*, 106.

Ruthenians advocated maintaining the Slaveno-Rusyn book language.[48] This was a sign of influence of religion and the clergy, as Slaveno-Rusyn shared many similarities with the liturgical language of Old Church Slavonic, which was already employed by the Church and had a long history.[49] Slaveno-Rusyn could appeal to conservatively-minded clergy who viewed the emerging Ukrainian language with suspicion, not only as a modern invention as such, but also as one promoted by "free-thinking" and "anti-religious" national populists.[50] However it also led to problems, as Old Ruthenians had to effectively rely on two languages. Communication with uneducated masses had to be conducted in vernacular, while serious matters were to be discussed in uncodified Galician version of Church Slavonic, which carried historical prestige but was incomprehensible to the general population.[51] Gellner argued, that a sharp distinction between vernacular and liturgical language is typical of premodern, agrarian societies, where "high" culture is produced and consumed by a narrow literate strata, whose interests lie in maintaining barriers between them and the illiterate masses.[52] However, mass literacy is most easily achieved by the introduction of a standardized and literary form of vernacular, rather than teaching the masses to read and write in a dead language. Modernity in the Galician context meant the rise of mass readership, introduction of standardized vernacular by Austrian school administration in 1893 and the triumph of Ukrainian identity over the Old Ruthenian program. However, this does not render Old Ruthenian identity irrelevant. Ukrainian national identity and Russophilism grew out of Old Ruthenianism and build upon its earlier achievements, which in turn depended on clergy's involvement. Furthermore, adopting Tara Zahra's idea of "national indifference"[53] could suggest that perseverance of Old Ruthenianism into the twentieth century was a form of resistance to nationalism expressed in a separate identity built on religion and regionalism. Finally, participation of the clergy in all three orientations of Galician Ruthenians shows that the religious structures of

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48 *Ibid.*, 88.
49 Himka, *Religion and* Nationality, 144.
50 *Ibid.*, 144.
51 Magosci, *The Roots of Ukrainian Nationalism*, 94.
52 Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), 11.
53 Tara Zahra, "Imagined Noncommunities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis," *Slavic Review* 69:1 (2010): 93-119.

the province did not favor any single identity, instead supporting various formulations of the answer to the national question and influencing all of them.

In conclusion, religion's role in the rise of Ukrainian national identity in Galicia is rather complex and cannot be reduced to a simple causal relationship. Ukrainian membership in the Greek-Catholic Church allowed them to demarcate the boundary of the national group and differentiate themselves from the Poles. Such an anti-Polish sentiment was based to a large extent on religious difference and opposition the Catholic Church's influence demonstrated in the ritual purification movement but non-religious factors, such as the Polish hegemony in the local administration or class conflicts also played a role. This Polish-Ruthenian tension was manifested in the earliest Ruthenian identity in Galicia, known as Old Ruthenianism, which later gave rise to a more nationalist Ukrainian identity laying claims to statehood. However to claim that religious divisions in Galicia produced national and political ones, would be an oversimplification. Religious practice alone, as has been demonstrated, could occasionally bridge the divides between Galicia's Poles and Ukrainians, and it was only after the religious life had been infused with nationalist thinking that the religious difference led to increasing separation of communities. Simultaneously, religious difference between Ukrainians in the East and those in Galicia could provide an obstacle to identities reaching beyond Galicia's borders. Ultimately, religious practice in Galicia provided plenty of opportunities to emphasise unity with East Ruthenians of Orthodox faith but less so with Galicia's Catholic Poles. The flexible position of the Uniate Church between Orthodoxy and Catholicism could in theory support the opposite outcome but as the culture became dominated by the national populists and their Ukrainian national identity, stressing differences with Poles and similarity with East Ruthenians became the most common view. However, while the Uniate clergy played an important part in the development of the Ukrainian national movement and by the end of nineteenth century endorsed it at its highest levels, the triumph of Ukrainian identity cannot be attributed to clergy's participation alone. Due to the agrarian character of Ruthenian society, clergy was bound to play a leading role in any political movement and it did so by also supporting identities rival to the

Ukrainian national one, such as Old Ruthenianism and Russophilism. Government repressions of Russophilism and pressures of modernity on Old Ruthenianism were ultimately responsible for the triumph of the Ukrainian national identity, both inside and outside of the Greek-Catholic Church.

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