The London School of Economics and Political Science

Nationalism in the Borderlands of a Borderland: A Critical, Cartographical, and (De)constructional Analysis of Contemporary Ukraine

Marnie Howlett

A thesis submitted to the Department of International Relations of the London School of Economics and Political Science for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

London, UK
August 2021

Declaration

I certify that the work I have presented in this thesis for examination for the MPhil/PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others. The copyright of this thesis rests with the author. Quotation from it is permitted, provided that full acknowledgement is made. All maps, tables, and figures are the author's own. This thesis may not be reproduced without my prior written consent. I warrant that this authorisation does not, to the best of my belief, infringe the rights of any third party. I can confirm that my thesis was copy edited for conventions of language, spelling, and grammar by Anthony Walker-Cook. I declare that my thesis consists of 94,189 words.

I can confirm that parts of this thesis and related themes have been published in:

Howlett M (2021) Looking at the 'field' through a Zoom lens: methodological reflections on conducting online research during a global pandemic. *Qualitative Research.* Epub ahead of print 16 January 2021. DOI: 10.1177/1468794120985691.

Abstract

With the increased emphasis on nationalism in the modern day, as is evident with Brexit, COVID-19, and the rise of populism in Eastern and Central Europe, this thesis seeks to better understand the lived experience of nationhood and national belonging. The project thus investigates borderland areas to uncover how space, place, and territory implicate ordinary peoples' experiences of nationhood. By drawing on the case of Ukraine, and three of its smaller administrative regions (Zakarpattia, Chernihiv, and Kirovohrad), the project analyses nationalism in both micro- and macro-level borderlands; Zakarpattia and Chernihiv as territorial borderlands located near Ukraine's neighbouring geopolitical entities, and Kirovohrad as the centre of the geo-ideological borderland that is Ukraine. By uncovering the ways nationalism is experienced in the contemporary day in light of globalisation, the thesis contests the assumption that nationalism is primarily constructed through top-down efforts by the state and its institutions. The findings therefore push forward Political Science and International Relations literature theoretically, empirically, and methodologically by positing the need to move away from the spatial scale of territory as seen in representations of space to include both grassroots voices and ethnosymbolic ties within smaller representational spaces, particularly borderland areas. As prior studies on post-Soviet Ukraine have equally approached nationalism and identity from the territorial state, the findings from this analysis hence add to the ongoing discussions around cartography, state construction, and nationalism in the twenty-first century whilst also furthering the scholarship on Ukrainian geopolitics and nationalism. Moreover, the project shows how citizens of the same state may identify with different nations, and thus, how several understandings of nationalism and conceptualisations of homeland can (and do) co-exist within a territory. As this is the reality of most modern states, the findings have important implications for international and inter-state relations now and into the future.

Acknowledgements

Although writing a PhD thesis is a solidary endeavour, the larger journey involves a community of people. As the majority of this study was written amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the support from those around me proved invaluable in helping me navigate the challenges—both intellectual and personal—arising from the precarious global environment. I will thus forever be indebted to everyone who inspired, guided, and supported me throughout the last four years, and especially during the last sixteen months, as my ideas developed into the project presented here.

First and foremost, I would like to express my profound gratitude for my supervisor, Professor Tomila Lankina. She believed in me from even before the official beginning of my programme, and has pushed me far beyond what I believed I was capable of. I cannot thank her enough for her constant encouragement, support, inspiration, and intellectual guidance—I aspire to one day be even half the scholar that she is. A very special thank you is also for Dr. Mathias Koenig-Archibugi and his support as my advisor and mentor, as well as Dr. Ulrich Sedelmeier for his feedback and assistance in the first two years of my programme. I would also like to thank them both for nominating me for the Montague Burton First Year Award in the LSE's Department of International Relations.

I am incredibly grateful to Nicole Wegner for encouraging me to pursue a PhD and supporting me throughout this journey as a mentor, colleague, and friend. Olga Onuch, Austin Charron, Eleanor Knott, and Paul Goode also deserve a special mention for inspiring me with their own works on nationalism and Ukraine, fostering my passion for research methods, and welcoming me into the larger scholarly community.

I would like to thank my many friends from the LSE's Department of International Relations for the significant role they played in my programme, especially Alireza Shams Lahijani, McKenzie Ratner, Emma Saint, Sam Dixon, Asha Herten-Crabb, and Olivia Nantermoz, as well as those with whom I worked closely through our involvement in *Millennium*. The administrative staff, particularly Romy Mokogwu, Sarah Helias, and Gabrielle To, must be recognised for their assistance and incredible organisational skills. I must additionally thank the entire LSE LIFE team for their continued support over the last four years, and especially Sebastiano Caleffi, Jessica Kong, Afroditi Koulaxi, Gio Graglia, and Joanne Kalogeras for the laughs, encouragement, and friendship. Finally, an exceptional thank you is due to Marissa Kemp for being by my side from the very beginning of this journey, backing my (sometimes crazy) ideas, and always having the best and most honest advice.

This acknowledgement would be incomplete if I did not thank Goodenough College for providing me with so much more than a home during the last four years. In addition to the incredible academic and networking opportunities, I am beyond grateful for the friendships that bloomed during my time on Mecklenburgh Square. Although there are too many to list here, I would like to specifically thank the following people for their boundless encouragement, patience, and laughter: Rachel Valbrun, Dean Thompson, Anthony Walker-Cook, Christy Milligan, Caroline Blake, Dina Murad, Annie Webster, Tessa Cornelissen, Blanca Gomez, Parinaaz Jalali, and Andrew Morritt, as well as the Library Party and Lille Ladies. Goodenough College's Running Club and all those who ran with me during the last four years must also be thanked, as our 7 am conversations very much shaped this project into what it is here. I am likewise incredibly grateful to Olivia Toussaint-Martin and Dany Lamothe for their motivation and friendship in helping me embrace and work through the first few months of the pandemic. A special mention is also for the entire staff at Goodenough and especially the Reception team for their endless support. Cătălin Gabi Bursuc, Donna Vie Weyerer, Barbara Khan, Ramiz Arif, Rosario Leone, and Zhanna Milanowska must specifically be thanked for their friendship and banter. Fortitude Bakehouse and Half Million Coffee additionally deserve a special mention for fueling the writing of this thesis with copious amounts of coffee.

This project would not exist without the substantial assistance and support provided by the following people and organisations in Ukraine and beyond. I am incredibly thankful to: Ekaterina Malikova, Stanislav Ivashchenko, Svitlana Slava, Anna Korbut, Viktoria Takashkevych, Olga Griedneva, Nykola Dubenski, Gulnara Beck, Ilya Kushch, Kostantin Davydenko, Lesya Kyranda, Yuriy Kirushok, Olena Hanzha, Pavlo Leno, Vera Kichanova, Anna Urukova, Ivan Kozachenko, and Alexander Kosmirak. Additional credit is due to Baba Yelka, the Peace Corps, Windows on America (Uzhhorod, Chernihiv, and Kropyvnytskyi branches), and CANADEM for both their direct and indirect assistance. I am also grateful to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), the Shevchenko Foundation of Canada, the London Goodenough Association of Canada, the Canadian Foundation for Ukrainian Studies (CFUS), the British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies (BASEES), and the LSE's Department of International Relations for assisting with my studies and supporting my fieldwork. In addition, I would like to thank the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES) and the LSE's Postgraduate Travel Fund for allowing me to present this research internationally.

My family shaped me into who I am today, and I am incredibly appreciative of their constant love and encouragement from across many time zones. I cannot thank my parents, Dr. Evan and Doreen Howlett, enough for their endless support. I am likewise indebted to my siblings, Dr. Joel Howlett and Dr. Jill Howlett, for growing beyond our sibling rivalries to become friends and colleagues. Immense appreciation and gratitude is also for my Baba, Anne Michayluk, whose love for the Ukrainian culture was instilled in me from a very young age, thus motivating my interest in the country and, intrinsically, also this project.

This thesis is as much my work as it is those who ensured my mental health and wellbeing over the last four years—from both near and far—by messaging and calling, dining and cooking, running and exercising (or encouraging me to exercise), sharing laughs over coffee and snacks, and/or traveling and exploring with me. Whilst there are too many people to list here, I know who you are. You inspired (and continue to inspire) me and, naturally, played a role in shaping this project. Thank you for always supporting my indefatigable sense of curiosity and endless questioning—I am exceptionally grateful for your patience.

Finally, a special thank you is for my participants, hosts, and friends in Ukraine included either directly or indirectly in this project. Thank you for sharing your stories with me, and, for being part of mine.

Table of Contents

List of Figures 8
List of Tables 9
List of Abbreviations 10
A Note on Translations and Names 10

Preface 12
Chapter 1: Nationalism in Borderlands 14

1.1 Opening Thoughts 14
1.2 Situating the Project 19
1.3 Thesis Direction and Chapter Outline 26

Part I: Theories, Concepts, and Methods to Studying Nationalism in Borderlands 29
Chapter 2: Theorising Nationalism in the Territorial State System 30

2.1 Introduction to Part I 30
2.2 Cartographically Mapping the Contemporary State System 30
2.3 Critiquing the Contemporary State System 38
2.4 Deconstructing the Territorial State 42

Chapter 3: Critically Conceptualising Ukraine as a Borderland 50

3.1 Conceptualising Ukraine as a Borderland 50
3.2 Nationalism in Borderland Ukraine 59

Chapter 4: Methodologically Approaching Nationalism in Borderland Ukraine 67

4.1 Studying Nationalism in Ukraine 67
4.2 Comparative Case Selection 69
4.3 Empirical Strategy 75
4.4 Limitations of Study 87

Part II: Imagining Homelands Within Borderlands 89
Chapter 5: Zakarpattia as 'In-Between' 90

5.1 Introduction to Part II 90
5.2 Conceptualising Zakarpattia Within Territorial Ukraine 91
5.3 Borderland Zakarpattia as Homeland 99

Chapter 6: Chernihiv as 'the Middle' 114

6.1 Conceptualising Chernihiv Within Territorial Ukraine 114
6.2 Borderland Chernihiv as Homeland 123

Chapter 7: Kirovohrad as 'the Centre' 138

7.1 Conceptualising Kirovohrad Within Territorial Ukraine 138
7.2 Borderland Ukraine as Homeland 147

Part III: Understanding Nationalism Within Borderlands 162
Chapter 8: Experiencing Nationalism in Borderlands 163
8.1 Introduction to Part III 163
8.2 Borderlands as Modern Homelands 164
8.3 Borderland Nationalism 171

Chapter 9: Concluding Thoughts 178
9.1 Closing Remarks 178
9.2 Main Contributions 179
9.3 Avenues for Further Research 185
9.4 Reflections and Final Deliberations 187

Appendices and Bibliography 190
Appendix A. Topic Guide for Interviews and Focus Groups 191
Appendix B. Participants from Zakarpattia 192
Appendix C. Participants from Chernihiv 193
Appendix D. Participants from Kirovohrad 194

Bibliography 195

List of Figures

Figure 1.1. Map of contemporary Ukraine with neighbouring states 23

Figure 3.1. Territorial evolution of Ukraine from WWI 52

Figure 4.1. Map of Ukraine with secondary cases (yellow) 70
Figure 4.2. Map of Ukraine with secondary cases (yellow) and neighbouring states 73
Figure 4.3. Map and instructions for cognitive mapping exercise #1 81
Figure 4.4. Map and instructions for cognitive mapping exercise #2 81

Figure 5.1. Select young adults' responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1 92
Figure 5.2. Select middle-aged adults' responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1 94
Figure 5.3. Select older adults' responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1 96
Figure 5.4. Response to 'where are you from?' on map #1 100
Figure 5.5. Select responses to 'where are you from?' on map #2 103
Figure 5.6. Select responses on map #2 depicting changes to Ukraine's borders 106

Figure 6.1. Select young adults' responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1 116
Figure 6.2. Select middle-aged adults' responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1 118
Figure 6.3. Select older adults' responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1 120
Figure 6.4. Select responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1 124
Figure 6.5. Select responses to 'where are you from?' on map #2 126
Figure 6.6. Select responses on map #2 depicting changes to Ukraine's borders 130

Figure 7.1. Select young adults' responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1 140
Figure 7.2. Select middle-aged adults' responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1 142
Figure 7.3. Select older adults' responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1 144
Figure 7.4. Select responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1 148
Figure 7.5. Select responses to 'where are you from?' on map #2 150
Figure 7.6. Select responses on map #2 depicting changes to Ukraine's borders 154

Figure 8.1. Locating homeland 166

Figure 9.1. Territorial evolution of Ukraine from WWI 183
Figure 9.2. Imaginative cartographies within representations of space 183

List of Tables

1.1. Motivating research questions 19

4.1. Binaries of attachment at various spatial scales 85
4.2. Binaries of attachment at territorial scale of Ukraine 86

5.1. Difference between the EF and OF of spatial binaries on map #1 drawn by young adults 91
5.2. Difference between the EF and OF of spatial binaries on map #1 drawn by middle-aged adults 93
5.3. Difference between the EF and OF of spatial binaries on map #1 drawn by older adults 95
5.4. Observed frequencies of stylistic elements on map #1 by all ages 97
5.5. Observed frequencies of binaries on map #2 by all ages 104

6.1. Difference between the EF and OF of spatial binaries on map #1 drawn by young adults 115
6.2. Difference between the EF and OF of spatial binaries on map #1 drawn by middle-aged adults 117
6.3. Difference between the EF and OF of spatial binaries on map #1 drawn by older adults 119
6.4. Observed frequencies of stylistic elements on map #1 by all ages 121
6.5. Observed frequencies of binaries on map #2 by all ages 129

7.1. Difference between the EF and OF of spatial binaries on map #1 drawn by young adults 139
7.2. Difference between the EF and OF of spatial binaries on map #1 drawn by middle-aged adults 141
7.3. Difference between the EF and OF of spatial binaries on map #1 drawn by older adults 143
7.4. Observed frequencies of stylistic elements on map #1 by all ages 145
7.5. Observed frequencies of binaries on map #2 by all ages 153

List of Abbreviations

AR	Adjusted Residual
CBS	Critical Border Studies
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
EaP	Eastern Partnership
EACU	Eurasian Customs Union
EAEU	Eurasian Economic Union
EF	Expected Frequency
EU	European Union
ENP	European Neighbourhood Policy
FSU	Former Soviet Union
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
LSE	London School of Economics and Political Science
OF	Observed Frequency
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
Russian SFSR	Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic
SEA	Single Economic Area
UA	Ukraine
UK	United Kingdom
Ukrainian SSR	Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic
UN	United Nations
US	United States of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WWI	World War I (First World War)
WWII	World War II (Second World War)

A Note on Translations and Names

Language is political. Although this thesis was written in British English, it draws on conversations and material in several other languages, particularly Ukrainian, Russian, Hungarian, Belarusian, Polish, Slovakian, Surzhyk, and several local dialects. To ensure consistency, and as Ukraine is at the heart of this thesis, I have opted to use the common transliterated Ukrainian names and spellings for towns, cities, and people, except where an established English-language version exists. American English is also used in a few instances when quoting directly from sources written in American English and when using words commonly written in American English.

To ensure the anonymity of my participants, no individual names are used in this thesis. 'Ukrainian citizen' is utilised when referencing citizens of Ukraine in order to differentiate between Ukrainian citizenship and nationality (whether conceptualised in civic or ethnic terms), as the term 'Ukrainian' is often used in reference to both.

For all those who wonder where they are from.

Preface

I have no real experience living on the border of a state or in a community near a border. I was neither born in a country that has since ceased to exist, nor lived in a country that was created after the time I was born. My experience with borders has been limited to customs officers and passport controls when traveling abroad. Because the cities in which I have resided are located near the centre of a country's territory, I, like others who also live in central regions, can only reflect on the borderlands from the middle of a state; from the territorial centre looking outwards. As the reality of most states today is that major cities are located near the centre of states' territories or, at minimum, not located directly on a border shared with another country, the experience of most urban dwellers around the world resembles that of my own. Since few people have truly had the opportunity to understand life in the cartographic peripheries, this project accordingly centres on the stories of those living in borderland areas.

In an attempt to help us understand international relations a bit better, this thesis, in many ways, was also written in an effort to resolve my own questions about myself. As someone born in Canada, studying in the UK, and with known ancestral ties to Ukraine, Poland, England, Ireland, Scotland, and the US, I have often asked: where am *I* from? Since commencing my post-secondary studies in International Relations in 2011, I have questioned how (and why) some of my colleagues could so easily categorise themselves as being *from* a country and, inherently, a representation of all things that country signified. Though a simple and acceptable answer to this question is "Canada," the more time I have spent exploring this vast planet, the more uncomfortable I have become with responding in this way. As someone with a mixed background, I have always felt too 'Ukrainian' to only be a 'Canadian,' but too 'Canadian' to be an 'Ukrainian.' Complicating this further is that the answer to where I am from has changed over the course of my post-secondary education: from "Canada and Ukraine" when I studied in Canada to "England and Canada" when I moved for my doctoral studies. I am also certain the ways I cognise myself will continue to evolve throughout my lifetime, adding further intricacies to my already complex identity. In fact, during the four years I spent working on this project, I discovered my family originated from communities near the borders between Ukraine and both Poland (modern day Lviv) and Romania (modern day Chernivtsi), particularly where the borders were re-drawn following major historical geopolitical disruptions. This small, albeit profound, piece of information has not only changed the way I understand myself, but informed my approach to international relations, geopolitics, and cartography (and in effect, this thesis).

But whilst I, in some ways, set out to write this project in an attempt to resolve queries about my mixed identity and somewhat confused sense of origin, I had not considered that my questions were ones other people were also asking or that my project may even be effectual to others. Yet, living, working, and studying with individuals from all over the world has made me realise that the country stamped to the front of our passports only helps to define us because it is easy to point out on maps, where space is visually represented as territorial states. When we begin to seriously discuss our identities, though, the conversation typically includes a "but…" or an addendum about the other places which have shaped us—places we have ancestral ties to, places we were raised, and/or places that hold fond memories and attachments for us. In my case, although I am not a citizen of Ukraine, nor have I ever lived in the country as a permanent resident, my experiences at the local level define me as being more than merely "*from* Canada." Although this answer may be unsatisfactory to some, my experience, like everyone else's, is unique, and simplifying my response to only one place suggests some parts of my identity are more important than others. Though not often acknowledged, a passport thence does little more than represent the country one has legal ties to—it does not elicit a specific experience or identity. Rather, where we are

from is determined by us alone and, ultimately, comes with us wherever we go (Selasi, 2014). As such, the 'but' or additional place(s) we include when explaining who we are implies an inherent clash between the fluidity of identities, the inflexibility of a passport, and the belief that we must be *from* a specific country.

These ideas were echoed in a Ted Radio Hour podcast I listened to in the spring of 2018 when I was struggling to conceptualise this project and its larger contribution. In her talk, Taiye Selasi (2014) discussed the importance of locality over nationality, as the local is "where real life occurs." This profound statement made me realise the approach I needed to take with this thesis; namely, to uncover how individuals understand themselves and their identities as both citizens of a country and members of a nation, the everyday experiences of local situations need to be considered, regardless of where the 'local' is. Although people in borderland and central areas both live within the same territorial entity, and thus likely share the same citizenship, their unique experiences with space, territory, and nationalism differ significantly. These ideas are subsequently explored in this thesis, as the following chapters uncover the ways diverse nationalisms co-exist within states while local experiences simultaneously inform socio-political practices and processes. By considering local experiences, this thesis therefore pushes forward conversations around the role of borders and boundaries in global politics—both as artificial lines dividing space into political territories and as social constructs concurrently uniting and separating people.

Given my proximity to the themes discussed here, and my own positionality, I am very aware that my subjectivities shaped the writing of this thesis. As Pierre Bourdieu (2007) reminds: all social practices are embedded in larger knowledge hierarchies, and without careful attention to the practice of creating academic knowledge, there is a risk of "retiring from the world and from action in the world in order to think that action" (1990: 382). Hence, I am very aware that my Ukrainian heritage and involvement in a very active diaspora created opportunities for me to access networks and sites in Ukraine that would not have otherwise been made available. Although I did not fully feel a sense of shared identity with the communities included in this study in ways that could overtly influence my approach to research, I recognise my participants may have acted in response to my ancestral heritage and familiarity with the country. As I was only 25-27 years old when I conducted my field research, I am very conscious that my age—in addition to my gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and class, amongst other traits—may have impacted my interactions with participants, including their responses. The same can also be said about my language choices: I primarily used Ukrainian, English, and Surzhyk in the interviews and focus groups, and the instructions for the cognitive mapping exercises' were provided in English, Ukrainian, and Russian. While I do not believe my language choices in any way indicated a political agenda, nor that my lack of fluency in Russian or the local dialects negatively impacted my relationships with my contributors or their ability to express themselves, I admit I may not sufficiently recognise all the ways my subjectivities influenced my interactions in the field.

Moreover, I realise that during the time I spent in Ukraine, I developed a deeper attachment to and appreciation for the country, particularly the regions of Zakarpattia, Chernihiv, and Kirovohrad, as is to be expected when someone spends significant time learning about and living in a new place. The sites I visited, the people I interacted with, and my experiences at the local level during my field research between 2018-2020 undoubtedly shaped the project into what is presented here. In order to address my biases and subjectivities, I have therefore made every attempt to remove myself from this analysis. Despite my very best intentions, though, I am aware my personal sympathies for the country may still colour my work. Nevertheless, it is my hope that the voices of the people included in this project—those living in the borderlands—are the ones heard loudest here.

Chapter 1:
Introducing Nationalism in Borderlands

"No matter what the government is, this is still our motherland…
This influences in a certain way people's mentality,
[our] attitude towards this or that country."

Uzhhorod, Zakarpattia (2020)

"I can say the following: every person has their surroundings,
and these surroundings influence a person's views of life."

Chernihiv, Chernihiv (2020)

"We have a proverb: the place where you were born,
you are needed most of all."

Novoukrainka, Kirovohrad (2019)

1.1 Opening Thoughts

Where are you from? While a seemingly simple question, it remains one that can neither easily, nor completely, be answered. Are we *from* the place where we were born, or the place(s) where we were raised? If these places are different to where we live now, which place are we *from*? What about the country marked on our passport(s)—are we *from* it, too? What happens when the place where we were born becomes part of a new country through the re-drawing of borders, or even ceases to exist? Can we truly be *from* any country then?

These questions are ones I have pondered extensively over the last few years. Time and time again, I have asked myself if we really are, and can be, *from* a country. The answer is invariably a yes in academia, specifically in the social sciences, wherein countries are understood as the territorial and sovereign compartments presented on maps, each with their own centralised government whose legitimate claim to authority relies on the abstraction of the territory it seeks to govern (Sack, 1986). Following this logic, everyone, theoretically at least, is affiliated with a state by the very reality of living in a spatial area that has been assigned to a particular territory. The territorial form of the modern state, accentuated through the internal consolidation of people in a bounded space by clear and definitive borders, thus holds great importance for individuals outside of academia and in macro-level positions of power, including policymakers and government officials, as the starting point for political relations and diplomatic interactions with other sovereign entities. At the micro-level, too, states play a critical role in the lives of ordinary people, if not for the mere fact that the land where a person lives indicates—although it does not necessarily determine—their politico-legal association with a larger collective, as is articulated through passports and voting rights. To this end, the territorial state system motivates the ways we approach the world, other people, and even ourselves in the twenty-first century.

But whilst one of the world's 195 recognised states is typically offered as a response when the question 'where are you from?' is posed, such an answer remains, at least partially, unsatisfactory.[1] Declaring that we are from a specific country, as is commonly practiced, assumes sovereign states hold a finite existence, are absolute, and are fixed in time. Yet, they are *not* eternal. Although the concept of the state is now so ingrained within the contemporary understanding of politics that it is often overlooked as the relatively modern invention it is (Branch, 2010), space has only been formally organised into sovereign territorial entities through the use of linear borders since the Peace of Westphalia. Whereas borders were once drawn as a way to distinguish individuals of shared national, linguistic, historical, religious, and cultural identifications (Connor, 1978; 1994), the ever-increasing number of borders—and thus countries—since 1648 points to the contrived and impermanent nature of the contemporary state system. When reflecting on this relatively short history, we are reminded that established states have routinely disappeared while new polities have been, and continue to be, created through cartographical processes and the re-drawing of borderlines. In addition to the historical example of the arbitrary drawing of many African states during the Berlin Conference of 1884-85, this reality is more recently illustrated by the birth of several new countries after the fall of several European empires and the creation of fifteen states following the collapse of the USSR. As borders have been (re)drawn with the expansion and dissolution of political entities, and the subsequent re-assignment of space to different territories, many individuals have consequently seen their citizenships change throughout their lifetimes or lost their citizenships completely (Zevelev, 2001). Since simply living on one plot of land or even side of a city over another has come to determine peoples' citizenships, regardless of whether they feel any sense of attachment to the territory wherein they find themselves, individuals globally now hold citizenships of countries that did not exist when they were born or were born in countries that have not survived to the present day. This reality hence challenges the presumed logic of a fixed and sovereign territorial state.

In addition to de-bordering and re-bordering, previously held notions of sovereignty and territoriality have been complicated by globalisation. Advancements in transportation systems and telecommunication technologies have allowed for increased movements of people beyond the unitary and bounded, yet abstract, territorial units originally designed to contain them. The developments associated with global interconnectedness have further challenged states' borders, leaving many obsolete, impermanent, and sites of newfound sovereignty (Amilhat-Szary and Giraut, 2015; Graziano, 2018). As the spatial reality underwriting processes of globalisation, and global politics more generally, is assembled through historical cartographic practices (Strandsbjerg, 2010), these geopolitical transformations, especially within the last thirty years, have therefore instigated a shift in the meaning of borders and the ways they are articulated by state governments and studied by the academy. Specifically, the re-scaling of borders and subsequent cosmopolitanisation of societies has re-spatialised politics; the separation between the 'inside' and 'outside' of states, or 'the domestic' and the 'foreign,' has dissolved as political process and dynamics have extended beyond territories in the form of cross-border alliances and supranational networks (Beck, 2006; Mekdjian, 2015; Rumford, 2006; Sassen, 1996; 2015). In challenging the underlying and fundamental premise of sovereignty upon which the global order was built, the organisation of modern governance thus reinforces the invented and constructed nature of territorial states as a way to divide both people and space through the establishment of arbitrary and artificial borders. Following from here, we must ask ourselves: can, and how can, we be *from* a country when it is merely a socio-political construct?

[1] At the time of writing, the UN recognises 195 sovereign states (193 member states and two observers).

In pushing us to truly consider this question, Taiye Selasi (2014) so eloquently reminds of the "trap that the language of coming from a country sets—the privileging of a fiction, the singular country, over reality: human experience." Whilst we live in a "cartographic reality of space" (Strandsbjerg, 2010: 4), the routine emphasis on states' territories as the most salient scale for socio-political analyses—what John Agnew (1994) has termed the 'territorial trap'—has excluded the complex 'representational spaces,' or the "directly lived" places (Lefebvre, 1991: 38), where everyday social practices and processes take place, including those national in nature. Although much of the foundational geographical thinking emphasised territory as an important marker of identity, especially national identity (see, for example, Burghardt, 1973; Gottmann, 1973; Häkli, 1999; Herb, 1999; Kaiser, 2002; Knight, 1982; Shapiro, 2003), a great deal of literature from the field of Human Geography since the late twentieth century has stressed the significance of smaller spatial areas. In particular, it has been suggested that local places are imbued with more significant meanings than territorial states through the historical memories and symbolism connected with topographical features and natural landscapes (Agnew, 2011; Relph, 1976; Squire, 2015; Tuan, 1977), in addition to the everyday practices, interactions, and experiences by (and for) those whom directly interact with and 'live' them (Brenner and Elden, 2009; Delaney, 2005; Donnan and Wilson, 1999; Heyman, 1994; Migdal, 2004; Sack, 1986; Strandsbjerg, 2010). The 'deep-rooted' affective, cognitive, and even primordial bonds between a person (or a collective) and these places are embedded within their consciousness and naturalised over time (Altman and Low, 1992; Campbell, 2018; Canter, 1997; Groat, 1995; Gustafson, 2001a; 2001b; Low, 1992), evoking feelings of collective attachment and belonging to both other people and particular spatial areas, and constructing a sense of 'home,' or a 'homeland,' within them (Hubbard, 2005; Tuan, 1977). As nationalism speaks to the ways nationhood is experienced and practiced by actors—which includes the nuanced self-conceptions and identifications upheld by members of a national collective—the phenomenologies of locality within homelands, as places of significance, are thus fundamental for the nation.

Nonetheless, dominant approaches to nationalism in International Relations and Political Science have continued to prioritise and grant power to the territorial state. In routinely dismissing the primordialist view of nationalism as relating to kin-based ties, genetic links, and essential continuity from group ancestry to progeny "located symbolically in a specific territory or place" (Weinreich et al., 2003: 119), much of the principal theorising in these disciplines, at least since the late twentieth century, has centred on the role of the state for constructing or instrumentalising nationhood (see, for example, Anderson, 2006; Brubaker, 1996; 2004; Chandra, 2001; Gellner, 1965; Hobsbawm, 1992; Smith, 1998). In showing that the division of space into political entities has created 'civic' nations in situations where they did not previously exist (see also Ignatieff, 1993; Kohn, 2005)—and thus the constructed nature of identities have in many cases become bound to the state and its institutions (Goode and Stroup, 2015)—the "hegemony of constructivism" (Wimmer, 2013: 2) within nationalism scholarship widely shares the assumption that primordialism is merely "a long-dead horse that writers on ethnicity and nationalism continue to flog" (Brubaker, 1996: 15). But whereas the analytical scope of primordialism is indeed "rather marginal" (Antonsich, 2015: 299), and therefore it remains arguably "one of the most discredited" traditions of inquiry in contemporary studies of nationalism and ethnicity (Muro, 2015: 188), the significance of continuous and primordial spatial ties for nationalism cannot be overlooked; constructivists equally maintain that nationhood and/or ethnicity are experienced as primordial even as their origins,

which are usually modern, can be documented.[2] As primordialism is "a difficult position to hold" and therefore one with which few scholars fully identify (Marcos-Marné, 2015: 324; also Maxwell, 2020), Anthony Smith instead suggests the term *ethnosymbolism* to encapsulate continuous personal ties to space, detailing that nations are constituted by "shared memories, values, myths, symbols, and traditions," and inhabit, or are attached to, particular historic 'homelands' (2009: 32; also Smith, 1996). In offering a salient alternative to the organic bonds suggested by primordialism, ethnosymbolism emphasises the significance of homelands for the character, persistence, and role of nations, in addition to the development of unique social and symbolic processes, and feelings of belonging, associated with the nation (Smith, 1996; 2009).

Following from here, then, nationalism need not be understood as only connected to the state and its territory in uniting citizens of multiple ethnicities, languages, and religions through a "collective belonging characterized by a sense of relatedness and mutual and exclusive feelings of solidarity, sympathy, and obligation" (Wilcox, 2004: 576). In fact, nations do not necessarily follow a territorial logic and, instead, are predominantly organised through imaginative cartographies which include both the "pre-existing traditions, memories and symbolism" associated with specific primordial places (of various sizes) as homelands (Smith, 2009: 30; see also Kaiser, 2002; Weinreich et al., 2003) and the members' cognitive understandings of imagined borders separating them from others—the national 'We' from the foreign 'They' (Barrington, 2021). Although these imagined borders organised into 'mental maps' (Brubaker et al., 2006; Migdal, 2004) may not align with territorial borderlines—as homelands are not always nor necessarily conceptualised at the spatial scale of territory (Weinreich et al., 2003)—they remain fundamental for the ways people understand and articulate their national attachments and identities while living in a territorial state. Approaching nationalism from hegemonic 'representations of space' (Lefebvre, 1991) as divided into static spatial compartments therefore prioritises only particular understandings of nationalism associated with the territorial state, while completely overlooking the ways national practices and behaviour are shaped, embodied, lived, and "produced day by day" at different spatial scales (Polese et al., 2020: 1016). A recognition of the ways imaginative cartographies interact with the territorial cartography of the contemporary state system—particularly how homelands are conceptualised within space and subsequently overlap, contradict, and/or constitute only a small part of territorial states—is thus necessary for understanding nationalism in the modern day.

The most relevant areas for exploring nationhood and national belonging in the globalising world are perhaps those that have been most greatly impacted by the establishment of territorial states: the borderlands.[3] Since many territorial borders were drawn (or re-drawn) quickly following significant geopolitical events, they have consequently come to divide individuals sharing a sense of identity, whilst uniting different national groups within the same bounded space—this is clearly depicted by the prompt establishment of the post-Soviet and post-colonial states on the European and African continents in the late twentieth century. Yet given the significance of the symbolic meanings attributed to particular geographical areas as nations' homelands—rather than territorial states—many people living in states' peripheries have maintained national attachments irrespective of where the borders have been

[2] While there is an ongoing theoretical debate in the nationalism literature between modernism and ethnosymbolism, this larger discussion is beyond the scope of this project. For more, see Maxwell, 2020.

[3] While these areas are referred to as 'borderlands,' 'borderland areas,' 'peripheries,' 'peripheral areas,' and 'intermediary spaces' throughout this project, 'margins' and 'marginal areas' are not used to avoid suggesting they (and therefore also the people living within them) are in some ways diminished, devalued, and/or excluded from Ukraine's larger population. Nonetheless, it is recognised that these terms also have weaknesses, especially 'borderlands' with its emphasis on borders, as they implicitly reinforce the territorial state system. Still, as this project is interested in the areas nearest to and most significantly implicated by cartographic divides, these terms are thought to be the most appropriate.

(re)established. In the situations wherein imagined and territorial cartographies do not align, borderlanders are hence drawn across their states' territorial borders towards those who share similar ties of national unity and, simultaneously, are pulled towards the centre of their home states by the power of citizenship (Wilson and Donnan, 1998).[4] These dynamics have been further complicated in recent years in light of globalisation and the increased porosity of territorial borders, including increased cross-border interactions and mobility. As such, diverse and contradictory attachments and identities now regularly co-exist within borderland areas, establishing a unique *modus vivendi* atmosphere at the grassroots level (Martinez, 1994). In this way, the national identifications and attachments of the people in borderland areas cannot—if they ever could—be limited to, or simplified by, the image of the state within which they find themselves (Hannah, 2000), nor the stereotypes and/or underlying assumptions associated with the state stamped to the front of their passports. Due to the uniqueness of borderlands within states, particularly as areas which fundamentally emerged only as a result, and persist because, of the politico-legal delineation of states' territories, they are critical representational spaces which reveal much about nationalism at the grassroots. However, in overlooking the practices, interactions, and perceptions within these areas, top-down state-centric approaches to politics prioritising representations of space over representational spaces have failed to explain the borderland experience and the dynamic attachments, worldviews, and identities of the people living there (Agnew, 1994; Dorling, 1998; Harley and Laxton, 2001; Wood, 1992). To this end, they consequently also fail to fully capture nationalism in the globalising world order.

In order to understand nationalism in borderlands, then, this thesis takes an 'everyday nationalism' approach. Whereas some understandings of nationalism may indeed be constructed by or connected to the state, its structures, and its institutions, especially within the internal core of political territories—and therefore can be studied (perhaps even more effectively) in a top-down and/or state-centric way—this thesis is more interested in the everyday social practices and ways nationalism is manifested in the everyday lives of ordinary agents, or the "lived experience of nationalism" (Knott, 2015a: 1). As the project recognises the uniqueness of borderland areas within states in both a locational and socio-political sense, it accordingly seeks to uncover the particular nuances around how nationhood is experienced and practiced, and actively (re)produced and challenged, at the grassroots in these particular representational spaces. Since the idiosyncrasies of borderlands cannot be observed through hegemonic approaches to nationalism, or by simply studying representations of space or central regions within states as is often done in Political Science, this bottom-up empirical analysis, like others of everyday nationalism, instead looks beyond (or below) the state to consider everyday life as the object of analysis. In this way, the project's exploration of everyday nationalism within borderlands provides insight into the informal practices and experiences of the nation, rather than larger social structures and institutions, in these representational spaces.

By specifically exploring the role of borders (both territorial and imagined) for nationalism, the thesis thus contextualises the different ways people ontologically understand and experience their nations within the territorial state system—including even within the same state—and shows the incongruence between narratives and discourses tied to the state and everyday practices of nationhood at the local level (for more, see Brubaker et al., 2006; Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008; Goode, 2020; Hearn, 2007; Polese et al., 2020; Skey, 2011; Surak, 2012; Vucetic and Hopf, 2020). Given that processes of globalisation have undermined traditional notions of territorial sovereignty in recent years, the project moreover displays the importance of locality for politics at domestic and global levels and, specifically, the enduring value of ethnosymbolic ties with local places as a way for national collectives to perceive and experience their

[4] 'Borderlanders' is used in this thesis to refer to those living in borderland areas.

homelands. The thesis' inclusion of both people and places "curiously missing" from the study of nationalism (Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008: 537) appropriately also highlights the role of human agency and experience in the (re)negotiation and definition of nationalism (Antonsich, 2016; Brubaker et al., 2006; Condor, 2010; Fenton, 2007; Goode, 2020; Knott, 2015a; Skey, 2011; Thompson, 2001), and the importance of considering nationalism from states' borderland areas rather than primarily from central institutions. In doing so, and showing that citizens of the same state hold diverse spatial attachments and conceptualisations of nationalism depending on their location within a territory, the thesis also underscores that civic and ethnic understandings of the nation dynamically co-exist (Goode and Stroup, 2015), thus countering a homogeneous understanding of civic identification and the rigidity and 'lingering essentialism' in the perception of mono-ethnic groups (Kulyk, 2018). This project's exploration of the ways space, place, and territory shape how ordinary people in borderland areas make sense of, and meaning around, their nations is therefore especially necessary for contemporary understandings of and approaches to nationalism, as well as borders (both territorial and imagined) and cartographical state construction.

1.2 Situating the Project

1.2.1 Research Questions

This doctoral thesis accordingly approaches nationalism from the lived places that are borderland areas. The following question therefore fundamentally informs the research: **how do individuals living in borderland areas experience nationalism and national belonging?** In an attempt to answer this research question, the project is also guided by the four secondary theoretical and empirical questions found in Table 1.1. By answering these queries through an exploration of the ways nationalism is experienced in different borderlands, the research attempts to fill three gaps (theoretical, empirical, and methodological) in the current literature.

Table 1.1. Motivating research questions.

1. Research Question	How do individuals living in borderland areas experience nationalism and national belonging?
2. Theoretical Questions	a) (How) does the territorial cartography of the contemporary state system interact, coincide, and/or contrast imaginative cartographies? b) (How) do territorial borders implicate understandings of homeland at the grassroots?
3. Empirical Questions	a) How do individuals living in borderland areas conceptualise and experience their state's territory and their homelands? b) How do individuals living in borderland areas make meaning around borders—territorial or otherwise?

Theoretically, this project critiques the minimalisation of borderland experiences in Political Science and International Relations inquiry, especially in discussions around nationalism. Much of the dominant theorising within these disciplines—particularly from realist, liberal, and even constructivist perspectives—approaches politics at both domestic and global levels from the Westphalian system of sovereign states, whereby each state embodies the territorial and institutional dimensions of governance, and is able to command loyalty from its occupants through both military and legal means (Sutherland, 2012). In this way, the territorial state and its central areas, often capital cities, are taken as the primary point of reference, and borders viewed as politico-legal constructions materially defining the territorial and social bounds of a state and its population—this is especially true when the peripheral areas are peaceful and without conflict over territorial boundary lines.[5] Yet, this approach overlooks the reality that while borders tangibly demarcate "relations between space" and "spatialize social phenomena in an almost exclusively territorial form" (Löw and Weidenhaus, 2017: 566), they need not only be conceptualised in a physical sense; borders can simply be understood as divides that distinguish people vis-à-vis others in some way, which may indeed include a physical or territorial separation or merely socially constructed or imagined ideas about difference. Although territorial borders are often considered in political analyses, especially around the changed nature of these divisions through the unprecedented cross-border mobility and interactions associated with globalisation, the ways imagined borders are conceptualised by national collectives, and implicate politics more largely, have been regularly excluded from these studies. Despite the ever-growing number of states and thus territorial lines added to the map since the late twentieth century, and much critical research conducted on citizenship, identity, and nationalism in response to this dynamic political climate, the precise ways citizens living nearest territorial borders experience, understand, conceptualise, and encounter the 'reality' of borders in their everyday lives (Harley, 1989)—in both a physical and imagined sense—thus generally remains theoretically and empirically underexplored. The scholars whom have regularly included borderlands in their studies, or considered such places as areas worthy of study at all, have been mainly anthropologists, geographers, historians, and cartographers (see, for example, Bassin, 1991; Baud and Van Schendel, 1997; Donnan and Wilson, 1999; Hibou, 2004; House, 1982; Löw and Weidenhaus, 2017; Sahlins, 1998; Wilson and Donnan, 1998). Although this may be explained by the prevalence and use of more positivist and quantitative approaches in Political Science, the reality nonetheless underscores the need for greater theorising around the larger implications of both territorial and imagined borders for nationalism.

In an empirical sense, then, the project seeks to fill this gap in the literature by including the experiences of ordinary people who are frequently 'missing' from studies of politics and nationalism (Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008), specifically those in borderland areas. Though contemporary efforts in Political Science and International Relations have sought to push geopolitical analyses towards further engagement with materiality, matter, and the non-human, they have been slow-moving; Vicki Squire accordingly concludes there remains an overinvestment in "the representational, cultural, and the interpretive dimensions of geopolitics" (2015: 140). In order to move away from the 'territorial trap' (Agnew, 1994) that much of the existing theorising falls into by prioritising the territorial state and its institutions, this project's empirical analysis thence centres on the ways space is actually configured in socio-political practices, or 'lived,' within representational spaces (Lefebvre, 1991). In considering borderland areas as

[5] In the case of contemporary Ukraine, many empirical studies on borderlands have emphasised the conflict zones or compared major cities across the country, such as the eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk to the western region of Lviv (see, for example, Fournier, 2014a; Korablyova, 2021; Sakwa, 2015; Snyder, 2015; Zhurzhenko, 2010; 2019).

representational spaces, the thesis thus highlights the socio-cultural, political, and economic implications of the drawing and existence of territorial borders, particularly the ways ordinary people make sense of their citizenships and nationalities, as well as form attachments to various spatial scales. By exploring the lived experience of nationalism within the material places of the everyday (Lefebvre, 1991), the project acutely reveals the importance of empirical studies of borderland areas for realising contemporary politics and nationalism, and underscores the value of representational spaces and spatial analyses more generally, especially in light of globalisation.

This thesis also methodologically adds to the existing literature by studying nationalism at the local level in borderland areas using a bottom-up methodology drawing on an interpretivist logic with an ethnographic 'sensibility' (Pader, 2006; Schatz, 2009; Yanow, 2006). In remaining open to alternative explanations of identity and experience, which can only be understood through bottom-up analyses of subjective and intersubjective meanings (Kratochwil, 2008), the project explores how nationhood is negotiated, contested, and redefined by ordinary people in ways that cannot be seen through the top-down and state-centric approaches typically employed in studies of nationalism and political science. Although this project's in-depth qualitative approach is consistent with prior work on everyday nationalism in its use of interviews (Dukalskis and Lee, 2020; Fenton, 2007), focus groups (De Cillia et al., 1999; Skey, 2011), and participant observations (Schmoller, 2020; Surak, 2012), it also adds to this sub-field in showing the value of bottom-up spatial analyses for studies of nationalism (further details are found in Chapter 4). Specifically, the project draws on the geographical and psychological method of cognitive participatory mapping to examine the spatial attachments of people in borderland areas. The use of online methods (namely, interviews and a focus group) also proposes new methodological approaches for everyday nationalism in the contemporary day in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as in a post-pandemic world. This project's meaning-centred methodology and multi-method approach thus appropriately allows for an examination of the various ways national attachments and identifications are experienced in borderland areas, as well as showing the importance of borders—as territorial divisions and imaginary national divides—for both *a priori* and empirical studies of nationalism.

1.2.2 Analytical Framework

To uncover wider multi-dimensional understandings of national consciousness, belonging, and identity in borderland areas, this thesis thus critically considers the local consequences of the division of space through cartographic borders for nationalism. In the context of the social sciences, being critical refers to the self-conscious posture and devotion of attention to how "different kinds of linguistic, social, political, and theoretical elements are woven together in the process of knowledge development, during which empirical material is constructed, interpreted, and written" (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000: 5; Guillaume, 2013). Bourdieu (1994; 2007) further explains that by being critical and open to different dimensions of knowledge production in mediating between epistemology, ontology, and methods, the political posture behind every choice is well considered (see also Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Guillaume, 2013; Haraway, 1988). A critical approach moreover seeks to avoid a "scholastic illusion" whereby the social, gendered, institutional, ideological, cultural, and historical conditions of the social and individual levels are overlooked, or simply ignored, and ontological assumptions and empirical choices are disregarded as the political assumptions and/or choices that they are (Bourdieu, 1994: 217). This critical project therefore seeks continuous and reflexive engagement with the social world, rather than following procedural checks and balances, to produce an answer or solve a problem using specific methods. In this way, the research

privileges the *questioning* rather than the *answering* of questions to uncover new knowledge (Guillaume, 2013). While the inquiry is still certainly guided by questions, as were outlined above, it reminds that science is much more than merely an exercise of problem-solving, but one of great enquiry.

Critical Border Studies (CBS) is fittingly used as this project's analytical framework. In response to the static hegemonic representations of space which overlook the importance of lived spaces, CBS has emerged in recent years as an interdisciplinary approach to uncover how territory and borders are experienced and constituted by the people whom engage with them. Principal to CBS is a basic dissatisfaction with the 'line in the sand' metaphor as an unexamined point of origin for the study of borders; this approach attempts to 'decentre' or problematise the border as a site of investigation rather than a taken-for-granted entity in global politics (Parker and Vaughan-Williams, 2012). Instead of the modern fixation on linear boundaries themselves, this stream of thought seeks to understand how territorial borders are constituted by states and experienced by citizens near them (Rumford, 2012). By bringing together Sociology, Anthropology, Human Geography, and International Relations, among other disciplines, CBS also challenges the 'puzzling persistence of (state) borders' and the nature and location of the territorial boundary lines standing between political entities (Parker and Adler-Nissen, 2012). Because of the increasingly disaggregate function of, and rhetoric around, state borders and the territories they seek to define, CBS moreover attempts to advance "alternative border imaginaries" (Parker and Vaughan-Williams, 2012: 728), including new theories, approaches, and methodologies for better understanding the places where sovereignties meet.

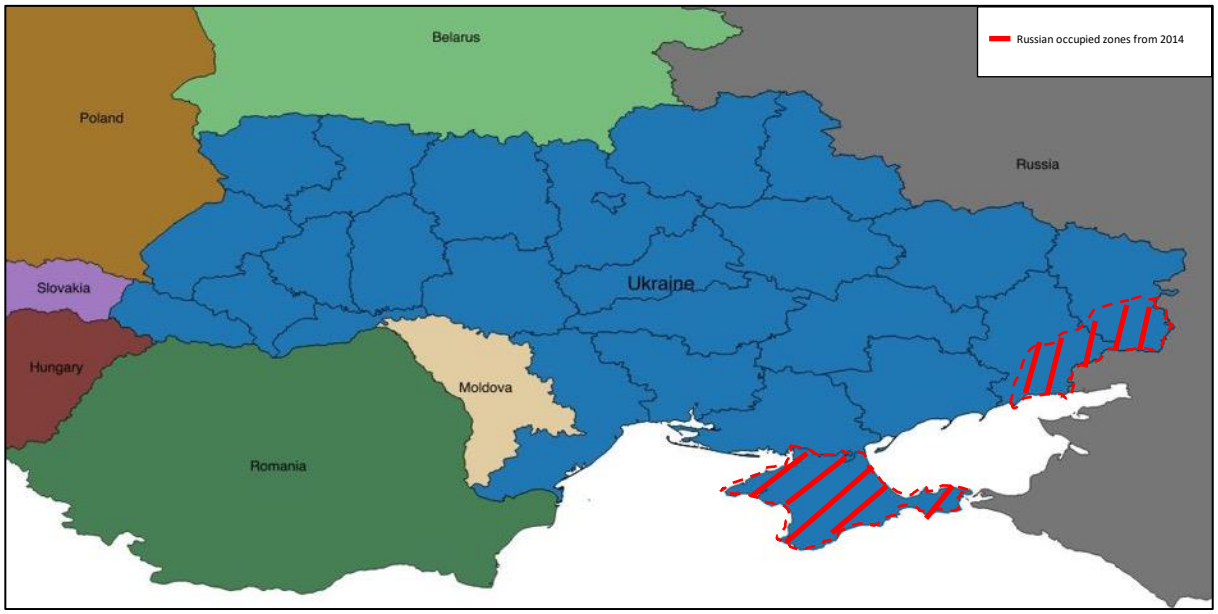
Drawing on CBS, this thesis therefore analytically *deconstructs* the Westphalian state system in an attempt uncover the subjective experiences, practices, and relations between people living in borderland areas. By approaching borders as invented constructs used to divide both people and space, the thesis appropriately sees the essentialised divisions of geographic space into bounded territories as both unnatural and impermanent (Parker and Vaughan-Williams, 2012). In challenging the division of geographic space at the territorial scale of the state, this project, like much critical geopolitics, argues to move beyond the objective analysis of the "*concept of the border*" (Parker and Vaughan-Williams, 2012: 729, emphasis in original) towards investigating representational and lived spaces (Lefebvre, 1991). The thesis consequently centres on the areas nearest to and/or created by these cartographic divides—the borderlands—to understand how socio-political processes and phenomena like nationalism are experienced, (re)produced, maintained, and performed both consciously and unconsciously through social actions and 'everyday' practices (Parker and Adler-Nissen, 2012; Rumford, 2012).[6] Whilst recognising that borders are intimately linked to particular political and socio-economic realities and identity-making activities, CBS provides a solid foundation for critically considering the national impacts of the compartmentalisation of space into territories and, especially, the reality that citizens of the same state do not always (or necessarily) share or understand nationalism in the same ways. Further, CBS' emphasis on 'alternative border imaginaries' motivates this project's effort to explore how national collectives make sense of themselves and others through both physical and imaginative cartographies. In approaching borderlands as representational spaces and scrutinising hegemonic representations of space portraying states as bounded, continuous, and territorial entities, this thesis' analytical approach furthermore demonstrates the necessity of exploring various constellations of power. With an emphasis on envisioning nationalism from different perspectives, the project aptly centres on local voices from borderland areas.

[6] This follows from the understanding that identity is something one *does*, not something that one *is* (Butler, 1993).

1.2.3 Case Selection: Ukraine

In order to investigate everyday experiences in borderland areas, Ukraine is used as the primary case in this research. While case studies can be defined and understood in different ways, for the purpose of this project, a case study is "the intensive (qualitative or quantitative) analysis of a single unit or a small number of units (the cases)" (Seawright and Gerring, 2008: 296), wherein the selection and intent of a particular case is to understand a larger class of similar units, or population of cases. By bordering seven different countries (Russia, Belarus, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Moldova), Ukraine is typical of a larger category of thirty-eight countries in the world surrounded by a minimum of seven other sovereign states. While a number of these countries have become (or are rising to become) global superpowers—such as Russia, China, Germany, and Brazil—Ukraine's socio-political history resembles that of the other post-Soviet and post-colonial states in both Europe and Africa with seven or more politico-territorial neighbours, and which were also colonised by more powerful political entities, such as Zambia, Algeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger, and Mali. An additional characteristic Ukraine shares with these post-colonial states is that the country's territorial boundary lines were drawn relatively quickly following its colonial rule (or after the collapse of the USSR), with little regard given to where national ties exist. As a consequence, and like in other countries where post-colonial cartographic practices did not (and in many cases, still do not) align with national collectives on the ground, Ukraine has faced, and continues to face, contestation—both internally and externally—over territory and identity.[7]

Figure 1.1. Map of contemporary Ukraine with neighbouring states.[8]



Map created by author. Shape files retrieved from DIVA-GIS.

[7] This is in particular reference to Crimea and the ongoing conflict in Donbas. Similar territorial disputes can also be seen in countries like Mali, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, South Sudan, and Iran.

[8] Demarcations of conflict zones are approximate.

Due to their similar cartographic histories, the aforementioned countries are all in strategic positions to reveal the ways that borders—both as territorial lines on a map and imaginative boundaries—shape peoples' experiences at the local level, including everyday practices like nationalism. With several neighbouring countries, these states see significantly more exchanges and movements of people, ideas, and cultures than countries bordered by fewer states, especially in light of increased globalisation. Yet of the states outlined above, Ukraine's independence and legal formalisation on 24 August 1991 was among the most recent and hence the historical memory associated with the state's territorial borders is less entrenched than in the more established states which gained independence in the mid-twentieth century. Using a post-Soviet state for this analysis also differentiates the project and geographically moves it away from prior post-colonial studies on borders and borderland areas, like those located on the Asian and African continents (see, for example, Bassin, 1991; Baud and Van Schendel, 1997; Donnan and Wilson, 1999; House, 1982). Furthermore, the ongoing territorial disputes in Ukraine—particularly related to the regions of Crimea, Luhansk, and Donetsk (see Figure 1.1)—are generally more isolated and less active and dangerous than the conflicts currently present in some of the aforementioned states, especially those in Africa. Ukraine consequently offered a safer environment for a female researcher from a foreign institution conducting fieldwork than some of the other countries sharing the same characteristics.

A further justification for the use of Ukraine in this thesis is that the country truly *is* a borderland; in Slavic languages, '*kraina'* etymologically means 'border' or 'edge,' and hence, Ukraine (*Ukraina*) translates to 'borderland' or 'on the edge.' Although this is explored in much greater detail in Chapter 4, Figure 1.1 shows how the country stands at the divide between the 'East' and 'West,' or between four EU and three FSU states. In addition to representing the physical space between these two significant geopolitical entities, Ukraine is simultaneously part of the larger borderlands of both the EU and Russia. Studying this state therefore allows for an analysis of nationalism not only from a macro-level geo-ideological borderland but also the micro-level territorial borderlands within a state: the borderlands of a borderland. The project accordingly draws on three of Ukraine's *oblasti* (regions)—Zakarpattia, Chernihiv, and Kirovohrad—to answer the research questions, as each offers a different conceptualisation of a borderland; in using Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, the thesis investigates the experiences of ordinary citizens in the territorial borderlands of Ukraine and near both of the geopolitical neighbours, while Kirovohrad allows for an examination of the perspectives of citizens in the centre of a geo-ideological borderland.[9]

Moreover, this project is differentiated from prior studies of Ukraine. Whilst Ukrainian nationalism has been extensively studied in recent years, especially since the 2013-14 Euromaidan and 2014 annexation of Crimea, the existing literature predominantly aligns with hegemonic approaches in nationalism by examining Ukraine from the scale of the territorial state. For instance, much historical work has centred on the alleged internal 'East-West' territorial divide between the two sides of the country via the Dnipro River (see Andrukhovych, 2005; Birch, 1995; 2000; Hnatiuk, 2004; Malanchuk, 2005; Riabchuk, 1992; 2002; Shulman, 1998), whereas more modern investigations of identity have explored Ukraine's relationship with Russia in light of recent events (see Horvath, 2014; Kulyk, 2014; 2016; Kuzio, 2015a; 2015b; Sasse and Lackner, 2018; 2019). Even though the state's borderland dynamics have been considered in political science inquiry (see Applebaum, 2015; Berezhnaya, 2015; Emerson, 2001; Huntington, 1996; Korablyova, 2021; Plokhy, 2007; Reid, 2015; Von Hagen, 1995; 2009; Zhurzhenko, 2010; 2019), most studies exploring

[9] See Chapter 4 for details about the secondary cases, including the justifications behind their selection. In Ukraine, 'oblast' is an administrative unit one step below the state, which is subdivided into 'rayons' (districts). In Russia, 'oblast' is both an administrative unit and subject of the Federation.

the perceptions of nationalism and citizenship held by various ethnic, cultural, and national groups within Ukraine have predominantly included only the eastern regions of Donetsk, Kharkiv, Luhansk, southern Odesa, central Kyiv, and western Lviv. As such, the existing scholarship is quite limited in terms of geopolitical and spatial analyses of Ukraine's borders, aside from those shared with Russia and Poland. Notably, the 'MAPA: Digital Atlas of Ukraine' programme at the Ukrainian Research Institute at Harvard University offers incredibly valuable insight into both historical and contemporary political geography in Ukraine at both state and region levels, but it, too, relies on representations of space by using GIS for understanding socio-economic and political transformations, rather than representational spaces. Of the studies of everyday nationalism in the post-Soviet space (see, for example, McGlynn, 2020; Morris et al., 2018; Polese et al., 2018; Polese et al., 2020; Schmoller, 2020; Seliverstova, 2017), few have analysed the state of Ukraine. Hence, by emphasising the borders standing between Ukraine and other states, specifically Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, and Belarus, in addition to exploring citizens' lived experiences of nationhood and identity within representational spaces in Ukraine, this study adds a new and unique dimension to the existing research in CBS, International Relations, and Political Science, as well as Ukrainian and Post-Soviet Area Studies more generally.

While academically salient, the findings from this multi-level analysis of nationalism within borderland areas are additionally of relevance for the practices of politics and international relations. In showing the reality that civic and ethnic understandings of nationhood may be more apparent in different geographical areas of a state due to historical cartographical processes, the project furthers our understanding of the role of nationalism in contemporary political events like Brexit and the rise of populism in Eastern and Central Europe, by showing how people living in different areas or regions of a country may feel stronger or weaker attachments to their state, its institutions, and its foreign policy objectives. The findings moreover have important implications for political responses to both state- and global-level threats, including public health crises like the COVID-19 pandemic (see Goode et al., 2020), in addition to other domestic challenges to sovereignty and security, such as civil conflicts, separatism, and territorial and boundary disputes, which risk the re-drawing of territorial borderlines. Likewise, the applicability for better understanding voting patterns and political participation in terms of both engagement and behaviour can be seen in this thesis, especially in contemporary Ukraine. Relatedly, the relevance of the findings for global politics and international relations, principally within the post-Soviet space, is depicted by the grassroots sentiments in the following pages which show support for an independent Ukraine—a reality that fundamentally underscores the fallacy in Vladimir Putin's recent claims that "true sovereignty of Ukraine is possible only in partnership with Russia" (President of Russia, 2021). At the same time, and whereas Russia's continued aggression in Ukraine since 1991, and particularly from 2014, has turned the borderland that is Ukraine into a violent 'bloodland' (Snyder, 2010; Zhurzhenko, 2014), this bottom-up study underscores differing conceptualisations of, and attachments to, the contemporary Ukraine. Beyond the significance for academic theorising and both domestic and global politics, the project thus also shows the complexities of nationalism and identity within the modern territorial state system as a consequence of cartography. Perhaps most importantly, then, this empirical analysis of nationalism from the local level of borderland areas inherently, and paradoxically, reinforces that the hegemonic narrative of coming *from* a country is problematically one-dimensional, fictional, and naïve thinking.

1.3 Thesis Direction and Chapter Outline

The remainder of this thesis involves eight chapters divided into three parts. *Part I: Theories, Concepts, and Methods to Studying Nationalism in Borderlands* encompasses Chapters 2, 3, and 4. *Chapter 2: Theorising Nationalism in the Territorial State System* sets the theoretical foundation by nesting the research in the current and relevant literature on territorial state construction. This chapter conceptualises the modern state system by expanding on the transition of space into sovereign territorial entities through cartography, focusing specifically on the main theories surrounding space, territoriality, and borderity. In considering the evolution of territorial sovereignty and the nationalisation of territorial states, it also critiques the tendency for social science scholars to overemphasise territory when approaching modern politics and nationalism, as well as failing to acknowledge the distinction between states and nations. By drawing on CBS, the chapter purports the need to explore representational spaces below the spatial scale of territory, including the ways individuals' attachments and feelings of belonging are implicated by borders. Chapter 2 therefore emphasises the importance of ordinary peoples' experiences within the representational spaces that are borderland areas for understanding nationalism in the globalising world order.

Chapter 3: Critically Conceptualising Ukraine as a Borderland provides the historical and contextual lenses for this project's critical analysis. To do so, it applies the themes discussed in the previous chapter to the borderland context of contemporary Ukraine in conceptualising the state as a geo-ideological borderland, a borderland of Russia, and a borderland of Europe. In detailing the prior literature on nationalism in Ukraine, Chapter 3 also shows that earlier works on Ukrainian nationalism, like most studies on nationalism more generally, have predominantly approached Ukraine from the image of a static and homogenous state in the way presented in representations of space, rather than from the representational spaces below the scale of territory. Hence, the third chapter of this thesis demonstrates the need for bottom-up studies of nationalism in Ukraine, as in all borderland areas, in order to better realise nationalism in both the contemporary state and larger state system.

Chapter 4: Methodologically Approaching Nationalism in Borderland Ukraine subsequently builds on the previous two chapters to detail the interpretivist research design and bottom-up methodology used to investigate how ordinary people in borderland areas experience and practice nationhood in their everyday lives. In further specifying the research questions, this chapter explains the methodological justifications for using Ukraine's regions of Zakarpattia, Chernihiv, and Kirovohrad as the secondary cases for this exploratory comparative analysis. The fourth chapter also outlines the project's empirical strategy, including its abductive logic of inquiry and the methods used for data collection—focus groups, 'elite' interviews, cognitive mapping exercises, and participant observations conducted during in-person and online fieldwork in each of the three regions under study. The analytical techniques used to code and examine the rich empirical material are also outlined, as are the methodological limitations of the study, especially those posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Part II: Imagining Homelands Within Borderlands includes Chapters 5, 6, and 7. These three chapters encompass the project's main empirical contribution in uncovering the attachments that ordinary people in borderland areas feel to different spatial scales. Moreover, Part II is used to explore how individuals envision their homelands within the contemporary reality of territorial Ukraine. As this project aims for both representativeness and to engage with a breadth of perspectives, narratives, and understandings, individuals from urban and rural locales of three distinct demographic groups are analysed: young adults (18-29 years), middle-aged adults (30-49 years), and older adults (50 years and older). Considering the spatial awareness and local experiences of diverse age groups in each region allows for a better

understanding of how ordinary peoples' relationships with different spatial scales shape their experiences of nationalism. *Chapter 5: Zakarpattia as 'In-Between'* is the first of three empirical chapters included in this thesis. Drawing on primary material collected through in-person and online fieldwork in Zakarpattia, the chapter explores borderlands as territorial peripheries. As Zakarpattia is Ukraine's westernmost region, and the only region to neighbour four EU states (Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania), this chapter likewise investigates local experiences within the borderland of Europe.

As the second empirical chapter analysing the experience of individuals in borderland areas, the structure of *Chapter 6: Chernihiv as 'the Middle'* resembles that of the one previous. Like Chapter 5, this chapter also uncovers the views of individuals from the three age groups from urban and rural settings in a territorial borderland, as well as their feelings of belonging to, and cognitive awareness of, various spatial scales. Whereas the previous chapter centred on the borderland experience of Ukrainian citizens living near Europe, this one explores the grassroots level in Chernihiv to examine the spatial attachments of ordinary people living in the borderland of Russia. In this way, the chapter includes the voices of ordinary people from a second territorial borderland and a region neighbouring both Belarus and Russia.

Unlike the previous two chapters, *Chapter 7: Kirovohrad as 'the Centre'* focuses on the experiences and cognitive perceptions of place, space, and territory held by ordinary people located in the centre of the geo-ideological borderland that is Ukraine. In investigating the spatial attachments of ordinary people living mid-way between Europe and Russia, this chapter thus adds a comparative dimension to the thesis in its exploration of borderlands from a macro- and geographical-level, which stands in contrast to the micro- and territorial-level analyses found in the previous two chapters. Still, this chapter resembles Chapters 5 and 6 in that it similarly includes individuals from diverse age groups in both urban and rural areas. When taken together, the empirical chapters in Part I therefore provide insight into how territorial and imagined cartographies simultaneously shape individuals' ontological understandings of themselves.

Part III: Understanding Nationalism Within Borderlands is the final analytical section of the thesis, encompassing Chapters 8 and 9 to explore how Ukrainian citizens understand and experience nationalism in borderland areas. *Chapter 8: Experiencing Nationalism in Borderlands* brings together the spatial attachments and imaginative cartographies of residents in Zakarpattia, Chernihiv, and Kirovohrad, as outlined in Part II, to show how diverging conceptualisations of homeland simultaneously exist within the larger territory of Ukraine. In doing so, the chapter explores how citizens' experiences within their homelands implicate their relationships with their state and its territory. By uncovering larger narratives around nationalism and identity within Ukraine, including around the co-existence of both civic and ethnic understandings of nationalism, the value of analysing spatial scales below that of territory and in borderland areas for studies of nationalism can thus be seen. Furthermore, Chapter 8 also depicts the value of considering borders in both territorial and non-territorial (or imagined) forms in discussions of contemporary nationalism.

Finally, *Chapter 9: Concluding Thoughts* revisits the original research questions about how nationalism is experienced in borderland areas. In doing so, this chapter offers an interpretation of the value of the research, especially its focus on borderland areas for nationalism and politics in light of the increased emphasis on borders and nationalism globally prompted by events such as Brexit in the UK, political leaders like Donald Trump in the US, and, most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, Chapter 9 identifies the implications of the empirical contributions for ongoing discussions in Political Science and International Relations around cartography, state construction, and nationalism in the twenty-first century, as well as for improving understandings of nationalism, identity, and politics in contemporary Ukraine. The penultimate section of this chapter suggests avenues for future research, including questions about the

role of cartographic borders in a post-pandemic world and how nationalism may be shaped by the pandemic into the future. In addition, this chapter suggests ways this research can be pushed further, both as a result of the limitations caused by the pandemic and in an attempt to analyse how understandings of nationalism and spatial attachments may have changed since March 2020.

Part I

Theories, Concepts, and Methods to Studying Nationalism in Borderlands

Chapter 2:
Theorising Nationalism in the Territorial State System

"It is…when the border is condensed to an image,
and when this image symbolizes wide-ranging political or theoretical stances,
[that] understanding of the border becomes reductive and delocalized."

Josiah Heyman (1994: 44)

2.1 Introduction to Part I

Part I is divided into three chapters to lay the theoretical and methodological foundations for this project. Although theorising of nationalism has evolved greatly since the late twentieth century, as can particularly be seen with the prioritisation of state-centric approaches, the territorial state remains the predominant focus of analysis within the disciplines of International Relations and Political Science. As a consequence, smaller geographical areas below the territorial scale of the state are often overlooked, including borderlands as the spatial areas most significantly impacted by the cartographic processes that established the Westphalian state system. In centring the investigation on nationalism within these understudied areas, then, this thesis accordingly shifts the parameters of the ongoing academic debates (in both a literal and figurative sense). Chapter 2 begins the discussion by detailing the historical transition of space to territory, as well as the major theories around nationalism within the contemporary state system. In doing so, the chapter stresses the need to move beyond the analytical concept of the territorial state presented in representations of space for studying nationalism, purporting the value of examining "directly *lived*" representational spaces (Lefebvre, 1991: 39, emphasis in original). Borderlands are thus emphasised in this chapter as both significant and relevant representational spaces, and salient sites for studying nationalism in the modern day, albeit their exclusion from much of the hegemonic state-centric theorising.

2.2 Cartographically Mapping the Contemporary State System

2.2.1 Transitioning Space to Territorial States

In order to understand nationalism in borderland areas, it must first be recognised that space has been a fundamental component of social practices and processes throughout human history. Even before people were arranged into territorially demarcated areas, society has taken on a spatial component by merely existing in space and having a certain spatial distribution. Though not uncontested, *space,* in a general sense, is often understood as "the conceptual map which orders social life" (Donnan and Wilson, 1999: 9); it is largely the dimension within which the physical and cultural relationships that give meaning to society are located. In theorising the different aspects and intersections of space and its meanings, Henri Lefebvre proposes the following spatial triad:

> 1. *Spatial practice*, which embraces production and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation…
> 2. *Representations of space*, which are tied to the relations of production and to the 'order' which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes, and to 'frontal' relations…

> 3. *Representational spaces*, embodying complex symbolisms, sometimes coded, sometimes not, linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life, as also to art (which may come eventually to be defined less as a code of space than as a code of representational spaces) (1991: 33).

In unpacking these categories, which now collectively constitute one of the most influential conceptualisations of space in social science inquiry, Lefebvre clarifies *spatial practice* is space that is perceived or 'used' by members of a society; *representations of space* are spaces that are conceived or 'thought;' and *representational spaces* are spaces that are experienced or 'lived.' As he further writes:

> 1. *Spatial practice*. The spatial practice of a society secretes that society's space; it propounds and presupposes it, in a dialectical interaction; it produces it slowly and surely as it masters and appropriates it. From the analytic standpoint, the spatial practice of a society is revealed through the deciphering of its space…
> 2. *Representations of space*: conceptualised space, the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers, as of a certain type of artist with a scientific bent—all of whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived…This is the dominant space in any society (or mode of production). Conceptions of space tend, with certain exceptions to which I shall return, towards a system of verbal (and therefore intellectually worked out) signs.
> 3. *Representational spaces*: space as directly *lived* through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of 'inhabitants' and 'users'…This is the dominated—and hence passively experienced—space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects. Thus representational spaces may be said, though again with certain exceptions, to tend towards more or less coherent systems of non-verbal symbols and signs (Lefebvre, 1991: 38-39, emphasis in original).

The principal idea underwriting the triad is thus that the three spaces are intertwined and always connected. As Lefebvre explicates: "the lived, conceived and perceived realms should be interconnected, so that the 'subject,' the individual member of a given social group, may move from one to another without confusion—so much is a logical necessity" (1991: 40). Since understandings of space are abstract and objective, our interactions with spaces also change over time, as do our uses, representations, and symbolic associations with them (Campbell, 2018). Appropriately, how we move within and around space, conceive of the cartographies of our everyday existence, and experience the symbolic associations and interactions overlaying geographic spaces can, does, and has changed over time.

This constant malleability is demonstrated when considering how understandings of space and society have transformed since the introduction of cartography. Before the emergence of the modern state system, political autonomy was recognised as governance over people in space with loosely defined regions where several sovereignties laid their claims (Baud and Van Schendel, 1997). In the European medieval world, political units were constituted on both personal feudal bonds between people and a series of non-exclusive, overlapping, and decentralised territorial authorities, wherein power radiated outwards from the centres (Branch, 2011). Manlio Graziano (2018) explains that ties to territory at this time took many different forms—from the absolute prohibition of access to other communities (sometimes through a physical barrier) to the sharing of resources, and even to land with no clear limits between communities. Political systems outside of western Europe were similarly based on personal and/or kinship bonds and corresponding territorial authorities; many pre-African polities and empires, such as the Chinese and Roman, were also structured so that authority was centralised and diminished in the peripheries (Bassett, 1998; Branch, 2010; Herbst, 2000; Klinghoffer, 2006; Kratochwil, 1986). One

significant result of the decline of feudalism in Europe was therefore the centralisation of government power as monopolising sovereignty, as was affirmed by the Treaties of Augsburg (1555) and Westphalia (1648). In codifying a post-feudal political order, these treaties confirmed that Europe's main powers recognised each other as possessing absolute territorial sovereignty, or the right to govern their territories without external interference. Importantly, overt mentions of linear divisions, demarcated territorial claims, or frontier divides were not made in these treaties; only the particularities of the territories which fell under the new authorities. Still, Westphalia unequivocally transformed understandings of space away from traditional (or feudal) states reflecting cohesive national collectives toward the contemporary state-centric world. Notably, the treaty did not mark the creation or consolidation of the modern state system as much as the continuation and expansion of intra-European practices of authority (Branch, 2010; 2011).

Due to the transforming understandings of space following 1648, territory became integral to most modern hegemonic conceptions of sovereignty as a physical manifestation of state-making. *Territory* can thus be understood as an area of both material and symbolic resources which structure and organise a collective both politico-legally and semiotically (Amilhat-Szary and Giraut, 2015) with strategic (terrain) and economic dimensions (land) (Elden, 2013). For Robert Sack, modern *territoriality* is therefore "the attempt by an individual or group to affect, influence, or control people, phenomena, and relationships, by delimiting and asserting control over a geographic area," while the area in question is the territory (1986: 19). He further outlines that territories are different from other spaces as instruments of power; the designation of a bounded territory influences behaviour by controlling the people and resources within the jurisdiction, as well as those whom are able to access it (Sack, 1986). In this way, territoriality refers to both what 'makes territory' for a given state and the various relationships between people and space (Amilhat-Szary and Giraut, 2015), including the spatial practices, representations of space, and representational spaces found within a particular section of space (Lefebvre, 1991).

Jean Gottmann also underscores the importance of the relationship between people and territories in inferring it is "the 'right to exclude others' that could not be implemented without territorial sovereignty" (1973: 95). This critical presupposition implies sovereignty requires a territorial base, which Jordan Branch reinforces in stating the only "legitimate form of authority [in the contemporary global order] is territorial, defined by linear cartographic boundaries and homogeneity within those lines" (2010: 282). With this, he references the 'state,' which is now recognised as "both a central place and a unified territorial reach" (Mann, 1984: 123), wherein authority is highly centralised, non-overlapping, and limited by territorial demarcations, except for in extraordinary circumstances (Branch, 2010; 2011; Mann, 1984). Following from here, then, the transition of space into something used to define and delineate sovereignty can fundamentally be understood in the way outlined by Edward Soja (1971): as a shift from a social definition of territory to a territorial definition of society wherein people have become inherently tied to the spatio-political concept of territory. Though it must be acknowledged that different kinds of territoriality exist, of which the Westphalian understanding is only one, the dominance of sovereign territoriality portrays space as more than a container of pure materiality standing in contrast to the social world, but a relational arrangement between objects, places, and people (Löw and Weidenhaus, 2017). This conceptualisation of space as divided into exclusive and sovereign territorial entities is thus fundamental for the conduct, study, and discussion of politics and socio-political phenomena like nationalism.

2.2.2 Demarcating Territorial Sovereignty

The need for clear divisions distinguishing the limits of each sovereign entity hence inevitably came with the Westphalian geopolitical order. In this way, dividing space into an established system of territorially-defined and sovereign political jurisdictions through cartography, or the practice and study of making and using maps, was a collective attempt by state elites to do away with the 'rough edges' between polities that were first perfected in Europe after Westphalia and later applied globally through colonially-enforced policies and land redistribution (Baud and Van Schendel, 1997). Michael Shapiro correspondingly argues that the departure from the pre-modern state with ambiguous frontiers to the contemporary political form with "territorial rather than dynastic markers" (2003: 279) inherently impacted the relations between neighbouring polities as disputes could no longer be overlooked or solved through territorial expansion, but came to be formally addressed through arbitration, confrontation, and negotiation (Baud and Van Schendel, 1997). Since the notion of a physical line separating political entities with absolute claims and capabilities had little longevity before Westphalia, the processes involved in the cartographic division of space were hardly inevitable and remain uneven; whereas state-formation in Europe was linked to the differentiation of early kingdoms and empires, territorial lines in European colonies were often drawn for reasons of perceived diplomatic and economic importance, such as access to global markets (Biggs, 1999; Branch, 2010; 2011; Eder, 2006). Other demarcations were tendentiously drawn in accordance with ethno-linguistic or cultural lines, ecological features, demographic movements, or displacements (Scott, 1998; Tagliacozzo, 2016).[10] Though most communities eventually came, or have come, to adopt the language and practice of sovereignty in a territorial sense, the associated cartographic processes involved both the political processes of definition and institutionalisation, and the technicalities of location and demarcation, to determine where states are able to exert power and control over a territory and, inherently, also people.[11] Geraróid Tuathail therefore appropriately stresses that contemporary geography is not natural, but "a product of histories of struggle between competing authorities over the power to organise, occupy, and administer space" (1996: 1). His words are clearly evidenced by the FSU's creation of fifteen constituent 'national' republics. Ergo, the practice of delineating states might be considered "non-political in character" (Adler, 2001: 10), yet, this process in and of itself is political and reinforces the modern assumption that territory is a necessary precondition for the state (Elden, 2013).

Though a relationship may not necessarily exist between particular spatial areas, they hence become territories when the (socially constructed) differences, by means of interior homogeneity, are deemed more significant than the similarities by those on the inside (Branch, 2010; 2011; Graziano, 2018; Löw and Weidenhaus, 2017). Implicitly embedded in the modern state's territorial foundation, then, is a dependence on the divisions drawn through cartographic processes, as territoriality and sovereignty require definitive territories. Whilst the terminology used to describe the limits of territorial compartments can and does vary, *frontiers*, *boundaries,* and *borders* are commonly and interchangeably employed by academics and non-academics alike, especially within Political Science, International Relations, Political Geography,

[10] Alternative forms of political organisation and understandings of sovereignty have also proved to be effective in other parts of the world, evidenced by the city-states in Northern Italy or the Hanseatic League near the Baltic Sea. Some groups have also maintained their traditional and indigenous practices to the modern day despite hegemonic Westphalian assumptions (Scott, 2009), such as aboriginal groups across almost all continents and nomadic populations like the Roma.

[11] I recognise this narrative oversimplifies and generalises the incredibly complex political, social, and geographical changes associated with the creation of the modern state system. Also overlooked are the colonial practices, violence, and other grassroots disruptions that accompanied cartographic technologies and processes to 'draw' territorial polities, including the many events wherein ethnic or religious cleansing were used as legal shortcuts to create homogenous political entities. Nevertheless, this explanation succinctly outlines the historical transition of space into territorial states.

and History. Notably, these terms all denote the extreme edges of territorial polities, but nuanced definitional and conceptual distinctions do exist.

Etymologically, *frontier* means 'in front,' often referring to the area that marks the extreme limit 'ahead' of or in 'the front' of the hinterland. Although historically neither a legal, political, nor intellectual concept, but a "manifestation of the spontaneous tendency for growth of the ecumene" (Kristof, 1959: 270), frontier is now often understood in the way described through Frederick Jackson Turner's (1920) description of America's westward development; namely, the territorial, political, and economic expansion and settlement of civilisations into 'empty' territories. He explains the American frontier is distinguished from the European fortified boundary line running through dense populations as the former lies at the edge of free land and the 'settled area' (Turner, 1920). In the case of early modern Russia, Andreas Kappeler (2001) similarly outlines that the concept of the frontier is relevant as it can be applied geographically (between steppe and forest), socially (between settled and nomadic cultures), religiously and culturally (between those who are 'civilized' and those who are 'barbarians'), and militarily (between different military organisations). In this way, frontier is best understood as a transition zone marking the end of what is known and the beginning of the unknown.

Conversely, *boundary* has a more general meaning as a demarcated line which binds together all falling within its limits (Kristof, 1959). Unlike how 'frontier' indicates an expansive historical phenomenon, 'boundary' implies stability, and thus often used in reference to political and legal developments or in diplomatic discussions when referring to the precise location of the lines separating a specified people and/or land (Baud and Van Schendel, 1997). Joel Migdal further employs boundaries to signify the site where things are done differently from within the bounds: "the point at which something becomes something else, at which the way things are done changes, at which 'We' end and 'They' begin, at which certain rules for behaviour no longer obtain and others take hold" (2004: 5). Anssi Paasi (1998) further explains that boundaries are manifestations of social discourse and practice; the construction of the meanings of communities and their boundaries occurs through 'stories' or ontological narratives that bind people together. In this way, boundaries are social constructs and involve both formalised markers, such as the lines on maps, and the symbolic divisions which cannot necessarily be seen but unite those who are similar (Lamont and Molnár, 2002). Most important here is that inherent to the definition of boundaries is a sense of 'boundedness' or unification.

Of the three terms, *border* is consequently used most commonly when denoting particular areas of space, typically in reference to the official instruments of states which "mark and delimit state sovereignty and rights of individual citizenship" (Donnan and Wilson, 1999: 5). As constructs of the state, or "imagined projections of territorial power" (Baud and Van Schendel, 1997: 211), borders are both institutions and processes represented linearly through points on the earth's surface determined by geometry and geology (Anderson, 1996; Diener and Hagen, 2018). They therefore divide space (as it is broadly understood) and define the physical shape of each state within the global order—even where they are not clearly marked, borders are usually still defined by a natural geographical parameter, such as a mountain range, river, or other watershed (also referred to as 'natural borders' or 'geographical borders' in this thesis). The lines found on contemporary maps are furthermore institutionalised through customs, immigration, and security forces, and physically manifested at the local level in the form of walls, roads, rivers, and fences; dividing and assigning people to different territories in this way has consequently also led to social, political, and cultural distinctions associated with the establishment of separate societies, economies, and identities (Diener and Hagen, 2018). In both literally and figuratively splitting groups

and/or spaces (see, for example, Barth, 1969; Cohen, 1985; 1986; Lamont and Molnár, 2002), borders thus represent the political, cultural, and social aspects of territoriality (Zhurzhenko, 2010).

In this way, borders can simultaneously be both boundaries and dividers—whereas the term 'boundary' stresses the limits of a bounded collective, like the people and things located within a respective area, 'border' also underscores a separation from or distinction vis-à-vis something/one else. Like territoriality, *borderity* thus fittingly refers to both the functional and symbiotic meanings about what 'makes a border' within a given space, or the ways space is characterised in a new configuration by the establishment and arrangement of borders and the associated technologies (Amilhat-Szary and Giraut, 2015; Rajaram and Grundy-Warr, 2007). In its essence, borderity accordingly suggests territoriality exists and functions dialectically with extra-territoriality (Nyíri, 2009), as can be visually observed through the Westphalian understandings of space—as sovereign entities neatly distinguished by borders—found on maps. Although a "map is not the territory" but merely a relationship between land and people drawn onto paper (Korzybyski, 1948: 58), the existence and development of maps since the sixteenth century has purported a standard scientific model of cognition and knowledge in (re)producing these assumingly 'correct' relations of terrain and territory through the use of borders (Harley, 1989). As a consequence, the emergence of the modern territorial state has fundamentally come to be connected with the historical process of literally being put or drawn 'on the map' (Biggs, 1999).

But while the term 'border' is indeed regularly understood as the territorial lines associated with state-building by demarcating the limits of power within and between states (Baud and Van Schendel, 1997) and situating at least two spatial areas in relation to each other (Löw and Weidenhaus, 2017), the term can likewise be used to highlight psychological or even 'imagined' differences between people. While individuals living near territorial borders were most directly implicated by the unilateral imposition of these divides following historical diplomatic negotiations (Biggs, 1999)—as was first seen with the establishment of Westphalian borders and again with the significant global transformations from the mid-1960s to the early 1990s—processes of territorialisation affected (and continue to affect) everyone. In a political sense, borders covertly implicate understandings of identity by underscoring the existence of an outside, and those external as 'foreign' or 'alien,' in territorially defining the state and classifying the people inside as 'citizens.' Since a state demands the loyalty of all people occupying its territory, the categories of 'self' and 'Other' are thus inherently constructed on the simple basis of individuals living in one territory over another, which is formalised through the attribution of certain rights and duties with the designation of citizenship to those on the same side of a territorial divide. The passport was subsequently established for the historical reason of the state needing to keep track of its own citizens and, paradoxically, also those of other states (Häkli, 2015; Torpey, 2000). By their very nature, then, territorial borders are "emblematic of the dichotomy and interrelation between senses of belonging and alienation and processes of inclusion and exclusion" (Diener and Hagen, 2018: 331)—they both delineate a state's territory as material symbols and justify the denotation of who belongs through 'passportization.'

Yet, borders need not only be territorial. Edward Said (1978), for instance, points to the constructed ideological distinctions by those who believe they belong together, or what he terms 'imaginative geographies,' which signify a sense of distinctiveness vis-à-vis 'Others' (national communities or otherwise) regardless of where the outsiders are spatially located. These 'geographical imaginaries' (Gregory, 1994) are similarly described by Migdal (2004) as *checkpoints* and *mental maps*: checkpoints are the 'imaginative borders' or sites and practices used to differentiate and separate members of a collective (including surveillance and assessment techniques like material checkpoints, racial profiling, and the

detection of accent and language differences), whilst mental maps maintain the attachments of and divorce between groups of people in representing the various meanings assigned to spatial configurations, in addition to shared emotions, feelings, loyalties, and cognitive ideas about the world. Similar to how cartographic borders delineate territorial sovereignties, social groups are distinguished by ascribed and subjective ideas determined by its members about what the collective is and where it is situated both metaphorically and in space (Korostelina, 2011); these invisible, psychological bonds serve to both unite nations and create a division between those whom belong and those outside as part of a larger imaginative cartography (Anderson, 2006; Said, 1978). How these groups both perceive and 'use' space is hence equally as important as how they conceive of the cartographies of their everyday existence and experience the symbolic interactions and associations which overlay space (Lefebvre, 1991). To definitionally and conceptually differentiate between these different uses of 'border,' 'territorial border' (or 'state border') is therefore used in this thesis in reference to the material lines demarcating space into sovereign territories, while 'imagined border' refers to the ontological divisions which both bind individuals to other members of the same social group and separate them from those not included.

2.2.3 Nationalising Territorial States

Importantly, the creation of a particular territorial understanding of society through the establishment of territorial borders as permanent features of the world has indubitably changed the relationship between people and space. In applying Lefebvre's tripartite schema to the modern understanding of territory, the perceived, conceived, and lived dimensions can be conceptualised as territorial practices, representations of territory, and territories of representation (Jones, 2007). Spatial practices in the territorial sense include the physical, material demarcations of state borders through markers, walls, and fences, as well as the creation and maintenance of infrastructure physically delineating the limits of a state (Brenner and Elden, 2009). Representations of territory can be seen through charts and maps which visually represent a particular territory outlined through cartographic divides, in addition to the geometrical and mathematical techniques like GIS used to systematically demarcate borders. Lived territories can be understood as the intersection of territorial practices and representations of territory, as well as something larger, such as a state or body politic (Brenner and Elden, 2009). As with the three aspects of space, territorial practices, representations of territory, and territories of representation are also connected; processes dependent on mathematics and geometry inform material practices like land-surveying to create an abstract and artificial division onto land, which is henceforth experienced by the people at the grassroots. The proliferation and success of any representation of territory appropriately depends on the extent to which it is in accordance with territories of representation. Not only does cartography play a constitutive role for the legitimisation of the state and its territory, then, but also for spatial and socio-political conceptions, practices, and understandings. How people ontologically understand themselves within the world is therefore directly related to the meanings they attribute to space, specifically their experiences with the territorial configurations which encompass them, rather than only the ways it is territorially compartmentalised in representations of space.

The division of space is therefore intrinsically linked to nationalism. This thesis defines nationalism as the ways nationhood is experienced, encompassing both the practices and nuanced self-conceptions and identifications upheld by members of a national collective. Nationalism rather than solely national identification is used here as members' self-conceptions of both the nation and themselves shape the ways that the nation is practiced in a sort of mutually-reinforcing feedback loop. In this way, nationalism and

national identification are not one in the same, but rather, national identification inherently informs and is informed by, as well as gives/is given meaning by, practices of the nation, which, taken together, shape how nationhood is experienced. Much of the principal theorising in the field of Geography accordingly emphasised the role of territory for nationalism, showing that the practices and experiences of nationhood within territorial states can only fundamentally be understood through a recognition of the complex cartographic processes which assigned people to different territories. Beyond the ways people are legally defined through citizenship as (not) belonging to a given state, many scholars specifically purport that territory is institutionalised as an important marker of nationalism for those occupying it. Gottmann (1973), for instance, advances the significance of territory as the main unit for politics is that it defines, at least in the modern day, the relationship between a community and its habitat, as well as between a community and its neighbours. As the 'right to exclude others' is linked to territorial sovereignty, he argues territorial delimitations determine who belongs to a nation: "[n]ationalism, on its modern expression, has been built on territorial foundations, and it required a territorial base upon which the sovereignty of that nation could apply its jurisdiction" (Gottmann, 1973: 95). In this way, territory assumes the responsibility of a nation's welfare, including providing the necessary material resources. Shapiro (2003) equally avows the establishment of a clearly defined territory formalises national identifications, as expressed through nationalism. By dividing people on territorial lines, nationalism can hence be understood as a 'territorial ideology,' as socio-political processes and dynamics, including national identity construction, intrinsically appear to take on a territorial component (Harvey, 2005).

Andrew Burghardt (1973) likewise emphasises the role of territory for nationalism. He reasons that territories are constructed as a way to contain certain groups of people, often national in nature, through the use of territorial borders. Territory and the associated demarcations therefore become institutionalised as an important aspect of identity in giving definition to people and places (Burghardt, 1973). As he details:

> Territorial units are perceived to exist, and the members of the group [in a particular territory] come to identify themselves with these units. Man has fashioned space in his own image. The group learns to understand itself in terms of, and in conjunction with, the land it perceives as being its own (Burghardt, 1973: 243-244).

Following from here, territories are constructed for the national groups contained by the state's borders, whilst the territory itself gives definition to the nation. On a similar line of thinking, David Knight writes that "territory is not; it becomes, for territory itself is passive, and it is human beliefs and actions that give territory meaning" (1982: 517). Although the meanings attributed to territory may appear to be pre-determined and independent, they are nonetheless socially constructed and stem from ordinary peoples' experiences with and perceptions of the current cartographic arrangement of space divided into sovereign states (Knight, 1982).

Guntram Herb (1999) moreover posits that the state in which a group of people belong, and are historically connected, is the most salient geographical scale around which national identities form. Because individuals become socialised and bound within territorial units, the reification of the state brings them together into a common and collective national story, which can regularly be understood through the concept of 'homeland.' Herb (1999) asserts that it is the actual physical space inhabited by members of a group, the specific terrain that helps to define them, the historical legacy of the area, the location of the place vis-à-vis others, and the territory's definition that add essential elements to national identification. In this way, a territory "creates a collective consciousness by reinventing itself as a homeland" (Herb, 1999:

17). Stated differently: the ways territories and the landscapes within them are perceived by occupants have powerful symbolic links to a national group's understanding of their past and, consequently, their present understanding of themselves and their identities (Knight, 1982).

Jouni Häkli (1999) also explains the link between territory and national identification in this way, pointing to landscapes and territorial imagery as an integral part of identity for the inhabitants. He employs the concept of 'discursive landscapes' to expound collective identities and common conceptions of territory; according to Häkli, 'landscape' is a "socially constructed relation of the natural and cultural environment," and 'discursive' is in reference to the fact that the landscapes are socially created and (re)produced, often expressed through material objects like texts, and allow for the necessary cultural, rhetorical, and historical negotiations around identity (1999: 124). Discourses of territorial landscapes and imagery are further (re)produced and (re)interpreted by members of national communities through the pattern of symbols, values, myths, memories, and traditions that characterise their specific national homelands and territories. By engendering a reality of their own, and accentuating difference from others, the nation's discursive landscapes then become an integral element of nationalism and especially national identifications (Häkli, 1999). As most of these seminal geographical works date back to the late twentieth century, it can thus be seen that the importance of territory for social groups, like national collectives, as well as for other socio-political phenomena has long been recognised.

2.3 Critiquing the Contemporary State System

2.3.1 The 'Territorial Trap'

But whereas the above theorising indeed helps "people imagine the world as composed of sovereign nation-states" (Sutherland, 2012: 10), this idealised archetype of society as confined to 'container-box' nation-states (Gielis and Van Houtum, 2012) has been challenged extensively. In particular, several calls have been made in response to the older scholarship, especially by human geographers, to (re)consider the academy's prioritisation of the territorial scale of the state when approaching politics and nationalism. John Agnew (1994) has been especially vocal in arguing that many scholars fall into what he calls a 'territorial trap.' He points to three geographic assumptions of this 'trap:'

> The first assumption, and the one that is most fundamental theoretically, is the reification of state territorial spaces as fixed units of secure sovereign space. The second is the division of the domestic from the foreign. The third geographical assumption is of the territorial state as existing prior to and as a container of society (Agnew, 1994: 76-77).

Although modern understandings of sovereignty have always been connected to the demarcation of territorial jurisdictions, Agnew reinforces the relationship between sovereignty and space has not always, nor necessarily, determined the boundaries of social relations, such as those between members of national collectives (see also Strandsbjerg, 2010). He thus claims that social and political life cannot simply be "ontologically contained within the territorial boundaries of states through the methodological assumption of 'timeless space'" (Agnew, 1994: 77) in the way visually suggested in representations of space, as doing so inaccurately portrays (if even at all) the socio-political relations between people.

Other scholars of geography and geopolitics have equally supported this argument and advanced that the privileging of the state in discussions of modern politics both simplifies and overlooks the lived dynamics at other spatial scales. Although territory may appear to be naturally pre-determined and have

significance independent of states' functions, Kerry Goettlich (2019), for example, stresses that the lived experiences of people within states cannot be contained in an equally fixed, mutually exclusive, or linear way, nor can they necessarily be represented by stable, coherent theoretical concepts as is suggested in representations of space. Since humans form attachments to and at several spatial scales—from small scales such as a favourite armchair to the extreme spatial scale of the whole earth (Tuan, 1977)—the experiences of ordinary people may instead contradict traditional understandings of the contemporary global order as singular, static, and territorial in encompassing alternative conceptualisations of space, including fuzzy borders and liminal spaces (Goettlich, 2019). Michel De Certeau further highlights a discrepancy between representations of space and representational spaces, arguing that the immobile representations of space and the mobile life practices of people stand in opposition as the fluidities of people are replaced by "a totalizing and reversible line on the map" (1984: 97, also Spruyt, 1994). Notably, even the ways states are represented and prioritised within the major geopolitical debates, particularly those between the materialist/Marxist, humanist (or agency-based), feminist, performative, and new materialist streams of thought, takes precedence over how they are lived, embodied, practiced, enacted, and performed (Goettlich, 2019). Though the territorial state remains the major political subdivision of the world, centring analyses on only this spatial scale is accordingly short-sighted and counterproductive for fully understanding modern politics and nationalism.

The reality of the dominant geographical theorising "not keeping pace with the functional" (Murphy, 2010: 771) is also particularly apparent when considering the underlying assumptions of the territorial state in light of globalisation. Whereas historical cartographic processes most often created (or, at least, attempted to create) territories with 'alienated' or 'coexistent' dynamics and no or minimal cross-border interchanges between neighbouring states (Martinez, 1994), amplified interconnectedness through rapidly evolving communication technologies and increased border permeability—both in terms of human mobility and cultural transferability—has weakened the fundamental assumption of territorial sovereignty supported by rigid linear borders (Branch, 2010; 2011). Due to these changing global realities, borderlines have become exceedingly porous and much more interdependent and integrated through "transboundary social formation" (Herzog, 1990: 135) and the removal of nearly all barriers to the movement of people and goods; examples include the emergence of borders as popular tourist destinations and in ephemeral and non-visible locations defying a straightforward territorial logic like Heathrow Airport Visitors Centre, Niagara Falls, and Geneva's Mont-Salève. To such a degree that cartographic processes once allowed for the state's exertion of power—both inwardly and outwardly—in forming a 'binary dualism' and defining who and what is 'in-place' and 'out-of-place,' or 'domestic and 'foreign' (Tuathail, 1996), societal changes in light of new global realities have challenged the symbolic power of territorial borders as politically demarcating states (Amilhat-Szary and Giraut, 2015; Graziano, 2018). The articulation of these divides by state governments and the academy has therefore evolved in recent years as several scholars have come to approach them as non-binaries (Rumford, 2006) and even considered their imminent demise in the movement towards a supposed 'borderless world' (Diener and Hagen, 2018). In undermining the fundamental premise of territorial sovereignty—and thus also the contemporary global order—these developments highlight both the constructed nature of states and the need to move beyond the 'territorial trap' when approaching socio-political phenomena like nationalism.

Globalisation and cosmopolitanisation have additionally challenged the underlying assumptions of the 'territorial trap' in re-configuring the political 'arena' and blurring divisions between states. The ways new global processes have obfuscated the 'inside'/'domestic' and 'outside'/'foreign' realms can be seen

through the introduction of new international institutions and norms in recent years, including inter- and supra-state treaties, organisations, and jurisdictions; the granting of citizenship, asylum, and extradition to non-citizens; and situations where states act out their sovereignty beyond their territories through military deployments and territorial leases/servitudes (Sassen, 2015; Strauss, 2015). The omnipresence of non-territorial alliances like global civil societies, virtual communities, and transnational networks further portrays the declining relevance, and idea of, sovereign states as the main institutions for the practice of global politics (Rumford, 2006; Sassen, 2015). Manuel Castells (2000) cites the EU as an example, coining it a 'network society' where augmented and de-territorialised flows of people and goods have diminished the relevance of borderlines and individual territories within the supra-state organisation, especially in the Schengen zone (see also Mekdjian, 2015; Rumford, 2006; Sassen, 2015). In underlining the false dichotomies of 'domestic/national' and 'foreign/international,' these geopolitical developments, especially those of the last thirty years, have therefore instigated a shift in the meaning of territorial borders and re-spatialised politics (Beck, 2006; Castells, 2000; Mekdjian, 2015; Parker, 2009; Rumford, 2006; Sassen, 1996; 2015), as well as showing that socio-political processes and phenomena below the state are obscured and overlooked when society is approached as static territorial entities.

2.3.2 Imaginative Cartographies

Perhaps most importantly, though, is that approaching nationalism from the territorial scale of the state completely ignores the reality that nations do not necessarily follow a territorial logic. Whereas the assignment of people to specific territories has indeed created a sense of shared politico-legal belonging through the institutional complex of civic rights and responsibilities (Schnapper, 1998)—and even constructed 'civic' nations in some situations where they did not previously exist (Ignatieff, 1993; Kohn, 2005)—nationhood is still organised through national collectives' imaginative cartographies (Brubaker et al., 2006). The existence of national groups, like any social group, accordingly rests on the fact that regular checkpoints and habitual assessments (or imagined borders) create mental maps which separate the familiar from the unfamiliar through a cognitive schema that is materialised through language, skin colour, dress, mannerisms, and other identifiable attributes (Migdal, 2004). Nations' imaginative cartographies therefore do not require an empirical reality nor automatically align with territorial cartographies, but remain in a perpetual condition of existence and becoming as long as the cognitive underpinnings of their collectives persist (Connor, 1978)—these ascribed and subjective ideas associated with nationhood are fundamental for how people understand and articulate their national attachments, feelings of belonging, and identities, as well as the ways they embody, enact, and perform nationhood (Anderson, 2006; Korostelina, 2011; Said, 1978). Hence, even while nations are often assumed to align and overlap with states—and indeed may in some situations be connected to the territorial state and its institutions as the state still enshrines a civic understanding of nationalism through citizenship and naturalisation policies (Goode and Stroup, 2015)—they follow their own geographical imaginaries (Gregory, 1994) or imagined spatial logics (Bassin, 1991; Donnan and Wilson, 1999; Wilson and Donnan, 1998).

Accordingly, the (re)assignment of people and land through historical cartographical processes has not ultimately determined the survival or autonomy of nations, as several national groups (as well as conceptualisations of nations more generally) may converge and overlap within the same territory and/or constitute only the core or a small proportion of a state's eponymous political collective. Whereas Kedourie argues the separation of a nation by territorial borders is "arbitrary, unnatural, [and] unjust" (1994: 62), the spatial experience of nations in the contemporary global order is instead both

discontinuous and differential, as members need not be physically located together within the same state (Maxwell, 2020); this is exemplified with the Jewish population which "comprises a notion of multiple spaces, rather than one of a single space; and between these spaces—a void" (Milo, 1992: vi-ix). The traditionally assumed 'natural' association of nationalism with the territorial state, or the monolithic nation-state—where there exists just one nation for one given state—is therefore allusive in light of globalisation and increased multi-nationalism and multi-culturalism, and also rare, if it ever existed. Instead, cartographic processes have created a system wherein members of heterogeneous nations co-exist within states' territories (Connor, 1994), thus sharing identical citizenships and passports albeit upholding different national identifications. Given the rapidly evolving global dynamics, it is hence apparent that approaching nationalism from the scale of the territorial state in the way presented in representations of space obfuscates the complex processes and dynamics at other spatial scales.

Following from here, it is therefore particularly surprising that the general tendency in other social sciences, and especially International Relations and Political Science, is to align with the older geographical theorising in likewise privileging the territorial state as the dominant way to frame, interrogate, and explain nationalism. Whereas the 'primordial' belief that national groups are "perceived kith and kin" who are "located symbolically in a specific territory or place" (Weinreich et al., 2003: 119) has regularly been dismissed in nationalism studies since the late twentieth century, much traditional and hegemonic thinking has instead inherently fallen into the 'territorial trap' in emphasising the state, and its territory and institutions, for the expression and experience of nationhood and construction of national attachments and identities (see, for example, Anderson, 2006; Brubaker, 1996; 2009; Chandra, 2001; Fearon and Wendt, 2002; Gellner, 1965; Hobsbawm, 1992; Motyl, 2010; Smith, 1998; Suny, 2004; Wimmer, 2013). This reality is directly related to the conceptual division between 'civic' and 'ethnic' nationalisms, wherein the more 'civic' (also 'territorial' or 'political') understanding of nationalism rejects the 'ethnic' assumption that nationalism, like ethnicity, is not a matter of choice but emotively rooted in a mythical and ancestral past connected to both shared historical, cultural, linguistic, and religious traits and/or memories (Breuilly, 1996; Hobsbawm, 1992; Muller, 2008; Smith, 1998; Wilcox, 2004). While the civic-ethnic dichotomy is often thought to be "more an artifice of academic reasoning than lived experience," as civic and ethnic understandings of the nation exist alongside each other (Goode and Stroup, 2015: 3), the dominant literature nonetheless still draws on the state as the starting point and underlying premise for contemporary nationalism and ethnicity, like other socio-political phenomena.[12] In doing so, a territorial link between sovereignty, the state, and the nation (i.e. the 'nation-state') is regularly presumed, which intrinsically collapses the conceptual distinctions between state and nation, citizenship and nationality, and patriotism and nationalism. While nationalism can indeed be studied, as well as experienced and practiced, at the scale of the territorial state, the routine accentuation of territorial and/or citizenship-based distinctiveness over the ontological or subjective differences between people, such as on linguistic, ethnic, and religious grounds (Wilcox, 2004), ignores, and arguably even minimises, the importance of imaginative cartographies for national collectives. Understanding nationalism in the contemporary day therefore requires a recognition of the fact that nations need not only follow a territorial logic, as well as a consideration of the ways imaginative cartographies and the territorial cartography of the state system may interact, overlap, and even contradict one another.

[12] Approaching national identities as 'essentialised,' totalising, and/or rigid overlooks the fact that they dynamically combine both civic and ethnic elements in such a way that they can be gauged as more or less one over the other (Barrington, 2021; Marcos-Marné, 2015; Shulman, 2004).

One approach to overcoming the 'territorial trap' and uncovering the cognitive underpinnings of nationalism, including the 'mental maps' through which national groups perceive the world, is 'everyday nationalism.' As a sub-field of nationalism studies, everyday nationalism explores the experiences and meanings around nationhood, or the "active construction" of nationalism, through everyday practices on the ground (Mann and Fenton, 2009: 518; see also Antonsich, 2016; Brubaker et al., 2006; Condor, 2010; Fenton, 2007; Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008; Goode and Stroup, 2015; Thompson, 2001). In recognising that nationalism may be variably expressed and experienced across time and space (Skey, 2011), everyday nationalism thus does not centre on the state and the associated institutions and territory, nor does it provide (nor seek to provide) an encompassing description of the relevance, role, or even origin of nationalism for the 'masses' (Goode and Stroup, 2015; Knott, 2015a). Instead, this sub-field's emphasises the agency of ordinary people and the everyday "lived experience of nationalism" (Knott, 2015a: 1) in order to further knowledge around how nationhood is spatially experienced and expressed in the everyday lives of ordinary people within the local places where they reside (Condor, 2010; Skey, 2011). Although resembling Michael Billig's (1995) 'banal' nationalism, this approach centres on social practices and agents rather than structures to consider how nations are negotiated, challenged, and reproduced by ordinary people, who are 'missing' from much of the dominant scholarship (Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008; Goode, 2020). As such, everyday nationalism not only looks beyond (or below) the state, but aids in disclosing the "vernacular understandings" (Brubaker et al., 2006: 9; also Migdal, 2004) and experiences of nationalism, including both the more visible everyday practices, encounters, and self-conceptions, and the common knowledge and specific idioms associated with particular nations, such as their imaginative cartographies.

2.4 Deconstructing the Territorial State

2.4.1 'Lived' Representational Spaces

To explore the ways nationalism is manifested in the everyday lives of ordinary agents, then, this project draws on the theoretical underpinnings of everyday nationalism to look beyond the territorial state. In an attempt to understand the particular nuances around how nationhood is actively experienced, practiced, (re)produced, and challenged in the everyday, the places of primordial and symbolic significance for ordinary people are the foci of analysis, regardless of at which spatial scale they are located. In contrast to space and territory, *places* are the specific and local sections of space where people and things are located and 'lived' (Agnew, 2011). Unlike the cartographic construction of states, places are socially constructed by the meanings ascribed to them through direct everyday experiences with and knowledge about the natural and cultural elements of the immediate environment wherein individuals or a group are located (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992; Hastrup and Olwig, 1997; Hubbard, 2005; Keith and Pile, 1993). Edward Relph (1976) stresses the importance of unpacking the ways a 'sense of place' is created within a territory through the 'lived experience of place,' including the identities people hold *of* and *with* places. He posits that every individual or group consciously, and even sometimes unconsciously, assigns an identity to certain places to distinguish the place's uniqueness: "[t]he identity of something refers to a persistent sameness and unity which allows that thing to be differentiated from others" (1976: 45). The identities people assign to places, or the identity *of* places, are therefore critical for generating a sense of belonging for both groups and individuals as they are inter-subjectively combined to form a coherent and common identity associated with that particular place (Relph, 1976). At the same time, historical negotiations of identity also include an acknowledgement of the meanings ascribed to individuals and groups deriving from places, or the identities they have *with* places, particularly in terms of whether certain places are experienced as an insider

or outsider (Relph, 1976). Places are accordingly locational in their relation to other spatial structures so that there is a clear division between what is considered both inside and outside of a given place (Lukermann, 1964); place has also been described as a 'thirdspace,' or geographical imaginaries constituted by both real and imagined spaces (see Soja, 1996). Hence, what differentiates place from territory and space is that place, as a smaller and more intimate geographic scale, is imbued with particular meanings by those who live within and outside of it (Canter, 1997; Groat, 1995; Gustafson, 2001a; 2001b; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977). The phenomenologies of locality and both the imaginative and physical landscapes serve to reflect and create perceived ideas about certain places (Tilley, 1994), which fundamentally inform unique experiences, social practices, and identities, as well as creating a sense of 'homeland' within the mind (Schama, 1995; Tilley, 1994).

By "providing a sense of belonging" for those whom it holds importance (Hubbard, 2005: 43), place is thus a critical empirical concept for social practices and identity construction for both groups and individuals. Yi-Fu Tuan (1977) further purports that of all spatial scales, it is certain places below the level of the state that are acutely salient for identity in forming an elemental part of a person's consciousness and sense of collective belonging, especially within a homeland. Unlike other geographers who define it in a territorial sense (see, for example, Häkli, 1999; Herb, 1999; Knight, 1982), Tuan explicates that homeland is "a region (city or countryside) large enough to support a people's livelihood" (1977: 148). Attachment to one's homeland can be intense and is typically based on historical descriptions, symbolic imagery, and memories which tie individuals to certain places, such as the landmarks of public significance or high visibility like cemeteries, monuments, and shrines found within it; these sites are significant for creating homelands as they increase awareness of, and loyalty to, certain places and thus enhance a sense of identity and connection both to the place and with the others sharing the place (Tuan, 1977; also Gustafson, 2001a; 2001b; Hay, 1998). The deep attachments people feel to particular homelands can similarly emerge through intimate experiences or sensuous perceptions, wherein the remembered sounds and smells, homely pleasures, and common activities subconsciously accumulated over time assure a significant attachment, familiarity, and ease with a specific place (Tuan, 1977). In this way, the experience of homeland as a smaller and more 'intimate' place, rather than homeland on a territorial scale, creates 'deep-rooted' affective and cognitive bonds between a person (or a collective) and 'home' places (whether present or former) that are embedded within their consciousnesses and naturalised over time, subsequently shaping social practices and behaviour and recursive processes like identity formation (Altman and Low, 1992; Campbell, 2018; Canter, 1997; Groat, 1995; Gustafson, 2001a; 2001b; Low, 1992).

In also highlighting the importance of particular localities and smaller geographical areas for belonging and identity, Nadia Lovell (1998) advances that it is precise places which evoke shared feelings of attachment and loyalty for individuals and groups. In addition to 'rooting' people to place and social relations, she asserts that it is the politics of landscape, which sometimes include material objects that shape, define, and embody particular discourses for those who occupy a certain place or homeland, and which may be expressed through myths and narratives, oral or written histories, and other more material elements such as exhibitions, museums, and shrines (Lovell, 1998). This collective memory and "emotional gravity" of a particular place very much coincides with the manner in which a group prefers to remember and perpetuate their past, including the way representations of the past have become part of the contemporary socio-cultural milieu (Lovell, 1998: 2; see also Liu and Hilton, 2005; Nicholson, 2017). Drawing on Lefebvre (1991), places subsequently take on meaning through the "everyday practices and

lived experiences" both within and beyond them by the individuals and social groups who 'use' them in their everyday lives (Brenner and Elden, 2009: 366).

Directly related to the physical component of homelands is also the concept of region. As small sections of space which may be contained within or cut across boundary lines, regions involve an "association of diverse phenomena" (Hartshorne, 1958: 97). Though 'traditional regional geography' approached space in a chronological way, specifically by investigating the unique idiosyncrasies within precise spatial units, 'new regional geography' emerged in the late twentieth century in an attempt to understand particular places and theorise the meanings and perceptions associated with regions, including the ways they inform identities (Charron, 2012; Charron and Diener, 2015). Particularly influential here is Paasi, who purports that regions, as socially constructed units, are distinguished from other spatial structures through the process of the 'institutionalisation,' wherein regions formally 'receive' their unique boundaries and symbols and become part of the "socio-spatial consciousness prevailing in society" (1996: 32-33). The four characteristics of this process, highlighted by Paasi (1996), involve the development of territorial shape, symbolic shape, and regional institutions, as well as the establishment of a distinct territorial unit. In becoming part of the larger socio-spatial "structures of expectations," the institutionalisation process involves the establishment of specific symbols for expressing and demarcating a spatial area; the abstract expression and continual (re)production of group solidarity and social consciousness through socio-economic, administrative, and cultural institutions; and the formation of a distinct region within the prevailing socio-spatial structures and societal consciousness (Paasi, 1996: 33-35). As regions can fit within larger states, local and regional identities have subsequently emerged within these smaller spatial units in response to cartographic processes and globalisation; in overcoming the 'territorial trap,' regions have also often been constructed as homelands as the "unfinished character" of or "[c]ultural division of labour" within states (Agnew, 2001: 104). Within the European context more specifically, Philip Ther (2013) has notably emphasised the common tendency to regard regions as given or essential units, which results in invalid assumptions about their internal homogeneity and territorial continuity—he consequently stresses the need to consider regions as objects of discourses and/or cultural practices.

In line with this thinking, several scholars have thus appropriately emphasised smaller geographical scales for national groups, purporting that the importance and historical continuity of a particular piece of land as a homeland reflects the spatial dimension of nationalism. Robert Kaiser, for example, points to the cultural memory of a nation as "an ancient community of belonging; an organic singularity 'rooted' to a particular place" (2002: 230). He outlines that political elites will (and have) mobilise symbolic narratives and images of a primordial homeland to 'territorially socialise' citizens and 'construct' homelands within a territory, as was seen in several post-Soviet states. Cartographic representations portraying symbolic landscapes and commemorative sites, such as maps, are therefore particularly important for constructing and reinforcing the consciousness of a given territory, as is education, national media, and cultural industries (Kaiser, 2002). William Safran also highlights the importance of a collective memory, vision, and/or myth about a nation's homeland, including "its physical location, history, and achievements, and, often enough, sufferings" (2005: 37). On a similar line of thinking, Rogers Brubaker (2005) outlines that a homeland orientation is a particularly central element in the constitution of a national community. He explains that when nations construct themselves as a collective, they continue to relate to their homeland, whether personally or vicariously, and define their ethno-communal consciousness and solidarity in terms of its safety, independence, and prosperity (Brubaker, 2005; also Safran, 2005). Relatedly, Smith describes the continuous personal ties to space as 'ethnosymbolic,' drawing from his own theory of

'ethnosymbolism' that contends some places—or what he calls 'ethnoscapes'—are endowed with such significant meanings through powerful memories and collective feelings of belonging that they are 'sacred' and 'integral' for particular social groups, communities, and cultures (Smith, 1996; 2009). He moreover details these ethnosymbolic ties with particular pieces of land "present a tradition of continuity," as they are symbolic for the people who use them (or what he terms the *ethnie*), while the community itself is also "an intrinsic part of [the] poetic landscape" (Smith, 1996: 150). Accordingly, the influential and meaningful bonds with places are important for nationalism as they aid national collectives in conceptualising themselves in space.

Yet as the contemporary state system is generally left unchallenged and the relatively short history of territorial sovereignty overlooked (Branch, 2010), the assumptions of the 'territorial trap' continue to shape societal aspirations and guide studies of socio-political phenomena like nationalism. As a consequence, the role of human agency and experience in the (re)negotiation and definition of nationalism is frequently ignored (Isaacs and Polese, 2016; Seliverstova, 2017), as states are often treated as spatial compartments encompassing homogenous populations. While state-centric approaches to nationalism cannot entirely be disregarded as territorial borders continue to exist "in some form or other" in both separating and uniting groups of people and territory into the world's 195 states (Parker and Adler-Nissen, 2012: 774)—even though these divisions are arbitrary and becoming exceedingly complex in light of globalisation—they remain 'unreflexive' in excluding local voices (Condor, 2010; Knott, 2015b).[13] Hence, such perspectives provide important insights into state-constructed narratives and understandings of nationalism, particularly those thought to be more civic, but routinely fail to recognise the value of both territorial and imagined cartographies for the experience and expression of nationalism. Since the three aspects of space are always interconnected (Lefebvre, 1991), so that the ways the division of space into territories is perceived and experienced fundamentally informs "the everyday practices and lived experiences" of people on the ground (Brenner and Elden, 2009: 366), considering how nationhood is experienced and practiced in representational spaces significant for actors is thus principal for understanding nationalism in the contemporary state system. To do so, the most appropriate way forward is a critical deconstruction of the territorial system through an exploration of the areas most directly impacted by both the establishment of borders through cartographic processes and the new realities caused by globalisation: the borderlands.

2.4.2 Borderlands as Representational Spaces

As the sites where territorial entities coincide, *borderlands* are accordingly the most relevant and critical sites for analysing nationalism in the globalising world order. Although hegemonic approaches since the late twentieth century have predominantly framed the construction of nationhood within the context of the territorial state—and inherently suggested borders are extensions of the state and a means to identify all those sharing a coherent nationality—borderlands are particularly salient and insightful socio-political areas for uncovering the 'lived experience' of nationalism. For this project, 'borderlands' are defined as the places created through "the existence of a border" (Baud and Van Schendel, 1997: 216). Whereas borderlands are often recognised as geographical areas emerging from cartographic processes and thus "significantly affected by an international border" (Prescott, 1965: 33-34), conceptual understandings vary due to the widespread usage of the term across academic disciplines. For instance, borderlands may

[13] The unilateral responses by states to close their borders due to the COVID-19 pandemic intrinsically demonstrates the continued relevance of these divides in the modern day.

sometimes refer to contact or conflict zones of different cultural or political entities, while debates also exist about whether the areas on both sides of a territorial boundary line are considered to be part of the same borderland (see, for example, Asiwaju, 1993; Baud and Van Schendel, 1997). Incongruous opinions also persist regarding how far 'inland' from a border a borderland extends. Nevertheless, the size and precise location of areas considered to be borderlands are of less interest here than the places themselves which are created by the presence of borders. Therefore, and as is seen in Chapter 3 with the introduction of Ukraine, this project considers borderlands at both micro- (as the smaller regions or plots of land within states nearest to territorial borders) and macro-levels (as particular states or larger geographical areas standing between geopolitical or ideological entities). Although borderlands created by territorialisation are the main focus of analysis in this thesis, it must be noted that borderlands can indeed be approached without using a territorial frame; Eric Tagliacozzo (2016), for instance, stresses that newer social science research understands border spaces in non-territorial ways, such as through ethnographic, geological, linguistic, and maritime lenses.

Despite these alternative ways of envisioning borderlands, this thesis is precisely interested in the unique areas that emerged through the division of space into territories due to the establishment of cartographic borders. Whilst these geographical areas existed within large sections of space until land was divided into the contemporary territorial state system—meaning they actually once resembled the more central parts of their states' territories—contemporary borderlands are positioned directly at the "spatial and temporal records of the relationships between local communities and between states" (Wilson and Donnan, 1998: 5). As such, the transforming understanding of space with the expansion of Westphalian practices of sovereign authority distinguished borderlands from the core or majority populations of the same states wherein they are located (Branch, 2010; 2011; Donnan and Wilson, 1999). Due to their position in the 'domestic' but beside the 'foreign' (Sahlins, 1998), these areas are thus both dissimilar and detached from the larger socio-political and economic realities of their own states because of their distance from interior centres and proximity to neighbouring states and, relatedly, also the challenges to integration central governments face (economically, logistically, and otherwise). Hence, even though hegemonic representations of space show a particular image of space divided into unitary and static territories, in a way that suggests domestic governments control everything and everyone within their territories equally (see Agnew and Corbridge, 1995), a sense of social 'separateness' or 'otherness' instead often exists at the local level within these areas. Whereas the everyday socio-political processes found in more central areas can likewise be found in contemporary borderland areas, the lived experiences of the ordinary people residing there are still unambiguously connected to ongoing semantic and physical processes of inclusion and exclusion, as well as continual change, negotiation, and (re)definition (Wilson and Donnan, 1998).

This reality is further caused by the complex impact of cross-border networks and relations for local dynamics within borderland areas. While borderlands may be detached or even subverted from states' larger political and economic processes, the people in these areas still make use of the state and its territory to their advantage. For instance, local communities often establish and maintain socio-economic and political connections across territorial borderlines for greater access to globalised networks and circuits of exchange and information, as well as more leveraging power within their own states than their more central counterparts in accessing political and economic resources within two or more states (Diener and Hagen, 2018; Rumford, 2006). When significant economic variance and inequality exists between neighbouring countries, cross-border trade typically increases—differing national trade laws, restrictions, and levels of taxation also often motivate smuggling (Andersson, 2014; Van Schendel, 1993). Though

these illicit activities are not limited to borderlands, nor do they exist in all peripheral areas, they are perpetuated as one of the many ways borderlanders have adapted to their detachment and subversion from core political areas. As cross-border activities are based on a certain level of trust between people in different states, they also subsequently create new power relations and 'politics of trust' networks, particularly in peripheral areas (Baud and Van Schendel, 1997). In forcing local populations to (re)define their attachments on various scales, the ways territorial borders "separate people (or groups of people)," paradoxically, also influences interactions across them (Tägil et al., 1977: 14).

In fact, and similar to the cross-border political and economic relations, socio-cultural influences from neighbouring states also implicate these representational spaces. Oscar Martinez (1994) explains the processes which shape the 'borderland milieu' by pointing to 'transnationalism,' or the intense interactions between people on both sides of territorial borderlines whereby the adjacent areas are impacted by and sometimes even share the values, ideas, customs, and traditions of those neighbouring. In this way, an unique *modus vivendi* atmosphere regularly develops in borderland areas by incorporating the contradictory attachments and identities tied to the co-existence of diverse peoples (Martinez, 1994). At the same time, though, it must be noted that cross-border exchanges are not solely responsible for the multifaceted socio-cultural structures within borderland areas as these divisions exist independent of the individuals whom are separated by these divides (Baud and Van Schendel, 1997; Löw and Weidenhaus, 2017). Although state borders were often drawn as a way to assign individuals with perceived common identifying characteristics like nationality to a defined geographical area (Graziano, 2018), or to promote the construction of a common identity—as is inherently assumed in state-centric approaches to politics and nationalism—these lines often cut through fairly homogenous cultural, ethnic, religious, and national groups and, in doing so, legally and territorially divide them between polities (Bassin, 1991; Donnan and Wilson, 1999; Wilson and Donnan, 1998). This was particularly evident with the artificial (re)drawing and movement of many territorial borders following the end of significant geopolitical events like colonisation in Africa in the mid-twentieth century (for more, see Asiwaju, 1993; Mudimbe, 1988) or the collapse of the USSR in 1991. While some states (and the associated borders) do align with the separations between groups with respect to features such as ethnicity, culture, language, nationality, or phenotype (race), others instead separate individuals sharing similar characteristics and thus simultaneously pull borderlanders both across borders and towards the centre of their home state (Wilson and Donnan, 1998). Due to the division of space through cartographic processes, then, peripheral areas have come to include: people who have no emotional or socio-cultural ties to other states; people who feel part of another state or nonstate entity; and people who share ties with both those residing within their home state's core and others across territorial borderlines (Wilson and Donnan, 1998). Whereas borders may indeed be viewed differently for those whom they have relevance, the areas nearest them are consequently embedded with many different and often competing meanings and experiences due to the social networks within their home states and ever-increasing, multi-faceted, and complex cross-border connections and mobility.

Still, borderlands are not always sites of cross-border cooperation, accommodation and acceptance. As 'communication regions' (Berezhnaya, 2015), they have come to embody historical traumas and geopolitical fears as the lines delineating many states have been 'nomadic' and even 'migrated' since 1648 through changes in their geopolitical statuses, locations, symbolic meanings, and socio-economic functions. Such changes have consequently led to the destruction of old communities and the establishment of new ones; the reformation of political and legal systems; the reshaping of national symbols, narratives, and languages; and the shifting of emotional attachments and loyalties (Bös and

Zimmer, 2006; Brednikova and Voronkov, 1999; Kaiser and Nikiforova, 2006; Zhurzhenko, 2010). In this way, borders have innately transformed understandings of citizenship and the meanings of certain citizenships, as well as contributed to commonplace violence by compounding the 'birthright lottery' or 'power of place' as important determinants for social opportunities, life conditions, and even mobility (De Blij, 2008; Jones, 2012); this is particularly evident when individuals with strong cross-border associations have an easier time adopting the dominant ethnic, cultural, and/or linguistic patterns of their 'home' state or possess more socio-economic power than their counterparts in neighbouring states (Martinez, 1994). In other situations, territorial borders may separate people living in vastly different socio-political and economic situations even as they share an attachment to the same national collective. Moreover, and in situations where borderlines have 'migrated,' and new territories and citizens 'knitted' together into the narrative of a state, the histories or 'suture' between sovereign authorities are often perpetuated and (re)produced through the memories, attitudes, and political behaviours of local people (Kaiser and Nikiforova, 2006; Peisakhin, 2015; Salter, 2012). Whilst entire populations are affected by these 'scars,' borderlands are most greatly impacted; Leonid Peisakhin (2015), for example, asserts that long-lasting legacies influence the attitudes, behaviours, and even identities of the people living in peripheral areas long after borderlines have been removed and populations 'stitched' together. His findings show that these histories persist even in spite of significant societal traumas and upheavals, such as those associated with communism. Graziano (2018) uses the term 'phantom borders' to describe a similar phenomenon where territorial units and new borders are formalised in a way that stands in opposition to the reality of the populations who directly experience them. When these situations exist, divergent cultural identities and behaviours may persist long after borders have been removed and historical institutions dismantled, even if these organisations inherently instigated the particular attitudes (see, for example, Alesina and Fuchs-Schuendeln, 2007; Peisakhin, 2012; 2015; Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2017; Wittenberg, 2006). 'Fault-line wars' are therefore commonplace in borderland areas as competing groups contest the location of contemporary borderlines on historical grounds (Balibar, 2009), as can currently be seen in the easternmost regions of Ukraine.

In other cases, the prioritisation of border interests above and even against those of a home state can, and has, lead to the circumvention, restriction, and instability of state authority in borderland areas. As a way to reinforce the state and exert control over the borderlands, domestic governments will regularly establish, manipulate, and strengthen differences between neighbouring states by reinforcing borders and checkpoints to break down cross-border socio-political networks and attachments, resolve underlying tensions between co-habiting groups, and evince a national preoccupation with and loyalty to one's home state (Newman, 2003; Tuathail, 1996); this can be seen through the reinforcement of physical divisions like fences, walls, posts, and other landmarks used to demarcate territorial sovereignty (Baud and Van Schendel, 1997). Practices and structures of the state, including symbols, myths, cultures, and languages which are in accordance with a particular image of the state, could thus be imposed in a top-down way—also known as 'nationalising policies' (Brubaker, 1996)—in an attempt to enforce contract-like agreements upon all citizens and even denaturalise essentialised categories like national identification in situations when they contradict those purported by the state (Baud and Van Schendel, 1997; Migdal, 2004). While discussed further in Chapter 3, the policies of *korenizatsiya* and Russification within the Soviet republics are two examples of such attempts to impose top-down measures and evince a preoccupation with a central authority. To such a degree, then, territorial borders provide the tools for the exertion of state power both inwardly and outwardly in an effort to form a 'binary dualism' in defining who and what is considered 'in-

place' and 'out-of-place,' or 'domestic and 'foreign' (Tuathail, 1996). While reinforcing sovereignty, the use of borders as political technology in this way has simultaneously left borderlands more likely than other areas within the same state to possess a kind of heterotopic reality (Stokes, 1998) and experience conflict, especially on ethnic, linguistic, and national grounds (Douglass, 1998; Jones, 2012; Tägil et al., 1977).

Insofar as territorial borders were originally, and continue to be, thought as rigid "simple separators" (Migdal, 2004: 6), those in the globalising world order are accordingly "meaning-making and meaning-carrying entities" (Donnan and Wilson, 1999: 4) with profound effects for political and cultural relations by influencing social processes, practices, and behaviours (Charron and Diener, 2015). Drawing on Lefebvre, borderlands are accordingly "qualitative, fluid, and dynamic" representational spaces (1991: 42) in that a banal common-sense 'ideology' is tied to the lived experience of the people inhabiting these areas. Because borderlands are invariably multi-faceted and complex, albeit critical, areas where contradictory nationalisms, citizenships, social ties, and patriotic influences merge and overlap, the dynamics of these spaces are as much local as super-local due to the overlying essence of geography and cartography, and the formal and informal ties between the local and global levels (House, 1982; Lankina, 2007; Löw and Weidenhaus, 2017; Migdal, 2004; Wilson and Donnan, 1998). Hence, even though studies within the disciplines of Political Science and International Relations regularly fall into the 'territorial trap,' the relevance and value of these lived spaces for studies of politics and nationalism is well-defined and has, perhaps, never been more so in light of the global transformations seen since the collapse of the USSR. As the experiences and ontological understandings of ordinary people within borderland areas remain perplexingly underexplored, this thesis appropriately shifts the parameters of the current debates in highlighting how nationalism is 'lived' rather than 'thought' based on assumptions implicit in representations of space. The following chapters therefore explore the "active construction" of nationalism in natural and everyday settings within some of the areas most impacted by the collapse of the USSR (Mann and Fenton, 2009: 518); namely, the borderlands created by the drawing of 'new' territorial borders in the post-Soviet space, specifically those demarcating the territory of Ukraine.

Chapter 3:
Critically Conceptualising Ukraine as a Borderland

"And that, he said, was the most Ukrainian thing of all:
to read the history of your country as if you were reading it through an outsider's eyes.
It was the fate of borderland nations always to know yourself through the stories of others,
to realize yourself only with the help of others."

Anne Applebaum (2015: 193)

3.1 Conceptualising Ukraine as a Borderland

The discussion in Chapter 2 revealed the importance of borderlands as representational spaces for understanding the lived experiences of nationalism in the contemporary day. In an attempt to avoid the 'territorial trap' and move beyond state-centred political analyses, these representational spaces are consequently the project's point of departure. As Ukraine's territory can be conceptualised as a macro-level borderland within which smaller micro-level borderland areas are located, the state is used as the case under analysis. This chapter therefore begins by critically conceptualising contemporary Ukraine as a borderland in three ways at the macro-level: as a geo-ideological borderland, a borderland of Russia, and a borderland of Europe. The latter part of Chapter 3 then outlines the main theorising around nationalism in Ukraine from its independence to the modern day. As much prior literature has analysed Ukrainian nationalism through the lens of the state, as well as employed more positivist methods like cross-country or region-level surveys, this chapter consequently also demonstrates the need for bottom-up studies of the everyday experience of nationalism in contemporary Ukraine, as well as in other borderland areas in the global order. Given that few studies have simultaneously characterised Ukraine as a geo-ideological borderland, a borderland of Russia, and a borderland of Europe when approaching nationalism, the value of this project in filling these gaps and considering the important, albeit typically disregarded, borderland experiences can also be seen. Chapter 3 hence provides the historical and contextual background for this project's original empirical analysis of nationalism within borderlands.

3.1.1 Ukraine as a Geo-Ideological Borderland

As a country whose name etymologically means 'borderland,' 'margins,' or 'on the edge,' it is widely recognised that Ukraine fully embodies this label. Historically, Ukraine's borderland status is exemplified by the reality that the geographical area of the state's contemporary territory was sought after for several centuries by different geopolitical and religious entities. Apart from the establishment of the Cossack statelet, *Hetmanshchyna* (Hetman state), in 1649 until 1764, the land that now constitutes Ukraine was separated between or under the domain and competition of many expansionist empires—some even at the same time—from the establishment of the Kyivan Rus' in the middle of the ninth century. The largest of these administrations involve the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth; the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires; the Russian Empire and its Central and East European competitors of Austria, Hungary, Poland, Romania,

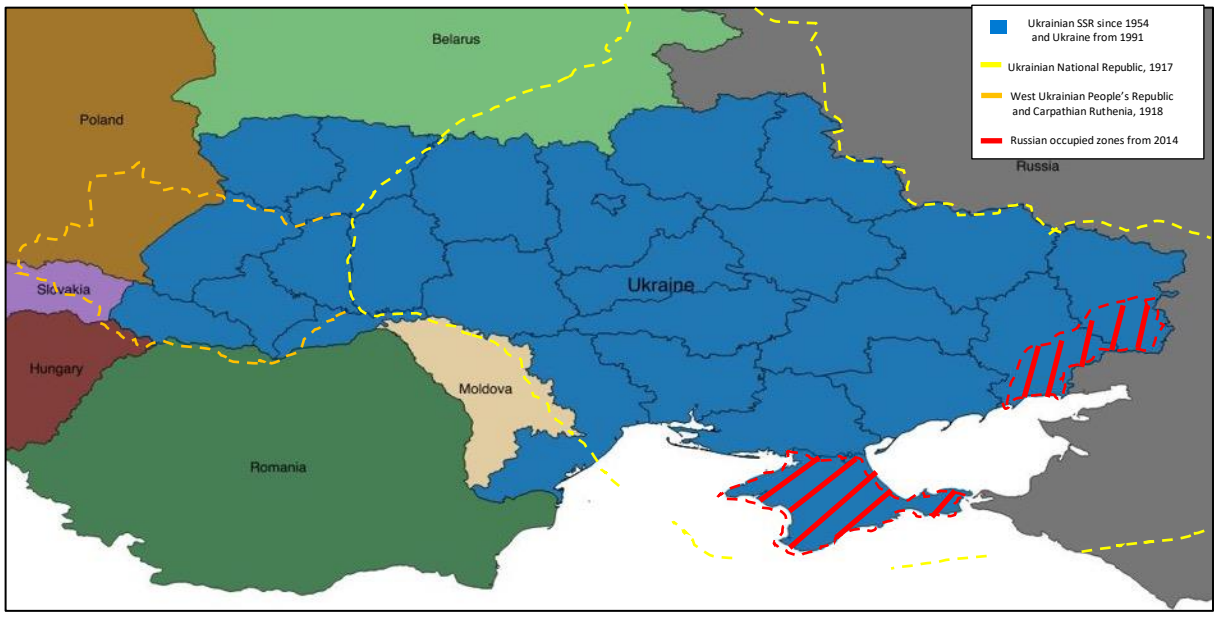
Moldovia, and Czechoslovakia; and the USSR prior to its independence in 1991 (Magosci, 1985).[14] In addition to the geographical division between these political entities, the term 'borderland' also reflects Ukraine's historical position as a religious contact zone between Eastern and Western Christianity, and Judaism and Islam, as well as the 'civilisational divide' between sedentary and nomadic cultures. Some academics have also applied Turner's frontier thesis to the state, providing adequate comparisons between Ukraine's steppe frontier and America's early expansion (see, for example, Boeck, 2009; Kotenko, 2010; Lepyavko, 2005; Plokhy, 2004).[15] Serhii Plohky (2007) further highlights that Western Christianity and the secular cultures of Europe are particularly notable entities against which ethnic Ukrainians defended themselves and their country when part of the larger Orthodox-Byzantine world. Relatedly, Samuel Huntington (1996) defines Ukraine as a 'cleft' country internally divided along historical, geographic, and religious lines—an image that is often used in political discourses. The 'clash of civilisations' that he points to involves the split between the Russian and Orthodox East and the Catholic and European West, which arguably has the potential to disintegrate along the East-West fault lines (Huntington, 1996). On the same line of thinking, Mark Von Hagen (2009) points to the role of religion in Ukraine' historiography, specifically the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, and the Cossacks in significantly shaping the country's borderland legacy. Through these various depictions of how the contemporary state's territory was historically entangled in the geopolitical struggles of two or more empires, religious institutions, and political entities, it can very clearly be seen why borderland studies have found a 'natural home' in Ukraine's history (Von Hagen, 2009).

Further illustrating Ukraine as a borderland is the reality that the state belongs to "several nested geographies" (Hrytsak, 2004: 252). In addition to the above depictions, scholars of Ukrainian history and geography have regularly conceptualised the state as part of mezzo-borderland-regions (Troebst, 2003), a borderland-type civilisation like the Black Sea region (Titarenko, 2009), the so-called Eastern European borderland, and even part of an East Central (or New Central) European zone (Plokhy, 2007). Yarsoslav Hrytsak (2004) moreover details that the contemporary state is concurrently situated within the mega-geographies of the FSU, Europe, and Eurasia. Despite variance, these classifications intrinsically point to the entangled and transnational history of Ukraine as a borderland, including the desire of its people to be both culturally and politically distinguished from those seeking to control them and their lands; Mark Beissinger appropriately maintains there is "probably no other region of the world in which empire building and state-building have been subject to such ambivalence" (1995: 180). Since the powers competing for the spatial area of modern Ukraine regularly saw it as a means through which they could exert and advance their own political, economic, and/or religious projects, legacies of violence have been perpetuated through subsequent generations, including civil wars, famines, purges, rebellions, protests, and war (Reid, 2015), even continued to the modern day (see Peisakhin, 2012; 2015). To this end, the country's complex history with and control by several civilisations and empires, and the associated socio-cultural and political exchanges and influences, has contributed to 'wholesale confusion' and contests over the precise definition of ethnic and territorial borders (Hrytsak, 2004). This reality also reinforces the central idea that Ukraine, like other borderland areas, is very much a "multiconfessional, multilingual, and multiethnic space" characterised by socio-cultural hybridity, pluralism, and ambiguity (Berezhnaya, 2015: 59).

[14] The Cossacks are a national symbol of heroism for Ukraine. They were a group of self-governing, semi-military communities who defended Ukraine's population from the fifteenth century until World War II.

[15] For more on Ukraine as a frontier, see the 2011 forum by *Ukraïna Moderna.* https://uamoderna.com/arkhiv/3.

Figure 3.1. Territorial evolution of Ukraine from WWI.[16]



Map created by author. Shape files retrieved from DIVA-GIS.

In the modern day, too, Ukraine remains a geographical borderland. As the European continent's second-largest country at 579,320 square kilometres, the state is geographically located between seven states: Russia, Belarus, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Moldova (see Figure 3.1). More precisely, Ukraine finds itself located between two competing geopolitical ambitions: Russia (or the 'East') as a historical great power and 'Europe' (or the 'West') as the larger integration project of the EU, or as the geographical land located in the centre of states representing both the 'East' (Russia, Belarus, and Moldova) and the 'West' (Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania). Notably, the four EU countries neighbouring Ukraine are all also NATO member states. Hence, discussions have been ongoing about whether Ukraine stands as merely the spatial area dividing Europe and the FSU (or even Europe and Asia more largely) or at a 'civilisational crossroad' along an East-West axis (Hrytsak, 2004; Huntington, 1996). The split along the East-West spectrum follows from historically different modes of agrarian production with the eastern feudal landownership system juxtaposed against the small agrarian farms found in western Europe. Over time, these practices shaped conflicting cultures, politics, and socio-economic dynamics within the continental area of Eurasia, as could specifically be seen with a culture of elite landowning in the East and politics amongst the upper classes and landlords in the West (Eder, 2006). Still, this East-West distinction is connected to the significant and largely undefined eastern edge of the European continent; Mykhailo Hrushevky (1984), the 'father of Ukrainian historiography,' appropriately characterises Ukraine as the

[16] Borderlines and demarcations of conflict zones are approximate. WWI is used as a temporal reference here as its outbreak in August 1914 resulted in a five-year period of significant territorial disruption for Ukrainian lands. Beginning with the collapse of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires in 1914, the military conflicts of WWI and various attempts at establishing Ukrainian statehood resulted in several administration changes and amendments to boundary lines. It is recognised that this map simplifies a complex history during WWI and WWII, particularly the profound territorial impacts caused by Nazi Germany, the USSR, Hungary, and Romania, as well as the significant human and physical destruction; yet, it still depicts key events in Ukraine's multi-faceted geographical and territorial historical development into its modern version.

dynamic space between two major 'fronts' where one is eastern (with 'Asiatic hordes') and one is western (with 'more peaceful Europe'). Due to the lack of a precise geographical distinction or natural border between the two entities, the East-West dichotomy is subsequently often used in non-communist historiography—although it has been discredited as part of a larger Orientalist discourse—to discursively construct and differentiate Europe vis-à-vis the 'Other' that is the East or Russia, including even by the West itself (Eder, 2006; Neumann, 1997).

In addition to its geographical position, Ukraine is also ideologically characterised along an East-West axis between the juxtaposing 'East' as Russia and 'West' as Europe. The former typically signifies greater attachments to traditions and legacies from the Soviet period, including the more authoritarian-styles of government still found in FSU countries like Russia and Belarus, whereas the latter represents the values embodied by both EU member states and others in Western Europe, North America, and Australia, such as the European model of freedom, universal human rights, democracy, and civil society (Korostelina, 2014). In offering Ukraine an ideology "based on glorification of their shared Soviet and pre-Soviet past," as well as a common language and culture, Russia stands in contrast to Europe in terms of its unique dogma and national character, whereas the EU's promotion of a post-modern understanding of Europe makes it a "sort of teleological point of the development of any human society" (Samokhvalov, 2015: 1373).[17] In this way, the position of Ukrainian lands between Russia and Europe—or what Vsevolod Samokhvalov (2015) calls the 'EU-Ukraine-Russia triangle'—means the state simultaneously exists as the centre of a post-modern EU and a (pre-)modern Russia (Cooper, 2011), an EU integrationist outlook and Russia's geopolitical approach (Gomart, 2006), and, arguably, irreconcilable contradictions and dichotomies (Emerson, 2001).

The intensive division between the East and West can similarly be seen within Ukraine's territory. Following the collapse of the USSR, the idea of 'two Ukraines' emerged (see Riabchuk, 1992; 2002), as it was suggested both within and outside of the academy that the country's westernmost regions are most 'Ukrainian' and supportive of nationalist ideas, pro-European sentiments, and democratisation, whereas the eastern regions are more 'Russian,' or Russified, in their language and identity, more supportive of strengthened ties with Russia, and more open to traditions and legacies from the Soviet period. Though this geo-ideological division has been challenged in recent years—particularly since the events of 2013-14—scholars of Ukrainian studies continue to acknowledge the marked contrast between the eastern and western regions of Ukraine, and the ways these dissimilarities influence nationalism, voting patterns, and political participation at various levels (Barrington, 2018; Frye, 2015; Kubicek, 2000; O'Loughlin et al., 2017; Onuch and Sasse, 2016; Sasse, 2010).[18] Beyond their own development and existence vis-à-vis each other, opposing orientations associated with the philosophical underpinnings of the East and West are manifested in the domestic politics of Ukraine through persistent and competing pro-European and pro-Russian orientations; recent examples include the Orange Revolution, Euromaidan, annexation of Crimea, and the ongoing war in Donbas over Ukraine's territory. In standing at the geopolitical and ideological divisions between the East and West, the state can thus appropriately be defined as a "battlefield between neighbouring peoples" in both a historical and modern sense (Berezhnaya, 2015: 55; also Von Hagen, 1995). Hence, even though contemporary Ukraine exists as an independent state in and of itself, and has

[17] This is not to suggest Europe and the EU are one in the same—a distinction that is explored later in this chapter.

[18] For more on the 'myth' of two Ukraines,' see Zhurzhenko (2002). Other scholars have also argued the line dividing Ukraine has since moved eastwards so that more of the country is now considered to be part of the 'West' (see Fournier, 2018; Kulyk, 2016).

not proven to be as 'cleft' as perhaps originally proposed by earlier scholars (for example, Huntington, 1996), it nevertheless continues to be influenced and shaped "by different political actors through various narratives" (Zhurzhenko, 2010: 22).[19] Though the impacts of other geopolitical entities around the world can equally be seen in the modern day as a consequence of global interconnectedness—such as the significant influences from diasporic populations in Australia and North and South America, the adoption of American pop culture (or even 'Americanization' more largely), and strengthened relations with NATO, as was reinforced by the recent NATO 2030 Summit in 2021—Ukraine's borderland position between, and thus relationships with, Russia and the EU remain the most significant.

3.1.2 Ukraine as a Borderland of Russia

In addition to conceptualising Ukraine as a geo-ideological borderland between Russia and Europe, the contemporary state is also located as a borderland *of* both Russia and Europe. Prior to the collapse of the USSR, Ukraine was indeed geographically located within the USSR's internal borderland as the state's western borders marked the place where the 'socialist camp' ended and the democratic 'West' began—an area that was strictly controlled by Moscow in preventing cross-border interactions with Europe (Zhurzhenko, 2010). Within the territory of the FSU, though, Russia had a difficult time differentiating and segregating citizens and subjects. Whilst the USSR was federally structured in such a way that fourteen of the fifteen republics constituted 'national states' (the exception was the Russian SFSR), in practice, the polities were circumscribed in that they were only partially allowed to 'fill up' their territory as a special role had to be reserved for Russians as both the ethnic majority and *de facto* leaders of the USSR (Beissinger, 1995; Brubaker, 1996). Hence, Russians, did not face barriers to social mobility or institutional support as their language and culture were celebrated in all non-Russian republics, and they often viewed the entire geographical area of the USSR as their national homeland (Brubaker, 1996; Kaiser, 1994; Smith, 1999). In creating an overland empire—unlike the maritime empires of Portugal or Britain—Russia's colonial expansion consequently blurred the distinctions between the metropole and its colonies (Smith, 1999), so that it "could not delineate what were the physical boundaries of Russia and what were occupied territories" (Beissinger, 1995: 160). To this end, the fracturing of the USSR in 1991 along the previously porous territorial borders of the constituent republics resulted in fifteen independent 'national' states, whereas Russians across the FSU were concurrently left with a lost sense of national dignity without knowing the precise location of their national homeland—a reality that was further compounded by the fact that post-Soviet Russia was a multiethnic territory in which one in five inhabitants were not Russian (Laitin, 1998; Shulman, 2002; Smith, 1999). The territorial borders established around Ukraine following the Cold War therefore represent both the post-1991 global geopolitical changes and the separation of contemporary Ukraine from a once perpetuated, albeit now imagined, Soviet Union (Zhurzhenko, 2010).

But in spite of the approximately 2,000 kilometre-long linear divide that now exists between the two states, Russia continues to play a dominant role in Ukraine's political, economic, and social affairs, thus demonstrating the dynamic atmosphere within borderland areas discussed in Chapter 2. As the territorial borders separating republics during the Soviet period were obstacles to neither socio-cultural exchanges nor economic integration, the new and relatively 'young' borderlines established in 1991 between Ukraine and the Russian Federation has faced significant challenges to its legitimacy, especially in the years immediately following the collapse of the USSR, due to its lack of symbolic power or "narrative plausibility" (Eder, 2006: 257). Like most post-Soviet republics, Ukraine had difficulties redefining and

[19] In spite of the state's tumultuous history, the agency of the Ukrainian people must not be overlooked.

reinforcing its newfound sovereignty in the aftermath of the Cold War as Russia invested in the infrastructure of several FSU republics; bilateral relations and economic integration accordingly continued between Ukraine and Russia, including both small-scale interactions like ecological projects and higher-level educational consortiums, as well as larger economic integration projects such as the EACU, EAEU, and SEA (Zhurzhenko, 2019). Russia's foreign policy and security initiatives likewise show its larger integration objectives; Russian-led security architecture in Europe is a particularly clear example (Samokhvalov, 2015). By rejecting Western capitalism, these initiatives have thence perpetuated the communist past at local- and state-levels in Ukraine, serving as impediments to both its integration into Europe and larger processes of de-Sovietisation and de-Russification (Smith, 1999). The inherited socio-structural colonial mentalities have indubitably also challenged the country's post-independence transformation, especially in terms of nation- and state-building processes. In this way, the border between Ukraine's and Russia's territories has regularly been considered a "symptom of unfinished nation building" and an indicator of continued, albeit unbalanced, bilateral relations (Zhurzhenko, 2019: 44).

Much neo-nationalism discourse since 1991 has moreover called for a 'return to empire,' valourising a pre-communist golden age to legitimise Russia's post-colonial programme (Smith, 1999). Since "Russia ceases to be an empire" without Ukraine, but "automatically becomes an empire" with Ukraine suborned and subordinated, as Zbigniew Brzezinski (1994) polemically explains, Ukraine's 'new' territorial borders have expectedly been contested by neo-imperial attempts to re-establish former alliances like the USSR and the 'East Slavic' or 'Eurasian' geopolitical and geo-cultural spaces (see also Korostelina, 2014; Shulman, 2004; Zhurzhenko, 2010). The latter is demonstrated by the ongoing conflict regarding the status of Donbas, a geographical area now straddling the Ukraine-Russia border which has historically served as a way to characterise Ukraine as a 'frontier;' Hiroaki Kuromiya further writes that Donbas' history "embodies the characteristics of the wild field—freedom, militancy, violence, terror, independence" (1998: 12). Underlying Russia's efforts for Ukraine's (re)integration (although not exclusively) is also the idea of a common Eastern Slavic identity, culture, and heritage based on shared perceptions, values, symbols, and geopolitical orientations shared between ethnic Ukrainians, Belarusians, and Russians, which is derived from the histories of the Kyivan Rus' and the Byzantine Empire that constituted Eurasia as a socio-economic and cultural space (Kuzio, 2006; Shulman, 2004; see also President of Russia, 2021). Whilst ethnic Ukrainians have indeed historically shared much with Western and Central Europeans, as is outlined below—and there is a desire amongst many to return to Europe—Russian mainstream political thought has never seriously considered Ukraine to be anything other than 'Little Russia' (*Malorossiya*) or an off-shoot of the Russian nation (Solchanyk, 1994); Russia's perception of Ukraine is thus not of a foreign country, but "a temporarily lost member of the same ethnic and cultural space" (Korostelina, 2014: 69; see also President of Russia, 2021). Ergo, the territorial border established between Ukraine and Russia in 1991 has been approached by the communist opposition as an artificial divide separating the unity of the East Slavic 'civilisation' or 'brotherhood' in an attempt to cut Russia off from Europe (Zhurzhenko, 2010).

Fournier (2018) subsequently asserts that Russia's most potent weapon against Ukraine's independent status is its threatening stance towards contemporary Ukraine's territory. In contrast to the 'soft power' of symbolism and values used by Europe to influence Ukrainian politics and society, Russia accordingly continues to use traditional instruments of 'hard power' to persuade Ukraine, and other former Soviet states, to the advantages of post-Soviet integration and the re-establishment of a former socio-cultural, political, and territorial unity wherein Ukraine's position within Russia's borderland is legally established rather than existing in its current geopolitical form. The annexation of Crimea drawing on old

Soviet territorial boundaries, and the ongoing war and Russia's hybrid intervention in Donbas to revive the so-called 'New Russia' (*Novorossiya*) (O'Loughlin et al., 2017), has thus materially resulted in both internal instability and the occupation of approximately 44,000 square kilometres of Ukraine's territory since 2014 (UN, 2019). At the same time, the Russian Federation has begun also using more 'soft power' tactics through non-governmental organisations, grassroots movements, and the spreading of disinformation; the latter is particularly evident in Ukraine's easternmost regions where Russia's telecommunication networks are regularly utilised by Ukrainian citizens (as is specifically detailed in Chapter 6). As Korostelina (2014) consequently writes: Ukraine's continued socio-economic engagement with Russia as its neighbour has left a sense of nostalgia for the USSR within Ukrainian civil society in, naturally, perpetuating Soviet legacies, structures and styles of governance, and paternalistic attitudes. While her words indeed preceded the events since 2014—namely, the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian war—the findings from this thesis also show the lasting impact of the USSR and continued influence of Russia in the contemporary day.

3.1.3 Ukraine as a Borderland of Europe

Whereas Ukraine is situated at the geographical and ideological boundary of its powerful eastern neighbour and former ruler, the state is simultaneously also located on the peripheries of Europe. Yet as was previously detailed, great ambiguity exists regarding the precise spatial area of Europe. Most practically, this confusion has arisen because of the significant challenges involved—at least in a geographical sense—in definitively separating Europe and Asia. For much of history, the boundary of Europe was thought to run along the Tanais or Don River, which is now located near the border between Ukraine and Russia. In the eighteenth century, Russian historian, Vasilii Tatishchev, further suggested the line should instead be drawn further in the east, along the Ural Mountains between Russia and its Asian colonies—a notion that was accepted by Europeans at the time and later also established by the Russian Federation (Bassin, 1991). But since a division was never formally established to delineate Europe's end and Asia's beginning, and as the continent is a peninsula with a very broad and indefinite eastern edge, ambiguity nonetheless remains where Europe precisely terminates on land and whether the continents are also divided by water (if so, the location of this underwater borderline is also unknown)—the Ural River, the Caucasus Mountains, and the Turkish Straits are therefore all commonly thought to represent the continental divide between Europe and Asia as natural borders due to the largely mountainous terrain north and east of the Black Sea. In addition to these geographical and topographical features, some scholars have furthermore used the territories presented in representations of space to conceptualise Ukraine's position vis-à-vis Europe: Timothy Snyder (2015), for example, purports the easternmost territorial periphery of Ukraine indicates the edge of Europe; Anne Applebaum's (2015) work proposes Europe's border is a line weaving from the Baltic to Black Sea through Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine; and Anna Fournier (2014b) suggests that Ukraine is the heart of Europe. Given this lack of consensus and ambiguity, Eric Hobsbawm concludes Europe "exists exclusively as an intellectual construct" (1997: 289), and hence, dividing the Eurasian land mass is determined only by subjective notions about how 'Europe' and 'Asia' are constructed and where they are both believed to begin and end.

In light of the obscurity around Europe's spatial location, debates have consequently been ongoing about whether the geographical area that is Ukraine is indeed located within it. Whilst Ukraine has shared, and still shares, ideological and cultural traits with the neighbouring 'European' countries, Russia has effectively tried to separate the state from the West and suppress anything resembling a European culture since the nineteenth century (Plokhy, 2007); this was evident throughout the Russian Empire and later USSR and, more contemporarily, in the lead up to and during the Orange Revolution in 2004 as Ukraine

began talks with the EU towards gaining membership in the organisation. Still, Ukraine's prospects of joining the EU have been met with great resistance from the organisation itself as the core bloc of countries continue to discuss whether Ukraine is 'European' enough for membership, thus, again, begging the fundamental question of where the boundaries of Europe are located (Eder, 2006). Whilst the idea of Europe is often conflated with reference to the EU and the states which hold member status within this alliance, it must be noted that the continent and organisation are indeed distinct entities: the latter is a multi-lateral geopolitical entity built through the socio-economic and political unification of several states and the dismantling of each of their territorial borders and sovereign underpinnings, while the former is a larger geographical area including the territories of both EU and non-EU member states (Graziano, 2017). Still, the EU's inclusion criteria for 'Europeanness' is not particularly consistent with the continental understanding as the organisation still excludes some polities historically considered to be 'European' and located on the European continent, like Switzerland, but paradoxically includes others which do not necessarily align with most other 'European' states in terms of their dominant cultures and religions, such as Romania, Bulgaria, and Greece (Balibar, 2009; Plokhy, 2007). It can thus be seen that Europe is neither a single definable people, but an 'intellectual construct' (Hobsbawm, 1996).

Nonetheless, a hierarchy still exists within the European continent, and the EU more specifically, to mark a state's level of 'Europeanness.' Etienne Balibar (2009) highlights the prioritisation of some states over others by conceptualising Europe as 'three concentric circles' established chronologically: the first is the core group of countries within the EU which share a single currency (also colloquially called 'Euroland'); the second is the broader circle of states which have not yet or refused to adopt the Euro as a shared currency; and the third is composed of the 'periphery' countries which are not 'part of Europe' but are still closely associated with the EU for both reasons of security and economics. Within the spatial scale of Europe, the states in the third geometric ring and located furthest away from the nuclear core are unlikely to ever formally accede to the EU as it is assumed their distance from the centre proves challenging for their cultural integration into the EU's relatively 'homogeneous' dynamic, although they may still seek membership (Balibar, 2009). The 'hard' external territorial boundaries of the second ring of states, or the outermost borders of the EU, have also created economic disparities and socio-economic challenges for the countries in the third ring and on the exterior of the organisation, particularly by disrupting historical patterns of trade and movements of people (Rumford, 2006); the states located within this circle are subsequently more likely to experience unequal levels of economic development when compared to the wealthier states found within the core, as well as increasing insecurity beyond their borders (Balibar, 2009; see also Wallerstein, 1974). As Ukraine is not an EU member state and counterweighted politically, economically, and culturally by Russia, it is therefore situated within Europe's outermost ring and typically characterised in the same way as other post-Soviet states in this ring, like Belarus and Moldova, as 'not quite' Europe. In defining who is both included and excluded from the larger European community, the 'ring of friends' or 'new neighbourhood' of countries located outside the EU, like Ukraine, hence also serve as the organisation's geopolitical borderlands (Balibar, 1998; Delanty and Rumford, 2005; Eder, 2006; Kravchenko, 2016; Liikanen et al., 2016).

Just as was described when discussing borderlands in Chapter 2, competing cross-border historical attachments and socio-economic forces are commonplace between the EU and Ukraine (Balibar, 1998). In fact, the EU has in many situations sought to 'soften' its perceived impermeable external borders to non-member states in the 'neighbourhood' as a foreign policy tool to encourage greater market integration and democratisation (Kravchenko, 2016; Liikanen et al., 2016; Rumford, 2006; Samokhvalov, 2015; Whitman

and Wolff, 2010). This is exemplified through increased inter-state traffic, networking opportunities, and the extension of EU governance to non-EU spaces, such as the ENP to tie the states located south and east of the EU to the organisation. The EU's encouragement of Ukraine's alignment with its own geopolitical policy objectives like the CFSP can also be seen through the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement signed in 2017 and the creation of the EaP in 2009 with six post-Soviet countries (Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan) to counter Russia's influence and facilitate a common area of democracy, stability, and cooperation. The cross-border interactions between Ukraine and the EU also have domestic economic, political, and cultural implications; most obvious is Ukrainian citizens' desire for transparent democratic procedures and the respect of human rights, liberties, and freedoms, as was demonstrated during the Orange Revolution and Euromaidan (Samokhvalov, 2015). Although the EU's enlargement ambitions are quite limited when it comes to Ukraine, the prospect of accession nonetheless still plays a symbolic and 'soft power' role in Ukraine's domestic and foreign political objectives (Zhurzhenko, 2010).

Notably, some scholars purport that Ukraine's western borders are more porous and permeable than its eastern ones with Russia as the state has gradually 'turned toward the West' in order to follow an European path of development (Fournier, 2014b; Yakovenko, 2000). Reinforcing this, and showing the influence of Europe in Ukraine more generally, are discourses within the state by political elites and regular citizens. For instance, as was overtly depicted in a speech by Oleh Zarubinsky (2005), acting chair of Ukraine's parliamentary commission on European integration, the year following the Orange Revolution:

> Ukraine is a European state. First of all, Ukraine is geographically situated in Europe, and moreover, the geographical centre of Europe is situated in Ukraine—in Transcarpathia, near the village of Rakhiv. The history of Ukraine is not a topic of conversation today, but one may remember that Kyivan Rus' was one of the most developed countries in Europe over 1,000 years ago…Over time our links with Europe were cut off due to historical circumstances beyond our control. Therefore, one should admit that Ukraine has always been a European state in terms of its geography, history, and culture. Now it is time Ukraine regained its place in Europe in terms of developed institutions of democracy and political system. It is high time Ukraine joined the family of well-developed democratic European states.

Analogous sentiments have frequently been expressed up to the modern day, including popular slogans seen during the Euromaidan demonstrations, such as 'Ukraine is Europe.' Ukraine's current president, Volodymyr Zelensky, also recently Tweeted on 2021's Europe Day that Ukraine is "the center and heart of Europe by geography, spirit, values and aspirations. We proved it on [the] Maidan and we prove it every day changing our state, building independence and our future, defending the eastern border of Europe." Evident here is that in addition to the cross-border exchanges between Ukraine and the neighbouring EU countries, the shared history, geography, and culture furthermore link the state to Europe and remain particularly important for justifying Ukraine's position for strengthened ties with Western alliances like the EU and NATO. In the same way that Ukraine's position as part of Russia's external peripheries has significant internal socio-economic and political implications, its concurrent geopolitical location within Europe's borderland hence unequivocally impacts the state's domestic dynamics and foreign policy goals.

Accordingly, contemporary Ukraine's situation both ideologically and geographically within a large, albeit somewhat ambiguous, post-Soviet space and the EU's 'ring of friends' has left legacies of conflicting politics within Ukraine as the state's post-independence cartographic borders are imbued with symbolic power, memories, discourses, images, and meanings relating to the diverging socio-political and economic

structures found within the East and West (Eder, 2006). Importantly, the territorial divisions between Ukraine and the neighbouring geopolitical entities have been both (re)produced and utilised in different ways throughout history; 'hard' territorial borders once separated the FSU from Europe, yet, cross-border exchanges and mobility are now commonplace, especially since the introduction of visa-free mobility for Ukrainian citizens in 2017. At the same time, the transformation of Ukraine's eastern periphery from a porous and somewhat meaningless divide into a frontline, or 'bloodline,' since 2014 (Snyder, 2010) suggests that Ukrainian citizens desire a 'hard' politico-legal separation between their state and their former imperial power after thirty years of independence (Korablyova, 2021; Zhurzhenko, 2019). However, Michael Emerson (2001) argues these geopolitical adjustments will be ongoing given Ukraine's situation as a 'buffer zone' (Sakwa, 2015) between the reluctant empire of the EU and the reluctant ex-empire of Russia—or the competing 'elephant and the bear'—on the European continent. Although Ukraine has and continues to 'nationalise' its territory since 1991, the state's spatial situation as a geo-ideological borderland, borderland of Russia, and borderland of Europe simultaneously nonetheless continues to significantly implicate how its citizens experience nationalism.

3.2 Nationalism in Borderland Ukraine

3.2.1 Nationalism in Post-Soviet Ukraine

Much has been written on Ukrainian nationalism since the state's independence. Given Ukraine's history with the USSR, a great deal of attention has appropriately been devoted to the relationship between ethnic Ukrainians and Russians, especially in terms of the linguistic, cultural, and national dynamics, wherein Ukraine is approached as a multinational state with at least two sizable ethnic nations occupying a shared territory (Barrington, 2021)—thus in line with the notion of 'two Ukraines' (see Riabchuk, 1992; 2002; Shulman, 2002; Szporluk, 2001; Wolczuk, 2007). A seemingly inescapable theme and common cliché found in much literature since 1991 has therefore been the aforementioned internal East-West divide between the assumedly monolithic (or nearly) Russian and Ukrainian 'halves' of the country. Although this 'dualism' has been critiqued in recent years, especially since the events of 2013-14, the earlier works suggest the two national groups are geographically distinguished by the Dnipro River. For example, Yurii Andrukhovych, one of the most read Ukrainian authors, describes the Dnipro as a natural border:

> It is, first and foremost, a landscape demarcation—wooded hills and mountains in the west, on the right bank, and the plain, the steppe or wooded steppe in the east (left bank). The Ukrainian right bank is the home of traditional and agricultural settlements with a 'timeless culture;' the left bank, particularly its southern part, is colonized, nomad, working-class, it is the former 'Great Steppe.' The conflicting effects of this division justify the Ukrainian indecisiveness (2005: 66).

As a physical partition in Ukraine's landscape, the Dnipro River is consequently thought to divide both the two poles of the country and citizens of different 'cultures.' Several scholars since the late twentieth century have appropriately used the Dnipro in their own theorising of Ukrainian nationalism.

Stephen Shulman (1998), for instance, demonstratively emphasises Ukraine as a country of distinct monolithic regions with two separate senses of ethnic identity. As he argues in his analysis of Ukraine's western city of Lviv and eastern city of Donetsk: "[m]ost Ukrainian nationalists, especially in western Ukraine, favor a unitary territorial-administrative structure" for the Ukrainian state, while "a federal

structure is more popular in eastern Ukraine" (1998: 630).[20] In also playing into the traditional understanding of a longitudinal division in Ukraine through a comparison of Lviv and Donetsk, Oksana Malanchuk supports this narrative, stating there is no question that "clear distinctions [exist] in the attitudinal makeup of eastern and western Ukraine" (2005: 364). She elucidates this East-West division is an important factor for understanding Ukrainian politics because of the historical separation of western and eastern Ukraine under Polish and Russian spheres of influence (Malanchuk, 2005). Sarah Birch (1995; 2000) moreover asserts the most important factors determining nationalism in Ukraine are the differences in Ukrainian and Russian ethnocultural heritage within the distinct halves of the country; ethnicity is determined on the Russian side by levels of education and Soviet-era demographic patterns, while historical factors play an important role in the Ukrainian regional divides, especially connections to the former Hapsburg lands (Magosci, 1985). In addition to these studies, much literature on Ukrainian nationalism and identity has similarly characterised the two poles in opposition due to their geographical positions as a borderland of both Europe and Russia: the regions closest to Europe are thought to hold pro-European identities and values, whereas those closer to Russia are perceived as having a stronger sense of nostalgia for the Soviet period (Korostelina, 2014; Zhurzhenko, 2010). In line with the macro-level understanding of Ukraine as a geo-ideological borderland between the East and West, this older literature also regularly characterises the western half of Ukraine's territory as composed of a homogenously ethnic population who are Ukrainian-speaking, supportive of nationalist ideas and democratisation, and hold salient religious and anti-Soviet attitudes, while the eastern regions have higher levels of industrialisation and urbanisation, are more Russified in terms of language and identity, and support strengthened ties with Russia (Kubicek, 2000; Odushkin, 2000; Solchanyk, 1994).

But while this dichotomy has guided much research since 1991, it must be stated that such an approach very much simplifies nationalism in Ukraine by overlooking important historical, economic, and political differences, especially in the contemporary day. Even from the late twentieth century, several scholars emphasised the need to move beyond the East-West opposition. Dominique Arel (1995), for example, proposes a four-region framework to study identity and politics by dividing the state into east, north-central, south, and west-central regions, whilst Ostap Odushkin (2000) and Paul Kubicek (2000) both suggest five-region models—these include east, west, central, and south regions with the only difference being that the former identifies Kyiv-city as a region and the latter, Crimea. As Odushkin (2000) asserts, these regional divides coincide with the split between ethnic Russian and Ukrainians, Russian- and Ukrainian-speakers, the Orthodox Church and Greek-Catholic Church, and the industrialised east and more agrarian west. In contrast to these approaches, Lowell Barrington and Erik Herron (2004) offer a distinct eight-region archetype as a more precise analytical framework in reducing intraregional variation. They argue their model underscores that regional divisions in Ukraine are much more complex than a simple East-West continuum because certain regions differ greatly from each other, including even those that are neighbouring, in terms of ethnicity, history, culture, religion, and language (Barrington and Herron, 2004; also Barrington and Faranda, 2009). John O'Loughlin (2001) similarly maintains that a regional model is not useful for studies of political differences in Ukraine as a more nuanced understanding of scale is needed to fully understand cross-country variation. Birch (1995) demonstrates such regional diversity in her own analyses of western Ukraine, highlighting internal heterogeneity and pre-Soviet cleavages within regions play an important role in electoral behavior and politics, especially ethnicity, geography, economics,

[20] Although public opinion has since changed, it is noteworthy that federalisation was the motto of the Anti-Maidan movement.

culture, and heritage. Peisakhin (2012; 2015) similarly underscores the lasting legacies of historical institutions and divergent imperial treatments—specifically those from the Austrian and Russian Empires in western Ukraine—on contemporary political attitudes, behaviours, and identities.

Paul Pirie (1996) further adds to the conversation by critiquing the notion that all individuals in Ukraine must be neatly organised into one national group over another, such as Ukrainian or Russian, for erroneously ignoring the many complex processes of identity that exist within different regions. As he suitably states, the categorisations of 'East' and 'West' impede studies of nationalism as "many individuals in these regions have multiple ethnic identifications, or are undergoing a transition from one identification to another" (Pirie, 1996: 1079). In pointing to inter-ethnic marriages, urbanisation, and language usage and linguistic Russification as some of the most important variables which contribute to a mixed sense of self-identification for citizens, especially in south and eastern Ukraine where the majority of ethnic Russians live, he argues both ethnic Ukrainians and Russians show a "propensity toward ambivalence and instability" in their identities (Pirie, 1996: 1079). On this line of thinking, several studies have likewise revealed that living in a particular region has distinct implications for behaviour and identity that cannot be explained by ethnic or national differences (see, for example, Barrington, 2002; Barrington and Herron, 2004; Barrington and Feranda, 2009; Birch, 2000; D'Anieri, 2011; Onuch and Hale, 2018; Osipian and Osipian, 2012; Sasse, 2010). Drawing on the case of Kharkiv, Volodymyr Kravchenko (2010) accordingly approaches Ukrainian regions as 'imagined places' defined by both political and (mostly) imagined delineations that instill a sense of regional distinctiveness and perceived cultural essence. From here, regions appear not only as smaller territories with stable boundaries but also as cultural practices (Ther, 2013). Other scholars have approached Ukrainian regions in a similar way; specific examples include Crimea (Charron, 2012; Kozelsky, 2010; Sasse, 2007) and Galicia (Wolff, 2010), as well as the characterised of western Ukraine's regions as 'Euroregions' in reference to the specific cross-border co-operation seen with neighbouring European countries (Vasylova, 2012). When taken together, these key authors markedly move beyond the traditional linear East-West approach, in addition to problematising the Russian-Ukrainian ethnic, cultural, and linguistic dichotomy for studying nationalism in Ukraine.

Since the Euromaidan, the internal dichotomy has also been explicitly challenged as several studies suggest increasing support for a civic Ukrainian national identity. Barrington (2021) indicates that the demonstrations prompted a greater understanding of Russia as the 'They' or the 'Other' for citizens across the country, as well as a more cohesive Ukrainian 'We,' even in spite of underlying linguistic, ethnic, and regional divisions (see also Said, 1978). His work suggests a growing civic understanding of nationalism in Ukraine, anchored around the status of Ukrainian citizenship, although it remains challenged by enduring ethnic identities and varying levels of attachment to citizenship—he consequently asserts this civic identity will need to incorporate Ukrainian culture and language into its definition of the Ukrainian 'We' in order to garner further support without alienating Russian-speakers or ethnic Russians (Barrington, 2021). Volodymyr Kulyk likewise points to a popular "drift away from Russianness" or "bottom-up de-Russification" in emphasising the changes across Ukraine in terms of ethnonational identifications, everyday language practices, and public opinion regarding state language policies (2018: 121; also Kulyk, 2016; 2019)—this increased attachment to Ukraine is particularly evident amongst Russian-speakers and ethnic Russians (also Cheskin and Kachuyevski, 2019). Others have argued that language practices and ethnic identities have changed little from pre- to post-Euromaidan, yet, attachment to Ukraine has indeed increased (Pop-Eleches and Robertson, 2018), meaning that more Russian-speaking citizens now "identify strongly with the Ukrainian nation" (Bureiko and Moga, 2019: 137). Of particular note is Olga Onuch and

Henry Hale (2018) who purport the need to consider the multidimensionality of ethnicity in a country like Ukraine, maintaining that placing an emphasis on particular variables over others when assessing the effects of ethnicity can significantly implicate conclusions. On this front, Kulyk (2018) likewise critiques the 'lingering essentialism' in the way ethnic groups are perceived as a 'pragmatic preference' for measuring ethnicity in much survey-based research, arguing that the meanings citizens attach to 'nationality' and native language have changed significantly in Ukraine over time, although not explicitly recognised.

Still, other scholars have also indicated that previously held ideas about nationalism in Ukraine have been challenged by recent events, including the ongoing war with Russia. Mykola Riabchuk (2015), for instance, stresses a shift in emphasis from the different identities characterising Ukrainian regions to a rise of civic nationalism in all regions. He details that in light of the war, the majority of Russian-speakers and a significant proportion of ethnic Russians have made their choice to favour Ukraine, "placing civic, not ethnic or linguistic and cultural priorities, in the foreground" despite their previous ambivalence (Riabchuk, 2015). It has additionally been argued that the imagined internal line dividing Ukraine between the more and less pro-Russian positions (although not an exclusive divide) has migrated eastwards—from the Dnipro to somewhere closer to Ukraine's easternmost edge—so that more of the country is now considered to be part of the West (Fournier, 2018; Kulyk, 2016). With this change has also come an increase in the number of people expressing their pride as Ukrainian citizens, greater attachment to national symbols, and alienation from and, in some cases, even enmity towards Russia (Kulyk, 2016). Within Donbas itself, civic identities have also been preserved or even strengthened, as being "Ukrainian" has come to be understood less in ethnolinguistic terms and more open to both mono- and bi-lingual (i.e. Ukrainian and Russian) native languages (Sasse and Lackner, 2018). Barrington accordingly suggests the Eastern Slavic identity has faded in Ukraine and the state "is more unified than it has been before" (2021: 159), whilst Arel equally asserts that "Ukraine has become more Ukrainian" (2018: 189). As these sentiments suggest a transition from an ethnic understanding of nationalism towards a more civic one wherein national ties are defined in terms of a state's institutions and territory (Goode and Stroup, 2015), the ways citizenships and nationalisms—whether ethnic or civic, Ukrainian or otherwise—interact within the territorialised space of contemporary Ukraine remains particularly important, albeit understudied.

3.2.2 Constructing Homeland in Ukraine

Critical to understanding how nationalism is experienced by citizens within modern day Ukraine is inherently a consideration of the ascribed and subjective ideas about the spatial dimension of nationhood, particularly their conceptualisations of homeland. In the post-Soviet space, 'homeland' (*rodina*) is imbued with particular meanings and often denotes the territory to which a person is connected through nationality as a consequence of Soviet-era policies (Hirsch, 2000; Kaiser, 1994), whilst fatherland (*otechestvo*) is the larger national territory within which the smaller homeland is 'nested' (Gradirovsky, 1999). However, this narrow institutional and territorial understanding of homeland has since been challenged, as the discussion in Chapter 2 showed, as homelands can be other places where people live and with which they have intimate connections, and due to the reality that people may make different linguistic choices when defining their homelands. Still, competing visions remain about where homelands in the post-Soviet space are located and what form they should take (e.g. national or political) because of the Soviet regime's manipulation and delineation of national categories, particularly by placing limits on nation-building to ensure the prioritisation and consolidation of the Union's interests over those of the competing and diverse republics. In order to provide greater social cohesion, national rights were also often denied to

groups not deemed 'ethnographically distinct,' whilst other nations were created through top-down policies which established territorial autonomy for distinct nationalities in an attempt to create national 'homelands' (Brubaker, 1996; Hirsch, 2000; Kaiser, 1994). In institutionalising geographical areas to ensure the territorial dimension of nationalism "would become of paramount importance," the republics were subsequently defined as the polities of and for independent 'nations,' and thought to embody the nations' rights to national self-determination (Kaiser, 1994: 125). A sense of national consciousness and belonging was also fostered, or 'instrumentalised,' through the promotion of indigenous ethno-cultural elements like language and affirmative action policies which provided indigene with greater access to higher education and elite socio-political positions within their respective republics (Kaiser, 1994; Roeder, 1991).[21] However, these 'new' national territories were not necessarily composed of primordial nations in search of autonomy, but autonomous territorial entities established for the construction of a shared sense of nationhood—territorial borders were thence drawn in some places where they had not previously existed or thought to align with national groups (Charron, 2012; Roeder, 1991; see also Burghardt, 1973; Gottmann, 1973; Harvey, 2005; Kaiser, 2002; Shapiro, 2003). Nonetheless, this state-led programme called *korenizatsiya* (meaning 'indigenisation' or 'putting down roots') was seen as important for socially equalising and integrating disparate ethnic communities under a common Soviet identity.[22] Whilst the programme effectively ended in the early 1930s, its official goal—and later that of Russification—was principally to create a cohesive socialist polity and 'draw together' the different national communities within the FSU.

Several scholars accordingly highlight the challenges these policies posed for the construction of national homelands during and following the USSR. In particular, the top-down efforts forced groups together rather than allowing nations to follow their own imaginative cartographies—attempts to pursue primordialist agendas outside of the official institutions, such as through protests and cultural renaissances, faced severe punishment by Soviet policies (Roeder, 1991). Kaiser (1994) claims such efforts encouraged geographical segregation between national collectives, each with its own territory and national agenda, and a rising national self-consciousness among upward mobile indigenes. Beissinger (1997) and Brubaker (1996) moreover expound that Soviet ethnofederalism resulted in a widespread sense of ownership and entitlement among titular majorities in the FSU due to the republics' abilities to 'fill up' their newly established territories with their legitimate 'national' cultures, as well as continuing to provide certain advantages for the ethnic majorities through the offer of status and rewards (also Roeder, 1991). As a result of the associated instrumental strategies which deterred from primordial attachments, Brubaker (1996) further contends that the legacy of ethnofederalism prevented civic notions of nationhood from flourishing when the 'nations' became independent states following the collapse of the USSR because the institutionalised understandings of national identification in fundamentally ethno-cultural and territorial terms, rather than as a political identity, was entrenched in post-Soviet thinking. Some post-Soviet citizens also held the view that their polity was somehow incomplete despite its sovereignty; aspiring to what Ernest Gellner (1983) calls 'national congruence,' wherein the national homeland and political entity are one in the same as a 'nation-state,' they wished to see their titular nation's language, culture, and people elevated to a key place within state institutions (Smith, 1999). This somewhat ambiguous sense of nationhood shared by entire populations resulted in ambivalent and even controversial understandings of

[21] The 'instrumentalist' paradigm differs from that of a 'primordialist' one in that it sees ethnic identities as contingent and changing self-ascribed roles, whereas the latter as shaped by historical memories, religions, languages, and geographical locations (Roeder, 1991).

[22] This policy involved supporting non-Russian elites and the use of non-Russian languages in republics across the FSU between 1923-32.

homeland, including questions around the location of the nation's boundary lines (Smith, 1999). Territorial and border disputes consequently emerged across the post-Soviet space as some national groups were separated from both each other and their territorial 'homelands' since the territories of republics during the Soviet period were not necessarily identically replicated after 1991.

In the case of Ukraine, as with many former republics, the independent state inherited an unfinished process of nation-building with inhabitants who "were disoriented by the collapse of the USSR" and did not share the same national identity, speak the same language, or understand their homeland in the same way (Applebaum, 2015: xii). When the state became independent on 24 August 1991, its new citizenry thus possessed "a tenuous, equivocal sense of national identity" (Reid, 2015: 1; also Shevel, 2002). Whereas the advancement of Ukrainian language and folklore, as well as cultural autonomy more generally, had been limited by *korenizatsiya,* Soviet authorities also attempted to bind ethnic Ukrainians closer to their Russian brethren and construct a distinctive 'Russian-friendly' Ukrainian political identity through other means like forced Russification and the introduction of communist party organizations and schools (Peisakhin, 2012; also Martin, 2001). As people had not been able to change their nationality during the USSR, even if it stood in opposition to their self-identifications, this fixed categorisation "ran counter to meaningful points of personal reference," especially in the instances where people resided away from their preferred national 'homeland' or spoke a minority language (Kulyk, 2013; 2018). Still, in his work, Paul Magosci (2002) suggests the hampering of a unified sense of Ukrainian national identity and culture was not only the result of Soviet policies, but struggles in constructing a cohesive understanding of homeland due to the country's history divided between various geopolitical entities. He argues ethnic Ukrainians living in most Ukrainian lands a hundred years ago did not even recognise they constituted a distinct national collective, but assumed themselves to be a branch of Russians with dialects influenced by Poland and Russia (Magosci, 2002; also Takach, 1996). In his study into the multiethnic and multiconfessional borderlands of Belarus, Lithuania, Ukraine, and the Pale Settlement, Steven Seegel (2012) relatedly shows the inability of minorities to map, write, and transform these areas into nation-state homelands, or what he calls 'modern homelands,' due the lack of a group consciousness without a political patron, in addition to nineteenth century ideas about progress and the associated discursive practices.

Hence, without a shared understanding of homeland within the new territory of Ukraine, Ukrainian citizens felt minimal attachment or sense of allegiance to their new fellow citizens, governments, or even the territory in which they suddenly found themselves living. The internal ethnic, linguistic, and cultural differences between the smaller administrative regions presented further challenges to the new polity, especially by way of constructing a cohesive and unified Ukrainian national identity (Korostelina, 2014). With over one hundred ethnic groups represented in Ukraine, and as a result of Soviet efforts to Russify and assimilate the ethnic majority's elite, Ukrainian culture in the years immediately post-independence was actually 'colonially marginalised' in a society dominated by Russophones (Barrington, 2021; Shklar, 1999; Taras et al., 2004). The pervasive 'national consciousness' or 'national bashfulness' of ethnic Ukrainians, due to a vague understanding of themselves vis-à-vis others (Subtelny, 1995), left them with self-perceptions as second-rate citizens and weak attachments to Ukraine as their homeland (Rymarenko, 1995). As a result of these complex dynamics, nationhood for ethnic Ukrainians appropriately took on a religious, almost metaphysical significance up until 1991, existing separately from such banalities as governments and borders (Reid, 2015). Lukasz Adamski thus appropriately maintains:

> Nearly all the Ukrainian historians, and consequently also the intelligentsia, the politicians and the media think in ways stemming from the nationalist paradigm of history which boils down to the fact that nations are the main object of studies of the past and that they have a 'national territory' assigned to them, that they constitute lasting entities which have existed at least since the mediaeval times, and that the membership of a nation is determined not by a subjective conviction of the given population, articulated in its national consciousness, but by 'objective' factors, in practice: the external ethnographic features and the language (2008: 100).

Following Ukraine's independence, understandings of homeland were therefore closely connected to 'ethnocentric' or even primordial ideas about nationalism based on ethnic descent, language, culture, and religion rather than reflected through identity documents like passports (Arel, 2002; Brubaker, 1996; Gibson, 2014; Hirsch, 1997; Shulman, 2002; 2004; Pohorila, 2016). The succession of elites who came to lead Ukraine similarly demonstrated minimal attachments or even a sense of loyalty to the citizens and the state, thus failing to build civic institutions and trust and, instead, destructed its public and private sectors for their own personal gains (Applebaum, 2015). Clear demonstrations include Leonid Kuchma's corrupt political and economic practices in the years immediately following independence and, still, more than twenty years later, Viktor Yanukovych's evisceration of the state's bureaucracy and economic development. Oxana Shevel thenceforth asserts Ukraine's "oscillation between competing ideologically charged narratives of the past" hindered both its civic nation-building initiative and its democratic development in the years immediately following its independence (2011: 138; also Shevel, 2002). Whilst the reality detailed in the opening line of the Ukrainian national anthem remained true—'Ukraine's glory nor freedom have not yet died'—the competing historical narratives associated with the new state's geopolitical position between Europe and Russia left citizens without a shared civic national idea or understanding of homeland.

Accordingly, the development of civic nationalism outlined above is particularly noteworthy as a relatively new development following the dominant 'ethno-state' view of Ukraine in academic studies since its independence (Pohorila, 2016; Shevel, 2009; 2011). In addition to an increase in the prevalence of a civic understanding of nationalism, it has also been purported that a greater number of citizens have come to self-identify with the Ukrainian 'imagined community' since the Euromaidan and beginning of Russia's aggression from late 2013 (see Kulyk, 2016; 2018; 2019). Particularly seminal is Grigore Pop-Eleches and Graeme Robertson's (2018) work which shows an increase in the proportion of Ukrainian citizens acknowledging Ukraine as their homeland following the Euromaidan. In limiting the choices for homeland in their study to 'Ukraine,' 'USSR,' and 'Russia' in an attempt to capture civic identification with the country of Ukraine, these scholars observed that civic identification with Ukraine as a homeland is associated with language use and ethnic identity, but remains conceptually and empirically distinct; the decline in support for Russian as a language of the Ukrainian state and more widespread support for Ukraine as a national homeland, especially by self-described ethnic Russians and Russian-speaking citizens, accordingly suggests growing legitimacy around the Ukrainian state (Pop-Eleches and Robertson, 2018). But while their study revealed a 'significant broadening propensity' of citizens to identify with the state of Ukraine as their homeland (Pop-Eleches and Robertson, 2018), it must be recognised that homeland can also be conceptualised at a smaller spatial scale in Ukraine, which is not considered in this state-level analysis. Of note here is that in the modern Ukrainian context, the terms 'homeland,' 'motherland,' and 'fatherland' are typically used interchangeably (*batkivshchina/vitchizna/rodina*) in reference to the larger territory of Ukraine, whereas an alternative (*mala batkivshchina*) typically denotes a 'small motherland' or 'small homeland,' such as one's village, city, or region. Since the dominant approaches to nationalism in Ukrainian studies outlined above have typically started from the premise of the territorial state, often using

quantitative cross-country surveys, there consequently remains a need to explore the attachments citizens feel to different spatial scales and especially their own conceptualisations of homeland, including the ways these 'home' places are vernacularly talked about, experienced, and given meaning (Brubaker et al., 2006; Canter, 1997; Groat, 1995).

In line with Agnew (1994)'s critique of the 'territorial trap,' then, this thesis differentiates itself from the previously outlined literature in considering nationalism within contemporary Ukraine beyond only the spatial scale of the territorial state. Since everyday experiences cannot be seen when remaining at the abstract and territorial-level of the state, the bottom-up project draws on CBS and everyday nationalism to better understand how nationalism is understood and lived by ordinary people at the local level in Ukraine. Akin to the work by William Douglass (1998), who emphasises that it is not so much the 'where' as opposed to the 'how' nations meet that is critical for unpacking expressions of national attachment and belonging, the project is also interested in understanding how homelands are imagined and meaningfully constructed within Ukraine's territory in light of geographical landscapes and places (Weinreich et al., 2003). The ways national collectives' imaginative cartographies correspond, overlap, and even contradict the physical cartography of the state system, due to the abstracted nature of nationhood, is also of interest here. Since there remains a relative absence of representational spaces in prior studies on Ukraine, this project, whilst recognising the importance of territoriality, focuses its attention primarily on the lived spaces that are borderlands. In this way, the thesis moves toward understanding Ukraine as a place of interaction and cultural exchange stemming from its macro-level borderland position as a geo-ideological borderland, borderland of Russia, and borderland of Europe, in addition to the experiences of those living in the peripheries of Ukraine's territory. Stated differently: the thesis considers nationalism in the borderlands of a borderland.

Chapter 4:
Methodologically Approaching Nationalism in Borderland Ukraine

> "[M]ost social science, it seems to me, is not permissible without ethnographic inquiry of some kind. You can't explain human behavior behind the backs of the people who are being explained. If you want to understand why someone behaves as they do, then you need to understand the way they see the world, what they imagine they're doing, what their intentions are."
>
> James Scott (as cited in Glenn, 2009)

4.1 Studying Nationalism in Ukraine

To understand nationalism in borderlands like Ukraine while overcoming the 'territorial trap,' this thesis accordingly analyses the everyday experiences of ordinary people. Unlike hegemonic theorising in Political Science and International Relations, and of the post-Soviet space more generally, which centre on territorial states for investigations of socio-political phenomena like nationalism, this project instead considers the everyday lives of grassroots individuals who hold important vernacular knowledge but who are typically "neglected" from studies of politics (Kostovicova and Glasius, 2011: 14; also Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008; Wedeen, 2010). By moving the study of nationalism from the foundation of the territorial state to places of significance at other spatial scales, the thesis empirically shows how ordinary people "not as objects, but as agents" actively and collaboratively (de)construct and make meaning within, around, and about their societies and polities (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012: 46). Through an exploration of "everyday social experience" (Brubaker and Cooper, 2000: 4), the project also exposes how nationalism "actually 'works' in everyday life" (Brubaker et al., 2006: 9), including the ways people (re)produce and/or challenge the nation through ordinary, 'everyday' practices in borderland areas (Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008). In engaging with a plurality of ideas, understandings, and preferences to uncover symbolic and intersubjective actions, meanings, practices, and interactions—especially of those typically minimalised or overlooked in mainstream studies (Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008; Kubik, 2013)—the importance of representational spaces for the lived experiences of ordinary people is also illustrated (Lefebvre, 1991).

This thesis accordingly uses a bottom-up methodology and interpretivist logic in its approach to nationalism in borderland areas. In line with other work on everyday nationalism, the project draws on an ethnographic 'sensibility' centred on meaning-making and contextuality (Pader, 2006; Schatz, 2009; Yanow, 2006), and prioritises the lived experience of individuals at the grassroots by "getting close to [their] activities and everyday experiences" on the ground (Emerson et al., 1995: 1). In moving "beyond official rhetoric," especially that which is proposed and often over-simplified by domestic officials and positivist scholars alike, the project involves an in-depth observation of social practices at the micro-level to examine how ordinary people engage and enact, and even ignore and deflect, nationalism and nationhood "in the varied contexts of their everyday lives" (Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008: 537). Specifically, this project's empirical approach uncovers how and why people "act, think and feel the way they do" (Wacquant, 2003: 5), which helps to explain the ways politics, and specifically national practices, identifications, and senses of belonging, are manifested at the grassroots level in borderland areas, including in the more seemingly informal, quotidian, or mundane ways (Auyero, 2007; Ekiert and Ziblatt,

2013). By exploring and engaging with a variety of subjective experiences, interpretations, and meanings (Kratochwil, 2008), and particularly those which shape the discursive practices and social relations within the particular time- and space-bound context that is Ukraine (Adcock, 2006; Ahmed and Sil, 2012; Caporaso, 2009; Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012; Yanow, 2006), the project probes into the informal dynamics of post-Soviet civil society (see also Morris et al., 2018; Polese et al., 2018; Polese et al., 2020).

In contrast to positivist political science research, then, which mimics the hard sciences in seeking to uncover "one true description of how things are" (Kratochwil, 2008: 86), this study, like much interpretive research, is built on a phenomenological foundation (Holloway and Todres, 2003). Following from the epistemological assumption that all reality is socially constructed (Wedeen, 2002), the study does not seek to operationalise (or even use the language of) variables, nor draw on a particular and easily 'testable' mechanistic relation of causality to predict and explain certain outcomes (Salter, 2013). Instead, the project is exploratory and centres on emergent or constituent causality to explore a "complex web of facilitating conditions, localised spheres of influence, and networks of embodied, feeling actors" (Salter, 2013: 16). Drawing on a 'thick description' of empirical data gathered through immersive fieldwork (Geertz, 1973), this project, like other interpretive studies, provides a rich analysis of the beliefs, ideas, values, and preferences embedded in the social world, and the ways shared meanings shape interactions and relations between people (Wedeen, 2002; see also Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012). It is for this reason that a pre-established schema is not used to study nationalism and identity in this project, such as Ted Hopf and Bentley Allan's national identity database (2016), Abdelal et al.'s (2009) guide to measuring identity, or a framework of Ukrainian nationalism (for example, Kuzio, 2000; 2002; 2015a). While the variables utilised in these previous studies were useful to answer the specific questions asked by other scholars, this project herein asks different questions and focuses on experiences to be narrated and interpreted rather than variables to be measured (Doucet and Mauthner, 2008).[23] Although interpretive studies are often criticised for being 'unscientific' or "highly abstract and non-empirical" (Ragin 1989: 35; see also Wedeen, 2010), especially as they do not provide the forswear generalisations or sweeping 'abstractions' found in more positivist research, the direct exploration of "actors' understandings of their own contexts" in projects like this one still offer invaluable insight into socio-political phenomena and human condition (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012: 52; also Bunzl, 2008).

It must moreover be noted that the criteria for judging the rigour of positivist research, particularly reliability, replicability, and verifiability (King et al., 1994), are inappropriate for interpretive social science projects (Small, 2009). As interpretivist scholars are interested in meaning-centred and subjective data, a study's (and the researcher's) trustworthiness, transparency, and reflexive engagement with positionality are accordingly more robust evaluative standards (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012). Reflexivity, in particular, or the location of one's self "in a picture," is central to interpretive research as a way for researchers to actively acknowledge that what they see is "influenced by [their] own way of seeing," and that their presence, and the act of research more broadly, impacts the situation being researched (Fook, 1999: 11-12). Importantly, knowledge produced through interpretivist methods does not emerge randomly or through subjective reflection, as is sometimes suggested, but through the ways people—both scholars and those participating in the research—make sense of their particular worlds (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012). Although the aim of this epistemological approach is not to validate data through replication, Matti Bunzl asserts generality still exists within the delicate 'distinctions' in social realities, and that 'large

[23] Hopf and Allan's (2016) work is indeed interpretivist, but incorporates an epistemology that is more positivist than this project's bottom-up approach.

conclusions' can be drawn from the 'small' and 'very densely textured facts' (2008: 55, citing Geertz, 1973). In this way, interpretive and "people-centred approaches" are appropriate and necessary for social science research, especially Political Science, by providing insights into actors' lived experiences (Kostovicova and Glasius, 2011: 14; also Knott, 2015a; Goode, 2020; Surak, 2012). Likewise, Paul Goode and David Stroup (2015) elucidate that using in-depth qualitative research methods for studies of everyday nationalism are useful for generalisations and broader comparisons, even in spite of the contextual richness. In line with these scholars, the project therefore considers the national and ethnic practices of ordinary people within borderland areas—as sites fundamentally informed by the structural configuration of the Westphalian state system—as units of analysis. Indeed, the findings of this study are deeply contextual, however, they are still very much generalisable and shed light on larger socio-political phenomena (Goode and Stroup, 2015).

This chapter hence outlines the thesis' methodology and research design to studying nationalism in borderland areas. As was introduced in Chapter 1, the main question guiding the research is: **how do individuals living in borderland areas experience nationalism and national belonging?** Building on the theoretical foundations outlined in Chapters 2 and 3 regarding nationalism and borderlands in the contemporary global order, this chapter begins by detailing the study's comparative approach to empirically analysing nationalism in Ukraine as a borderland, and methodologically justifies the selection of three of the state's administrative units as secondary cases. The project's logic of inquiry is then introduced, followed by an explanation of the strategies used to collect and analyse the empirical data. This chapter concludes by expanding on the limitations of the study, including those related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

4.2 Comparative Case Selection

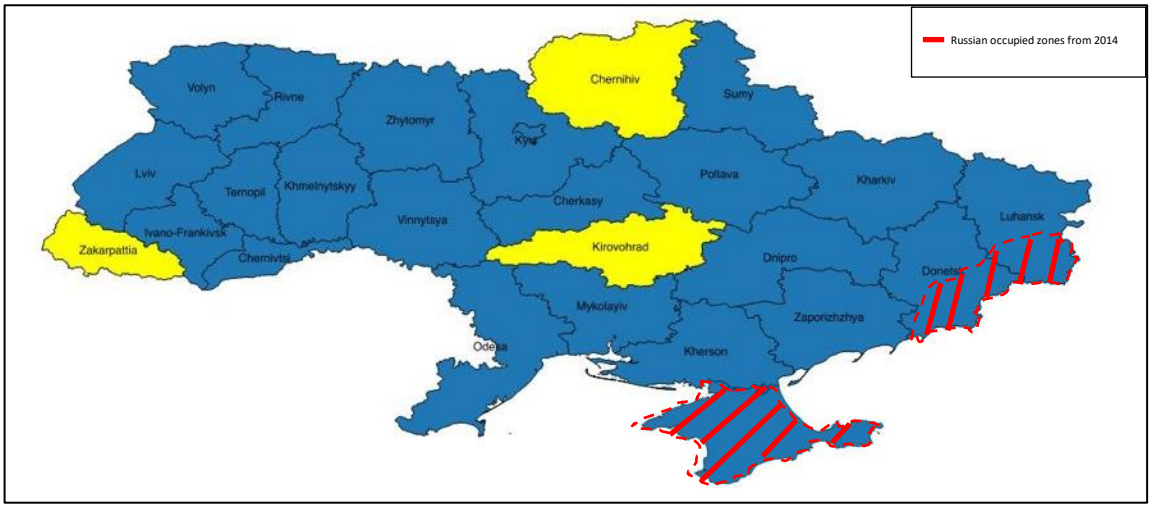
4.2.1 Interpretive Comparative Analysis

Within the primary case of Ukraine, as was outlined in great detail in Chapter 1, three *oblasti* have been 'purposively selected' (Gerring, 2007) for this project's comparative analysis: Zakarpattia, Chernihiv, and Kirovohrad. While these three regions provide a strategic opportunity to study nationalism within borderlands, as is outlined in more detail below, it must be noted that the value of comparative research remains disputed. From a positivist perspective, it has been argued that comparative analyses of cases—such as John Stuart Mill's most-similar or most-different styles of case comparison (Gerring, 2007; Mill, 1843/1872)—can only accurately identify difference across a sample if the cases are comparable in terms of all relevant variables. As a "perfect pair" (or in this case, a triplicate) in the real world can prove exceedingly difficult to find, if it even exists (Tilly, 1984: 80), interpretivist scholars, in emphasising meaning and contextuality, have criticised the idea of comparison as being an exercise dominated by positivism (see Roth and Mehta, 2002; Yanow, 2006; Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2006). In identity studies more specifically, selecting cases that can be fairly and adequately compared is also particularly challenging, as identity is typically tied to specific contexts with unique geographies, histories, levels of wealth and socio-economic development, state policies, rates of mobility and migration, and political climates. Thomas Wilson and Hastings Donnan (1998) also argue the same about studies of territorial borders and borderland areas, stressing that comparative approaches to borders must consider that the history of each is unique, inter-state border investigations yield different results than those of intra-state borders, and analyses considering more than one side of a territorial borderline can produce significantly different insights and understandings. For these reasons, interpretivist and ethnographic scholars typically opt for

in-depth case analyses of single cases or a very small number of cases (small-N) specified as being contextually unique (see, for example, Brubaker, 2000; Brubaker et al., 2006; Wedeen, 2010).

Still, several scholars emphasise the validity of comparison in interpretive analyses. Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz (2006), for instance, suggest that the deliberate pairing of cases within interpretivist work widens the scope of analysis, especially within exploratory research, by drawing out the idiosyncrasies and subtle nuances of each case (see also Brubaker, 2000; Yanow and Schwartz-Shea, 2006). Rogers Brubaker's (2000) study of Weimar German and post-Soviet Russian diasporic communities similarly shows that even comparisons which cannot 'control' for certain variables between cases, like temporal or geographical variance, still offer valid insights into the individual cases' distinctiveness. Walker Connor (1994) moreover asserts that studies of the social world, especially those relating to nationalism can, and must, follow a comparative method instead of remaining confined to a single manifestation. Specifically, and as comparisons reveal "what [cases] have in common,…[and] what is peculiar to each" (Connor, 1994: 76), comparative analyses aid in uncovering the motivations behind specific processes, experiences, and behaviours in light of the similarities or differences of the cases (Chabal and Daloz, 2006). Erica Simmons and Nicholas Smith (2017) likewise stress the value of comparisons, especially interpretive comparisons, and argue that they can enhance the theoretical contributions and quality of scholarly arguments by taking into account the unique contexts and socio-political meanings which actors are enmeshed.

Figure 4.1. Map of Ukraine with secondary cases (yellow).[24]



Map created by author. Shape files retrieved from DIVA-GIS.

Rather than using a single in-depth case to study nationalism in borderland areas, then, this project is framed as an interpretive comparative case study with an 'ethnographic sensibility—or a 'comparative ethnography' (Simmons and Smith, 2019). In contrast to a positivist comparative analysis wherein cases and variables are compared to measure the effects of borders on populations, this project is meaning-

[24] Borders of conflict zones are approximate.

centred and prioritises depth over breadth. Hence, it is not interested in testing hypotheses or explaining variation, but in engaging with multiple expressions of nationalism and experiences with borders and territory, including contradictory narratives (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012). As such, Zakarpattia, Chernihiv, and Kirovohrad are used here as empirical examples of borderland areas to comparatively explore and better understand the ways nationhood is experienced. In this way, the investigation represents what Charles Tilly (1984) calls an 'individualising' comparison, wherein the "distinctiveness of the overall configuration" is of more concern than the specific differences in outcome—though these differences are still of interest (Brubaker, 2000: 8).[25] In intentionally and explicitly comparing empirical findings from the three regions to identify similarities and differences in grassroots practices and experiences, the leverage of the comparison is thus the ability to uncover the "ambiguous and shifting meanings at work in the political worlds under study" (Simmons and Smith, 2017: 50). Due to both the uniqueness of borderland areas and the idiosyncrasies of each of the three regions under study in this thesis—as with any place—a comparative analysis is additionally more appropriate than a single case study as it helps to separate the discursive practices and social relations within borderlands from the specificities of each region and those of Ukraine. Although single case studies are also of significant value for producing in-depth knowledge about specific contexts—and each of the three regions under study indeed warrants a thorough analysis as an unique snapshot of the borderland experience and as all three remain understudied—the project's comparative framework allows more room for theorising about nationalism in borderlands than what would be possible in a single case study. By exploring and comparing the breadth of experiences and practices within these particular regions, the use of a comparison accordingly also mitigates the risk of seeing the specific contexts as necessarily representative of a larger universe of cases.

Furthermore, using a systematic comparative analysis to study nationalism in borderlands advances the study of nationalism more generally by sharpening the study's empirical and theoretical insights for contexts beyond Ukraine (Simmons and Smith, 2019). Whereas small-N studies have been criticised due to their shortcomings in terms of representativeness and external validity—which arguably create obstacles to theory-building and generalisability (King et al., 1994)—the value of comparison for exploratory and hypothesis-seeking projects, like this one, is demonstrated by the added analytical depth in uncovering local understandings, narratives, dynamics, and processes of nationalism within borderland areas, and at the grassroots of Ukraine, that are (and have been) otherwise overlooked. Although the project in no way attempts to make sweeping or generalising conclusions about the nature of all borders, or countries bordered by several countries, it recognises that the findings are not isolated to the unique case of Ukraine or the borderland areas included in this study. While the ability to transform, match, or 'export' the insights to comparable contexts requires equivalent knowledge of other situations—knowledge that is not the focus of, nor presented in, this study—Karl Weick reminds that "all knowledge is usable" (2016: 343). Consequently, and even in spite of Ukraine's idiosyncrasies, and those of the three regions used in this study, the insights can indeed be applied to other borderland contexts—whether at the scale of territory or smaller spatial scales below the state (George and Bennett, 2005; Bunzl, 2008). Connecting the findings from this study to other contexts thus acutely helps to both facilitate theory-building around borderlands, and particularly the ways that nationalism is experienced, as well as helps to empirically explain the socio-political contexts and national discourses found in borderland areas.

[25] Brubaker terms this type of comparison "configurational comparison" (2000: 8).

4.2.2 Secondary Cases: Zakarpattia, Chernihiv, and Kirovohrad

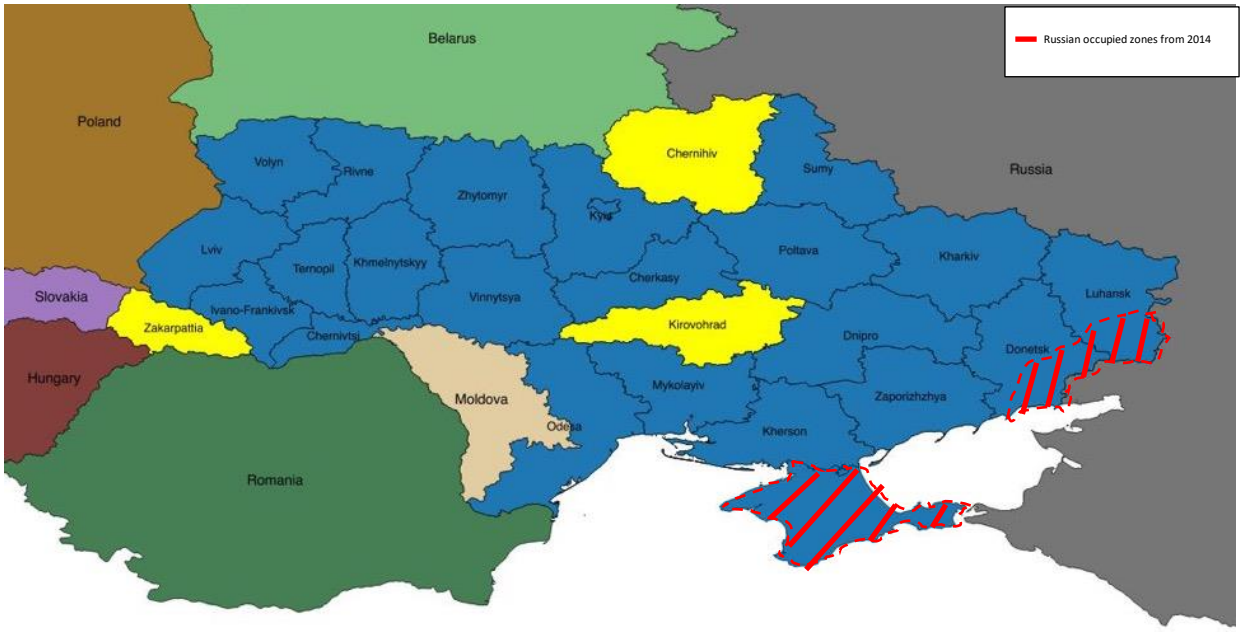
Although selecting cases for their particular importance has been previously criticised (see, for example, George and Bennett, 2005), it must be noted that a random sample of cases for this study would prove problematic in lacking sufficient leverage in terms of the distinctiveness of the borderland experience (Brubaker, 2000). The three secondary cases have accordingly been strategically selected as they have a common basis for comparison and are of sufficient interest to answer the project's research questions (Gerring, 2007; Seawright and Gerring, 2008). As is outlined below, the three regions are topographically dissimilar, are located in varied parts of the same country (see Figure 4.1), and have vastly different histories and levels of economic growth, development, and socio-political climates due to their locations within Ukraine's territory (see Lankina et al., 2016; Peisakhin, 2012). Perhaps the most distinct difference between the cases—which indubitably impacts the people, economy, and history of the regions, as well as the ways individuals conceptualise place, space, and territory—is that they border different countries (which also come with unique histories, economies, levels of development, and political climates).

At the same time, though, the regions selected for this study are, in many ways, contextually alike. Namely, all three regions have experienced the challenges around Ukraine's state- and nation-building, or the Soviet 'detritus,' following the collapse of the USSR (Laitin, 1998), in addition to the continuing contestation around its territory. These regions have additionally been studied less frequently than the others typically included in the scholarship on Ukraine, particularly Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kyiv, Luhansk, Lviv, and Odesa.[26] Further, each of the three oblasti offers a different conceptualisation of a borderland, especially within the Ukrainian context: Zakarpattia and Chernihiv sit on the territorial borders of Ukraine—the former is located in-between Ukraine and 'Europe' (or the four neighbouring European Union countries) and the latter is positioned at the mid-way point between Ukraine and the former Eastern bloc (Russia and Belarus)—whilst Kirovohrad is Ukraine's centremost region and situated in the heart of a macro-level geo-ideological borderland. The regions moreover embody the three ways Ukraine was conceptualised as a borderland in Chapter 3: Zakarpattia is located directly in Europe's borderlands, Chernihiv is situated in Russia's borderlands, and Kirovohrad in positioned in the larger geo-ideological borderland between Europe and Russia.[27] Accordingly, the experiences of individuals in these regions are considerably unique, but, when studied in tandem, reveal the complex ways that Ukrainian citizens create meaning around their country's territory and borders, as well as ontologically conceptualise themselves within their homelands. Comparing cases (or in this study, regions) which are located within the same geographic area or country can additionally be more feasible for researchers using a bottom-up methodology in terms of traveling to field sites and acquiring specific language skills to conduct immersive research with participants in their own settings (Emerson et al., 1995).

[26] Moving the research away from these regions was also necessary in order to gain ethics approval because of the ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine.

[27] Notably, the regions are presented throughout the rest of the thesis in reverse order from what was introduced in Chapter 3 to emphasise the alternative conceptualisations of Ukraine as a borderland (as a borderland of Europe and Russia) before the traditional East-West dichotomy prioritised in much of the older literature, as well as to allow Zakarpattia's discussion to inform the discussion given the data collected from this region are slightly limited when compared to the other two regions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 4.2. Map of Ukraine with secondary cases (yellow) and neighbouring states.[28]



Map created by author. Shape files retrieved from DIVA-GIS.

Zakarpattia

Of the three regions analyses in this thesis, Zakarpattia has been strategically selected because of its geographical position bordering multiple states. Following a complex history of occupation by the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Germany, the region was among the last to join the Ukrainian SSR in 1945 after an agreement was made with then-Czechoslovakia.[29] The land that is contemporary Zakarpattia remained with the Ukrainian state when the USSR collapsed in 1991 and was established as one of the country's twenty-four administrative units. The region of about 12,800 square kilometres is now located at the westernmost point of Ukraine wherein four EU and NATO member states merge: Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, and Romania (see Figure 4.2). The length of the territorial borders shared with the neighbouring states totals approximately 473 kilometres and includes eighteen checkpoints. The most significant divide is between Zakarpattia and Romania at roughly 205 kilometres with six checkpoints (two road, three rail although two inactive, and one inactive pedestrian). The borderline between Hungary and Ukraine is slightly smaller at approximately 137 kilometres, and includes one control point and seven checkpoints (five road and two rail), whilst the Slovakia-Ukraine border is about ninety-eight kilometres long with one control point and five checkpoints (two road, two rail, and one pedestrian). The divide between Poland and Zakarpattia is considerably shorter, at only around thirty-three kilometres, with neither checkpoints, nor control points due to the mountainous terrain and national parkland.[30]

[28] Demarcations of conflict zones are approximate.

[29] Crimea was the final region incorporated into the Ukrainian SSR in 1954.

[30] The Ukraine-Poland border is longer and includers more checkpoints where the regions of Lviv and Volyn neighbour Poland (see Figure 4.2).

As the region neighbouring the largest number of states, Zakarpattia is an outlier and perhaps the Ukraine's most complex, yet explicit, demonstration of a territorial borderland. Zakarpattia's location within and at the westernmost point of Ukraine's territory also means it is situated directly within the geopolitical borderland, or 'ring of friends,' of 'Europe' (Balibar, 1998; Delanty and Rumford, 2005; Eder, 2006). Given the region's complex history and unique geographical position bordering four EU states, the inclusion of Zakarpattia in this study thus allows for an exceptional exploration of nationalism in a borderland, while centering on a region that has typically been excluded from the prior literature which favours other regions in western Ukraine, including neighbouring Lviv, Chernivtsi, and Ternopil. Using Zakarpattia also moves this bottom-up study away from the ongoing war in eastern Ukraine and, in doing so, ensured the safety of myself and my research assistants during fieldwork.

Chernihiv

Chernihiv has been selected as the second case in this thesis. Given its geographical position, the region is separated from Belarus and Russia by a borderline totaling to roughly 458 kilometres (see Figure 4.2). The divide between Chernihiv and Belarus is approximately 235 kilometres and includes nine checkpoints (three major roadways, two rail, and four pedestrian/local traffic crossings—three roads and one river/ice crossing), while five checkpoints (two major roadways, one interstate, and two rail) can be found on the 223 kilometre-long border between Chernihiv and Russia. At approximately 31,900 square kilometres, this oblast is in the most strategic position to observe the experiences of Ukrainian citizens living near two of the three post-Soviet states surrounding Ukraine, as well as the role that these states play in shaping contemporary Ukrainian citizens' identities, experiences, and worldviews. As Chernihiv has a long history dating back to before the Kyivan Rus' before joining the Ukrainian SSR in 1932, its inclusion in this thesis also provides an opportunity to uncover the unique historical experiences and identifications of individuals living near Ukraine's colonial power. Hence, using Chernihiv as a case also divulges the persistence of Soviet legacies in modern Ukraine, specifically the ways Russification, communism, and industrialisation have affected and continue to implicate identity construction (Peisakhin, 2012; 2015). As Chernihiv is located directly in the borderland of Russia, this region moreover contrasts Zakarpattia in offering an analysis of a peripheral region near the other significant geopolitical entity neighbouring modern Ukraine (Korostelina, 2014; Zhurzhenko, 2019).

Because Chernihiv is Ukraine's northernmost region, yet also positioned in the approximate geographical and longitudinal centre of the country, the inclusion of this oblast also distinguishes the thesis from the prior literature outlined in Chapter 3, which has regularly approached Ukraine from an assumed East-West binary, wherein the eastern regions of Donetsk, Luhansk, and Kharkiv, and even the more Russified region of Odesa, are juxtaposed with the western regions of Lviv or Ternopil. Including Chernihiv here also contrasts the other studies centred on Ukraine's territorial borders and peripheral regions referenced in Chapter 3—which have predominantly focused on the areas nearest the EU and Russia—and moreover brings the Ukraine-Belarus borderline into the analysis. Chernihiv has also been selected instead of other eastern regions because it shares borders with two external states, rather than only with Russia. The region was also selected due to its stable socio-political dynamic, which also mitigated the risk of conducting immersive field research in a volatile environment as was the situation at the time of writing in Donetsk, Luhansk, and Kharkiv.

Kirovohrad

The third oblast under study in this thesis is Kirovohrad. Unlike the other two regions, Kirovohrad is not located on Ukraine's territorial peripheries (see Figure 4.2). Instead, the region of 24,600 square kilometres is geographically situated in the heart of Ukraine's contemporary territory.[31] Although not neighbouring other states, Kirovohrad is still surrounded by six other regions*:* Dnipro, Mykolaiv, Odesa, Cherkasy, Poltava, and Vinnytsia. The region was established as part of the Ukrainian SSR in 1939 out of the north territory of Mykolaiv oblast and has shifted very little throughout history, although it did lose land to the neighbouring region of Cherkasy in 1954 whilst gaining its western territory from Odesa in the same year. It must be noted that while Kirovohrad is centrally located, it is not—nor has it ever been—the main site of power and influence in Ukraine. Hence, its inclusion in this study allows for an exploration of a centrally-located region not housing the capital. Using Kirovohrad also moves the analysis away from the traditional approaches to nationalism and identity wherein the predominant focus is on citizens in core political areas and/or the discourses purported by top elites and state institutions (Condor, 2010; Knott, 2015b; Kostovicova and Glasius, 2011; Migdal, 2004).

Furthermore, Kirovohrad is included in this analysis because it offers unique insight into the borderland experience. Since the region is not located in the territorial peripheries of Ukraine, it may appear to robustly contrast Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, as could be done using a more positivist comparative research agenda like Mill's method of difference wherein similar cases with one element of difference are compared (see George and Bennett, 2005). However, as Ukraine is conceptualised as a geo-ideological borderland on a macro-level, Ukraine's centremost region of Kirovohrad is simultaneously located longitudinally in the epicentre of a borderland between the 'East' and 'West,' as well as constitutes parts of both of Europe's and Russia's borderlands. The inclusion of this region is therefore to help unpack the understandings of nationalism and perceptions of space, place, and territory held by individuals not living on or near territorial borders, but who still engage with borders and territory in their everyday lives by nature of their location within a geo-ideological borderland. This study's incorporation of the spatial understandings and attachments of both territorial borderlanders (from Chernihiv and Zakarpattia) and geo-ideological borderlanders (from Kirovohrad) thence reveals how ordinary people living in different parts of the same country experience and practice nationhood.

4.3 Empirical Strategy

4.3.1 Logic of Inquiry

In order to unpack the intersubjective meanings, experiences, and expressions of nationalism held by ordinary people in borderland areas, this project follows from an abductive logic of inquiry. Rather than seeking general principles and propositions induced from particular events, or laws deduced through the testing of hypotheses and theories, an abductive approach begins with a tension, puzzle, or surprise and strives to identify possible explanations so these phenomena become less perplexing (Agar, 2010; Locke et al., 2008; Van Maanen et al., 2007). Unlike the step-by-step processes of deduction and induction, the 'puzzling-out' in abductive reasoning involves an iterative-recursive process of simultaneously and repeatedly moving back and forth between empirical material and theoretical literature as the researcher is inferentially and actively directed through the process of sense-making (Agar, 2010; Bentz and Shapiro, 1998; Dilthey, 1976; Gadamer, 1976); the reasoning is iterative as the same logic of inquiry is continuously

[31] The region's city of Dobrovelychkivka is the geographical centre of Ukraine.

repeated, and recursive as abduction is repetitively performed within abduction as further discoveries are made (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012).[32] Although abduction and induction are similar in the way they both make interpretations and draw inferences, the former is more closely connected to the context of discovery (Bentz and Shapiro, 1998) and distinguished by moving from a puzzle toward explanatory conditions or circumstances which are "as situated as the puzzle with which it begins" (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012: 28). As the research puzzle and inquiry are closely entwined in abduction (Gustafsson and Hagström, 2018), the researcher may indeed also be caught (or even overwhelmed) within this puzzle as the tensions impelling this reasoning often emerge when the expectations the researcher brought into the field (based on prior knowledge, experience, and literature) do not align with what is actually observed and experienced. The search for an explanation thus begins when the pre-developed theories, concepts, and hypotheses fail to adequately explain the lived reality (Lichterman, 2002; Peirce, 1934), or "we become interested in a class of phenomena for which we lack applicable theories" (Friedrichs and Kratochwil, 2009: 714). Whilst theoretical assumptions are still important in this line of reasoning—as we can never completely separate ourselves from the dispositions, lenses, epistemologies, and historical ideas that shape our worldviews (Braun and Clarke, 2006)—the iterative-recursive relationship between empirical observations and theoretical literature encourage new explanations, accounts, concepts, and understandings, and allow for the generation and refinement of knowledge and theory in the research process, as the puzzle and associated theoretical underpinnings are continually honed (Agar, 2010; Gustafsson and Hagström, 2018; Kapiszewski et al., 2015).

In using abductive reasoning to explore how nationalism is experienced and understood in borderland areas, this project is therefore one of inquiry as much as problem-solving. Whilst acknowledging that learning transpires through the process of conducting research (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012), a great deal of advance preparation went into designing this project's theoretical framework and empirical strategy (see more on this below) based on pre-existing theories and literature about nationalism in Ukraine, in addition to my own prior experiences within the country. Yet, as most of my field engagements, observations, and interactions could not be predicted ahead of time, and as my fieldwork plans were significantly disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the research design was continuously altered and adapted in response to these unexpected happenings (Agar, 2010; Fujii, 2015). The research puzzle was also flexibly revised during the implementation of the project as I continuously moved between theories and empirical material, experienced tensions in the field when my previous understandings and expectations juxtaposed what I observed (Lichterman, 2002), and was forced to reconsider my previously planned data collection methods due to access limitations as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Rather than following general principles or propositions as one would expect from inductive or deductive approaches (Agar, 2010; Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012), the data analysis involved a circular-spiral pattern wherein I simultaneously engaged with and laterally moved between multiple theoretical literatures (including some I had not considered prior to fieldwork) and empirical materials (Gustafsson and Hagström, 2018). It is because of this dynamic exploration that the project evolved beyond nationalism and came to also ask about other identities—cultural, regional, territorial, citizenship, among others—in its attempt to uncover how individuals in borderland areas understand themselves within both their local surroundings and in relation to various spatial scales.

[32] Deductive (moving from theory to observations) and inductive (moving from observations to theory) reasonings are described in a more step-by-step way with a 'first this, then that' logic (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012).

4.3.2 Data Collection

While Kenneth Waltz writes, "once a methodology is adopted, the choice of methods becomes merely a tactical matter" (1979: 13), this thesis recognises that empirical landscapes, diverse knowledge systems, and complex social practices will not always align with existing theoretical explanations and disciplinary requirements (Neal, 2013). Selecting a methodology to match this project's interpretivist epistemology thus aligns with what Gary King, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba (KKV) famously outlined: that much social science research "does not fit neatly into one category" wherein it can be best explained through only a qualitative *or* a quantitative approach (1994: 5). In order to explore how ordinary people experience nationalism within the cartographic reality of space, methodological pluralism is thus strategically used here to ensure a variety of explanations, meanings, and understandings—a useful compromise on the veracity of 'subjective' and 'intersubjective' accounts that allows room for agency without assuming an 'authentic' depiction of identity or experience (Doucet and Mauthner, 2008). In an attempt to "elevate the empirical above the theoretical" (Neal, 2013: 43), the data in this thesis were therefore collected through a bottom-up methodology that centres on the lived experiences of actors at the grassroots level (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012); namely, through focus groups, cognitive mapping exercises, 'elite' interviews, and participant observation conducted through fieldwork (as is outlined below).

While multi-method approaches can prove useful for many projects, as the "flaws of one method are often the strengths of another" (Denzin, 1978: 302), I am very much aware of the weaknesses and critiques involved in the mixing of methods. As Amel Ahmed and Rudra Sil (2012) stress: the claim that using several methods in one project reduces errors or increases the validity of a finding is accurate in the sense that the approaches proceed from the same, or proximate, foundational assumptions. The use of two or more methods must follow from comparable, if not similar, ontologies with the same abstracted conception of causality (Ahmed and Sil, 2012). If these conditions do not hold, using multiple methods then neither eliminates method-specific errors, nor serves as an effective means to cross-validate the findings. While it is possible for key concepts and variables to be translated and compared across methods, empirical observations are ultimately non-commensurable and do not serve to strengthen each other if they follow different ontologies (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012). The use of multiple methods in this thesis is therefore neither to suggest that methodological pluralism offers a coherent, unified strategy for generating inferences more valid than any one method could independently generate, nor do I believe that the use of two or more methods produces stronger empirical data than single-method research. The triangulation of methods is neither meant to suggest that interpretivist projects require multiple data sources to be more rigorous or meet the positivist standards of reliability and verifiability (see King et al., 1994). Instead, a mixed method approach is used for this analysis so that the strengths of the different methods can help overcome their individual deficiencies. Furthermore, and because expressions of identity are fluid, limiting the study to a single method infers experiences can be best represented and explored in one specific way—and that which is determined by the researcher (i.e. myself)—and not in other ways which may be more appropriate for the people included in this study.

Fieldwork

In line with this thesis' ethnographic sensibility, the remaining chapters are based on data collected through immersive fieldwork during three trips to Ukraine. These visits totaled to approximately fifteen weeks and took place between September 2018 and March 2020. During this time, I was predominantly based in the capital cities of each of the three regions under study (Uzhhorod in Zakarpattia, Chernihiv in Chernihiv, and Kropyvnytskyi in Kirovohrad), but also traveled to nineteen smaller rural communities for

focus groups and interviews, as well as to engage in participant observations, such as by volunteering in various capacities and attending festivals, events, and concerts with local people and gatekeepers. Although one fully immersive trip was not possible due to the structure of my doctoral programme, I believe dividing the fieldwork across shorter trips was the best approach for this research as it allowed me to frequently and comprehensively reflect on my findings by physically removing myself from my field sites (Knott, 2019; Till, 2001), in order to approach each subsequent fieldtrip with more preparation and knowledge. Further, and thanks to social media, "returning from the field [did] not mean leaving the field in an absolute sense" (Knott, 2019: 148), as I was often in communication with my participants between trips in order to gain access to new networks in other regions, plan my next trip, and ask follow-up questions where necessary. My prior experiences with Ukraine also proved exceptionally useful for conducting this research—the fact that I had visited Ukraine several times for personal, volunteer, and academic reasons prior to my doctoral programme was advantageous in terms of arranging the logistics, accessing gatekeepers and participants, feeling comfortable with the local culture and environments, and speaking and understanding the local languages.[33] In addition, I observed Ukraine's presidential (both rounds) and parliamentary elections in 2019 as an international election observer with CANADEM, which further expanded my networks and increased my familiarity in the regions included in this study.

It must be noted that several more weeks of fieldwork were originally planned for April-May 2020, however, this trip was postponed and then cancelled in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. In May 2020, the research design was flexibly adapted in response to the dynamic global environment and the reality of indefinitely not being able to access my field sites (Agar, 2010; Fujii, 2015; Lichterman, 2002; Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012). I therefore completed my data collection online through the use of synchronous platforms between May-June 2020 (see Appendix B for additional details). Since the pandemic altered my original research plans, I spent different amounts of time embedded in each of the three regions under study—a limitation which undoubtedly affected the larger analysis, even whilst I tried my best to mitigate it by conducting online research (more on this below). In spite of the challenges posed by my inability to access the field, though, fieldwork (whether in-person or online) still provided the most practical and effective means to carry out this project.[34] Specifically, immersing myself in the 'activities and everyday experiences' (Emerson et al., 1995) of my participants in Ukraine allowed me to see how nationalism actually 'works' in their daily lives (Brubaker et al., 2006).

As this thesis seeks to both explore and engage with a diverse breadth of perspectives and narratives, I realised very early into the data collection that age is a necessary and very important conceptual piece in the puzzle of how nationalism and territoriality are experienced and understood in borderland areas. Cynthia Miller-Idriss (2009) shows that patterns of national identity may change across generations, especially as a result of global events, whereas other dominant voices in Political Science also suggest political attitudes and behaviours are easily malleablised through external forces (Zaller, 1992). Scholars of intergenerational persistence theories likewise indicate that younger and older generations are noticeably different when it comes to political and religious attitudes, opinions, and identities (see, for example, Conover 1991; Putnam, 2001; Sapiro 2004). At the same time, it has also been suggested that

[33] Of the three regions, I had only visited Zakarpattia prior to commencing my fieldwork. The previous experiences and pre-established networks I had in this region proved particularly useful amidst the COVID-19 pandemic once my final field trip was cancelled. Although I do not speak fluent Hungarian or Russian, my Ukrainian language skills proved beneficial in all regions for both logistical reasons and data collection.

[34] Given the original research plan for data collection had to be altered in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, further research could continue this project or carry out the cancelled in-person research (when public health measures allow).

various generations hold similar attitudes and identities (see, for example, Bengston et al., 2009; Jennings et al., 2009; Rico and Jennings, 2012) as a result of familial, socialisation, and educational experiences, though some studies show younger generations may have similar identities and attitudes as their elders, but that they are almost never identical (Niemi and Hepburn, 1995). Following from here, it is thence worth considering that different lived experiences also shape individuals' spatial attachments and geographical imaginaries, as well as understandings of citizenship and national belonging. This is particularly important in a post-Soviet state like Ukraine, where socialisation and educational experiences have varied across generations based on different amounts of time people spent living in the FSU versus independent Ukraine, and because of technological advancements and increased cross-border mobility and communication due to heightened globalisation.[35] Still, there is significant agreement in the social sciences that historical institutions like political administrations have long-lasting legacies for society, including the persistence of pre-communist preferences despite the societal upheavals of communism (Wittenberg, 2006) and the perpetuation of communist attitudes and behaviours in the post-communist day (see Alesina and Fuchs-Schuendeln, 2007; Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2017).

As such, this analysis centres on participants from three distinct age groups: young adults (18-29 years), middle-aged adults (30-49 years), and older adults (50 years and older).[36] The emphasis on age in this thesis thus not only adds theoretical and analytical depth, but differentiates the project from past studies of Ukrainian nationalism. Since the project remains open to alternative experiences and expressions of nationhood, residents from both urban and rural locales are also included to account for the different ways Soviet and post-Soviet socialisation experiences have implicated Ukrainian citizens' perceptions of their state and nation (see Humphrey, 1988). As the most rural areas of states are not often considered in political research, especially through bottom-up approaches focused on subjective and intersubjective meanings, bringing these communities into this analysis adds to the current debates in nationalism and also shows how territorial borders have transformed rural social spaces within the post-Soviet context.

Focus Groups

To analyse the subtler nuances and experiences of ordinary people during fieldwork, I conducted one online and twenty-six in-person focus groups in urban and rural locales in all three regions (see Appendices B-D for more information). As I recognised prior to data collection that some concepts employed in political science scholarship might not matter, nor even exist at all, for the participants who would be included in this study and are not immersed in academic jargon, especially concepts around identity and nationalism, the project required a method that could explore the saliency and hybridity of identities in a way that allowed participants to draw on their real vocabularies and syntaxes without fear of using the 'wrong' words (Braun and Clarke, 2018; Wilkinson, 1998). By encouraging participants to candidly interact with each other and speak in a 'naturalistic' way (Wellings et al., 2000), focus groups created an open and supportive environment for in-depth conversations, debates, and discussions about their lived experiences. As participants were able to be less logical, thoughtful, and even organised than

[35] In more quantitative studies, age would be termed a 'moderator variable' (Z) that generates interactive effects (see Berry et al., 2012). For this study, however, it is recognised that age affects one's identification, but the aim is not to test and/or compare variation in identity based on age. Instead, various age groups are included here to explore a breadth of diverse narratives and experiences.

[36] 'Older' rather than 'old' or 'senior' is used to define a distinct age group while recognising that fifty years is not typically considered a benchmark for a more senior status in society.

what would be expected in individual interviews (Krueger, 1994), focus groups were a robust method for this project in encouraging "collective sense-making in action" through the expression of diverse perspectives, opinions, and views (Wilkinson, 1998: 193).

The groups in all regions were diverse in gender and age (see Appendices B-D). I began with open-ended, icebreaker questions about the participants' lives, locales, and regions before moving to the more substantive questions which centred on nationalism, citizenship, territory, geography, borders, local culture and politics, the location of the participants' locales, and the participants' feelings about their state and those neighbouring. Although I originally planned for each group to represent one of the three demographic groups outlined above with approximately six to eight participants to allow for greater participant involvement (Morgan, 1996), it must be noted that this was not always possible and the focus groups varied in size and in terms of participants' ages. This is because foreigners, and especially foreigners from the diaspora, do not often visit the communities wherein I conducted focus groups, especially the most rural locales and, as such, many more individuals than expected regularly turned up to meet and speak with me once they heard I was visiting. Although this did not prove to be particularly problematic in most instances, as the number of participants in each group was never too significant (usually under eleven), participants in the larger groups had lower levels of involvement and a few participants often dominated these conversations while others simply observed.[37] I chose not to ask participants to leave the groups in the situations where there were more than ten participants as I felt it was ethically problematic as most individuals had traveled significant distances to meet me, knew each other from their communities, and had volunteered their time to participate in my research. Nonetheless, I understand this created some challenges for my moderation, especially around keeping the conversations centred on my questions, even if it did allow for the expression of more diverse responses and opinions (Morgan, 1996).

While all focus groups followed a topic guide that included broad themes for open discussions (see Appendix A), the conversations were relatively unstructured for each group to pursue their own interests (Braun and Clarke, 2018). As the moderator, I mostly guided the conversations toward specific themes and topics through prepared questions, as well as managing the group dynamics by limiting the participants who attempted to dominate the conversation and prompting those who would otherwise contribute very minimally (Morgan, 1996). The languages during the focus groups varied with English and Ukrainian used in Chernihiv and Kirovohrad. In Zakarpattia, a local gatekeeper helped with interpreting the focus group discussions due to the region's unique dialect (discussed further in Chapter 5). Still, in one focus group, we faced challenges as the participants only spoke Hungarian, and therefore, one participant had to act as the interpreter and translate my questions from Ukrainian to Hungarian and the other participants' answers from Hungarian to Ukrainian. All focus groups lasted between 60-90 minutes and took place in schools, community centres, and libraries, while one was held in a café.

Cognitive Mapping Exercises

As identifications are strongly associated with understandings of one's home and homeland, especially within post-Soviet societies (Charron, 2012; Kaiser, 1994), determining the geographic scales and identifying features that participants highlight when depicting where they are from is critical for uncovering spatial components of identity. Hence, to better understand cartographic discourses at the

[37] One focus group in Kirovohrad unexpectedly had twenty-four participants. In this group, the conversation was dominated by eight participants, while the remaining sixteen simply observed and came to individually introduce themselves after the meeting as it was the first time many had interacted with a Canadian.

local level in Ukraine, I collected a broad sample of maps during the focus groups through participatory cognitive mapping. Participatory mapping, or counter-mapping, is the "involvement of local people" to reveal the distinctive knowledge of local communities, improve geographic understandings, and instigate conversations about local struggles, aspirations, and identifications (Smith et al., 2012: 119, also Chambers, 2006; Elwood, 2006). Though knowledge acquired through lived experience is generally granted less legitimacy in academic research because of its close connection to and association with participants (Elwood, 2006), this type of mapping is the most effective way to reveal peoples' attachments to and relationships with diverse spatial scales (Pacione, 1978). Using participants' experiential knowledge and allowing them to express different aspects of their spatial awareness thus provides valuable information and a better understanding of the connection between people and places from local perspectives (Smith et al., 2012). Such an approach is accordingly in line with this project's bottom-up methodology.

Figure 4.3. Map and instructions for cognitive mapping exercise #1.

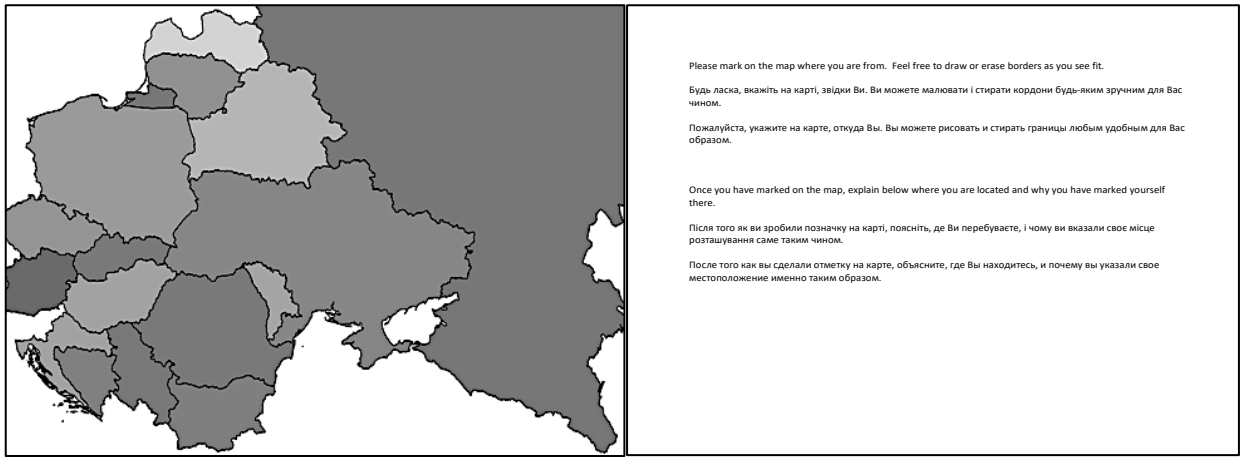
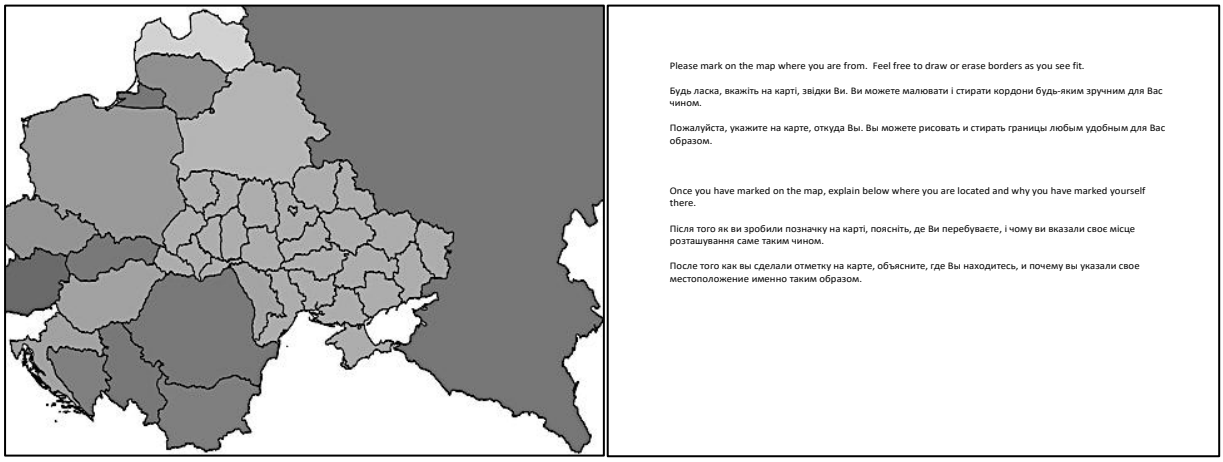


Figure 4.4. Map and instructions for cognitive mapping exercise #2.



As an additional method to observing ordinary people in real time and space (Wacquant, 2003), this exercise was carried out twice during the focus group discussions. At the beginning of all in-person focus groups, participants were given a blank map of Eastern Europe and asked to use the map to answer the question, *where are you from?* (see map with instructions in Figure 4.3).[38] The instructions for the mapping exercise were provided on the back of the maps in English, Ukrainian, and Russian as it was my expectation that the participants in all three regions spoke at least one of these languages. The interlocutors were asked to write or draw anything they wanted on the maps to answer this question, including adding any type of label or shape, drawing and/or re-drawing the borders of any countries, or erasing borders they felt were incorrect. After completing the maps, the participants were then asked to explain what they had marked on their maps and why they had marked their maps the way they had. This same question was posed at the end of the focus groups and participants were presented with the exact same map, but with Ukraine's twenty-four regions added (see Figure 4.4). At this time, they were again asked to mark their maps in any way necessary to communicate where they are from. Importantly, the mapping employed in this project was not entirely free-form as the project is interested in uncovering the participants' spatial and territorial understandings, particularly their perceptions and experiences of (and with) borders and territory. Still, the inclusion of cognitive maps adds an additional layer to the analysis in showing how participants realise themselves within Ukraine's territory and the larger geography of Eastern Europe, which cannot necessarily be captured in surveys, census data, or even verbally through conversation.

'Elite' Interviews

In addition to focus groups and cognitive mapping exercises, sixty-four semi-structured 'elite' interviews were conducted across the three regions during fieldwork (see Appendices B-D for participant information from each region). Interviews were used in this study to uncover the perspectives and opinions of individuals of high social and political standing who make, or greatly influence, decisions in the selected regions which, in turn, greatly affects the lives of the greater population (Mikecz, 2012).[39] I understand the term 'elite' is difficult to define as it can mean various things in different contexts, and because the status of 'elite' is always variable and situational. Although, in most cases, the term carries great weight and thus can problematically create a binary, a hierarchical category, and an implicit bias between those who are defined as 'elite' and those who are not (or the 'non-elites'), this project's use of the term is not in any way meant to reduce individuals' agency or worth as persons. Instead, I characterise someone as an 'elite' not because of their job title or position of power, but because they have the ability to exert influence through "social networks, social capital, and strategic position within social structures" (Harvey, 2011: 433). Importantly, I recognise these individuals are still in positions to manipulate information, exert influence over others, and strategically ensure that a specific image and/or message is upheld and maintained, especially when participating in research. In order to avoid potentially uncomfortable situations in the focus groups, and to understand their experiences in the region and how they create and uphold a certain image of identity that may influence the experiences of 'non-elites,' I therefore opted to interview 'elites' one-on-one. Given the complexities around the term, I have also decided to leave 'elite' in single quotation marks throughout the rest of the thesis.

[38] Unfortunately, this exercise could not be replicated during the online focus group.

[39] The 'elite' interviews did not prove to be in any way more formal than the focus group discussions. Almost all interviews were very candid, especially those conducted online amidst the COVID-19 pandemic (see Howlett, 2021).

As I endeavoured to understand the contextual nuances in 'elite' individuals' responses, including those beneath the surface of their answers and the reasoning and premises that underlie their thought-processes (Aberbach and Rockman, 2002; Aberbach et al., 1975; Soss, 2006), I conducted semi-structured interviews. This type of interview created a rich and flexible interaction between my participants and I, which allowed me to very much enter into their lives (Fujii, 2012; 2017)—this was particularly evident during the interviews held online in the spring of 2020 (see Howlett, 2021). Of the sixty-four interviews, fifty-three were conducted in-person in Ukraine in libraries, cafés, or participants' offices. For those online, all conversations except for one were video discussions: eleven were held over Facebook video chat, one on Skype, and one on Viber. For the online interviews, the participants were all located within their homes, although one individual left his home to go for his morning walk. All interviews lasted between 45-90 minutes and all aside from two were one-on-one conversations.[40] To ensure consistency across the interviews, all conversations used the same topic guide from the focus groups which included broad themes for open discussions (see Appendix A). While predominantly following the thematic structure found in the guide, I adapted or followed up with additional questions depending on the participants' answers during each interview to ensure a conversational style. I recognise this approach comes at a cost as not every participant was necessarily asked the same questions nor in the same order, yet I still believe the advantages of conversational depth and flow outweigh the shortfalls. The language used for the interviews was determined by each participant to ensure their comfort.[41]

Notably, respondents for the in-person focus groups and interviews in all regions and locales were recruited predominantly through convenience and snowball exposure (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2014).[42] Participants for the focus groups were typically recruited through a gatekeeper once initial contact was made directly with the individual or a larger organisation. For the interviews, most participants were contacted via email and Facebook messenger with an attached meeting request letter on the LSE's letterhead, although a few participants were introduced through mutual friends or another participant. The participants for the interviews and focus group held online were recruited through contacts and gatekeepers from prior in-person fieldwork, as well as through social media, including Ukrainian pages and local groups on Facebook, and also contacted via email and Facebook messenger. The participants recruited both in-person and online were given a written description of the research in Ukrainian and English, including an explanation of the study and a description of how data would be used and stored, which was also explained at the beginning of the interviews and focus groups. Interlocutors were additionally provided with a consent form prior to their participation, although I quickly realised that signing this form caused anxiety and discomfort so I instead opted for verbal consent.[43] Depending on the participants' preferences, most interviews and all focus groups were audio-recorded while hand-written notes were taken.[44]

---

[40] Two interviews—one in Zakarpattia and one in Kirovohrad—involved two participants.

[41] In Zakarpattia, most discussions were held in Ukrainian or English; in Chernihiv, most were held in Surzhyk or English; and in Kirovohrad, most were held in Ukrainian or English.

[42] The term 'exposure' is used here instead of 'sampling' as the latter term refers to the scientific possibility of generalising from a sample to the larger population with some degree of certainty based on inferential statistics (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012). Snowball sampling also comes with the risk of the researcher becoming deeply embedded in the network of their initial participant(s), thus potentially privileging some voices and silencing others. In contrast, 'exposure' represents a circuitous process of locating different people and places, which enables a researcher to map a variety of views and perspectives.

[43] This is in line with other scholars working in the post-Soviet context, such as Knott (2015b), who elucidated that signing forms may be challenging or counterproductive for research.

[44] Some interviews were not recorded to respect the participants' wishes.

4.3.3 Data Analysis

Focus Groups and Interviews

To ensure the English translations are as reflective of the originals as possible, including accurately capturing local nuances and phrases, a native Ukrainian was hired to assist in transcribing and translating the interview and focus group discussions. Grounded theory was then used to analyse the rich and complex information found in the focus group and interview transcripts to uncover attachments at various spatial scales through an interactive and flexible investigation (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). As the first analytical phase, inductive thematic analysis was employed as an exploratory and descriptive approach to explore both implicit and explicit meanings in the textual data (Guest et al., 2012). Using the qualitative data analysis software, NVivo 12, all transcripts were coded for items of analytical interest, including prominent and re-occurring words and word patterns, phrases, symbolic references, and sentiments relating to identifications, attachments, and experiences at local, regional, and territorial levels. In order to capture the richness of the data, non-verbal cues were also identified, such as emotions and feelings, as these often pointed to certain themes or revealed something about a specific person, place, or time not overtly referenced or discussed in the focus groups or interview discussions (Adcock, 2006; Soss, 2006; Yanow, 2006). In recursively analysing the data, detecting patterns, and constructing meaning, the first round of coding generated fifty-five smaller codes (Braun and Clarke, 2006). After returning to the theoretical literature following this initial coding, as per the project's abductive logic of inquiry, the transcripts were then coded a second time, generating seventy-two smaller codes and sub-themes. The second round of coding also took place after an inductive analysis of the cognitive maps (more details on this below), so that the binaries presented in Table 4.1 could be considered in the coding process (although not necessarily coded for). The exploratory and abductive nature of the study thus allowed for a practical and effective procedure for identifying both overt and covert patterns and themes in the narration of participants' experiences and perceptions, including new codes not originally considered.

Following the coding of the textual data, the smaller codes were aggregated into fifteen themes and then four global themes to answer how participants make meaning around and both express and experience nationalism, as well as the ways they perceive and engage with space, place, and territory. The global themes and tropes identified within the focus groups and interview transcripts were then combined with the findings from the cognitive mapping exercises to explore participants' senses of attachment at various spatial scales and the ways they enact, perform, embody, and (re)produce their nation (Denzin, 1978; Hall, 2003; Soss, 2006; Yanow, 2006). A discussion of the observations relevant for the research questions from each region under study are explored in Chapter 5 (Zakarpattia), Chapter 6 (Chernihiv), and Chapter 7 (Kirovohrad).

Cognitive Maps

To analyse the maps and examine differences between the three regions, this thesis draws on Austin Charron's (2012) analytical approach to uncovering the spatial understandings and territorial identities of Crimean residents. Similar to Charron's study (2012), all maps gathered for this project were analysed individually and inductively coded for items of interest which appeared on at least one map. The characteristics were then documented as binaries; in the case that a particular feature appeared on a map under scrutiny, a '1' was added to an Excel table, whereas a '0' was granted when the feature was not

observed.[45] This inductive analysis involved significant coding and re-coding to ensure all maps were analysed for the same binaries, and resulted in thirty-six binaries divided into two categories. The first category of binaries relates to the various spatial scales participants used when noting where they are from (see Table 4.1). This set includes fifteen binaries associated with various spatial scales, particularly at the locale-, region-, and country-levels, as well as the languages used by participants when adding names of places (i.e. their locales, regions, and/or country). Taken together, these binaries demonstrate the participants' spatial awareness, their attachments to various spatial scales, and their conceptualisations of themselves and their locales, regions, and state within representations of space (Pacione, 1978).

Table 4.1. Binaries of attachment at various spatial scales.

Locale-Level	Region-Level	Country-Level
Locale (in Ukrainian)	Region (in Ukrainian)	Ukraine (in Ukrainian)
Locale (in non-Ukrainian)	Region (in non-Ukrainian)	Ukraine (in non- Ukrainian)
Locale (in English)	Region (in English)	Ukraine (in English)
Locale (in Russian)	Region (in Russian)	Emphasis on entire country of Ukraine
Locale (in Hungarian)	Region (in Hungarian)	Emphasis on city or country not Ukraine

Another category of fifteen binaries relates to the territorial scale of Ukraine. As can be seen in Table 4.2, these binaries represent the various ways participants suggested changes to contemporary Ukraine's territory and borders. Several binaries indicate the participants desire for particular historical lands currently located in the territories of neighbouring states to be included within Ukraine's territory, such as Crimea, Kuban, and Starodubshchyna, whilst other binaries, conversely, point to the fact that certain geographical areas within Ukraine should be incorporated into other states' territories. Some binaries found within this set also show particular modifications to Ukraine's territorial borders, as suggested by the participants. By complementing the binaries from the previous category, those presented in Table 4.2 reveal the geographical knowledge and understandings of ordinary people in the regions under study, and the ways their perceptions, engagements, and experiences with Ukraine's territory within representational spaces align with and/or counter those depicted in representations of space (Smith et al., 2012: 119, also Chambers, 2006; Elwood, 2006; Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008). Notably, the maps were also assessed for stylistic elements relating to the specific marks added to the maps, such as the type of mark that was used (i.e. a simple dot or check, a specific symbol, or an unclear marking), as well as whether the marks were erased, edited, or inaccurately/incorrectly placed, and whether more than one place was marked on the maps.

[45] For instance, a binary was created to express whether a locale's name was written on an interlocutor's map using the Ukrainian language, where '0' indicates the person did not write the name of their locale in Ukrainian and '1' means he/she did.

Table 4.2. Binaries of attachment at territorial scale of Ukraine.

Territorial Amendments at Region-Level	Territorial Amendments at Country-Level	Territorial Border Amendments
Region separate from Ukraine	Crimea as Ukraine's territory	Altered (erased or added) Ukraine's territorial borders
Region with Romania	Kuban as Ukraine's territory	Highlighted Ukraine's current territorial borders
Region with Hungary	Starodubshchyna as Ukraine's territory	Open borders with European Union
Region with Slovakia	Ukraine as European Union	Open borders with Russia
Region with Poland		
Region with Belarus		
Region with Russia		

Following the individual assessment, the maps were then divided by region and age. Within the collection of maps from each region, cross-tabular tables and Chi-Square tests were run in SPSS for each category of binaries to observe the frequencies and variance across age groups. In order to determine the expected frequency, the total number of responses (including both '0' and '1' answers) in any binary (which equals N) were multiplied by the total number of '1' (or 'yes') responses for all binaries included in the test, and then divided by the total number of responses to all binaries included in the same test (or N times the number of binary sets). To calculate the significance of difference between the observed and expected frequencies, I therefore assessed the adjusted standardised residuals for each binary—this is derived from a comparison of the observed (OF) and expected (EF) frequencies. In line with prior literature, the project treats an adjusted residual (AR) of two or greater as an indicator of a significant difference between the expected and observed frequencies within a cross-tabular statistical test like Chi-Squared (see Haberman, 1973). In such instances, the frequency of the outcome is considered to be significantly higher than expected and thus worthy of further analysis. Conversely, an AR less than two indicates the occurrence of the outcome is significantly low (or significantly lower than expected). The Chi-Squared test is also used to confirm the statistical significance and determine whether the null hypothesis is rejected. It must be noted that using an AR to determine statistical significance of difference is less accurate than other tests, such as an ANOVA test, because it does not produce a p-value and therefore the confidence of the results cannot be discussed. Nevertheless, this approach still provides useful information about the observed frequencies and highlights the binaries which are of particular statistical significance. In particular, the observed binaries across all three regions proved counterintuitive in many instances in revealing the significance of local places for the ways individuals living in borderlands conceptualise place, space, and territory, as well as themselves within their country, continent, and even the world. While explored in greater detail in Part II, this observation underscores the importance of considering representational spaces and grassroots experiences in contemporary studies of nationalism, even though the dominant theorising typically centres on the territorial dimension of the state.

4.4 Limitations of Study

As this study was conducted within a specific time frame and with limited financial resources as a doctoral thesis, several limitations must be identified. Most importantly, the majority of the project was written during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to the personal challenges that came with the virus, including those related to national lockdowns and my inability to physically access various institutions like the LSE's campus and libraries, my fieldwork plans were significantly disrupted while I was in Chernihiv in March 2020 as states began closing their borders to foreign travellers. Although I still managed to spend fifteen weeks in Ukraine prior to the pandemic, in-person fieldwork was no longer feasible after early 2020 as both the UK's government and the LSE took firm positions against international travel from March 2020 onwards, and Ukraine's borders were closed between 17 March 2020 and 15 June 2020. As such, I was forced to cancel my final fieldwork trip planned for April-May 2020. As was outlined above, I was still able to continue some of my fieldwork online by conducting thirteen interviews and one focus group in May-June 2020. Whilst online interviews did prove an adequate substitute for several conversations that otherwise would have been conducted in-person, focus groups were not as easily replicated in a digital setting. This is because many findings from my in-person focus groups came from observing the interactions between people in conversation and during the cognitive mapping exercises, as is outlined in the following chapters, but this was not possible given that synchronous communication platforms prevent simultaneous dialogues and exchanges. Accordingly, only one focus group was conducted online.

Although this thesis does not claim to be representative of the wider populations under study nor the entirety of Ukraine's citizenry because the number of interlocutors is neither large enough nor sufficiently random—nor is 'representativeness' necessarily a fair criterion for assessing the rigour of interpretivist research (Small, 2009)—it must still be noted that logistical and ethical considerations caused by the pandemic limited the total number of participants included in this study, especially as fewer focus groups were held in Zakarpattia than in the other two regions (see Appendices B-D).[46] Whereas participants interviewed online were still recruited through convenience and snowball exposure—and thus were fairly randomly selected—it must be noted they did not necessarily portray the same heterogeneity as those of in-person fieldwork given the 'natural' recruitment efforts (e.g. meeting participants through volunteer efforts, events, or via other interlocutors) were not possible online. The direct impacts of the virus on the populations under study must additionally be acknowledged as this study's older demographic group, in being more than fifty years of age, falls into the 'high risk' category in terms of public health measures around COVID-19. For this reason, and as many older adults did not have stable WIFI or access to the appropriate technologies for conducting synchronous online discussions, they are particularly underrepresented in this project. Further, Ukraine's national lockdown significantly impacted the country's socio-economic situation, and especially the border regions of Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, as people were prevented from traveling abroad to work, shop, and vacation, as was done almost daily prior to the pandemic. In June 2020, western Ukraine also experienced the largest flood in the last fifty years, which added further socio-economic challenges for the population of Zakarpattia, especially those living in rural communities. From an ethical standpoint, and to ensure no harm was done to my participants (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004), I consequently chose not to recruit a significant number of participants for online research in the spring of 2020, even though the number of participants from Zakarpattia was already smaller than the other two regions. I believe this was the most appropriate and ethical choice given the circumstances, and do not think the findings were drastically affected so as to change the entire project.

[46] The number of interview participants is approximately the same across all three regions.

Since this project analyses the ways cartography and nationalism intersect and overlap, a number of factors in addition to the COVID-19 pandemic may have also influenced the analysis and conclusions in ways not explicitly considered. For instance, this study does not overtly focus on gender, sexuality, class, or race, or the ways these subjectivities and other crucial components of identity might inherently impact national identifications or an individuals' understanding of and attachments to various spatial scales (Skey, 2011). As identity is fluid, as well as spatially and temporally contingent, it must be recognised that the responses given by those involved in this research also likely depended upon when and where they participated, as well as the others who participated with them (especially in the case of the focus groups). Consequently, it is difficult to assess or create forswear generalisations about the perceptions, beliefs, and understandings of individuals independent of the context in which they are embedded, as is the reality for all interpretive research projects. Nonetheless, the rigour and value of this research can be seen through its direct exploration of actors within their own environments (Bunzl, 2008; Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012; Wedeen, 2010), which reveals the intricate and complex ways nationalism is manifested at the local level in Ukraine in "everyday contexts by everyday actors" (Blee and Currier 2007: 158). Although offering only a snapshot of a time and place that can never be replicated, especially due to the pandemic, generality and 'large conclusions' can still be drawn from the 'densely textured facts' found in this thesis (Bunzl, 2008; Geertz, 1973), particularly those relating to social practices (Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008), which can help us better explain larger socio-political phenomena like nationalism and particular contexts like borderland areas and post-Soviet states. The inherent value of this in-depth and meaning-centred analysis of nationalism in borderland Ukraine is accordingly demonstrated in the following chapters.

Part II

Imagining Homelands Within Borderlands

Chapter 5:
Zakarpattia as 'In-Between'

"[W]e need to take care of [Zakarpattia] as, sort of, the land that can serve as a bridge between Ukraine, on the other side of the Carpathians, and the EU."

Young adult (2020)
Uzhhorod, Zakarpattia

"We are very attached to Europe and Ukraine since we are located at the edge."

Middle-aged adult (2020)
Mukachevo, Zakarpattia

"It is all okay here…It is the west of Ukraine…The edge of Ukraine."

Older adult (2020)
Uzhhorod, Zakarpattia

5.1 Introduction to Part II

Part II is the main empirical contribution of this thesis and is divided into three chapters to uncover the lived experiences in the representational spaces that are borderlands. Drawing on focus group discussions, 'elite' interviews, participant observations, and maps drawn through cognitive mapping exercises during in-person and online fieldwork, the following three chapters investigate how residents in Zakarpattia, Chernihiv, and Kirovohrad understand and experience space, place, and territory, as well as their nuanced attachments to various spatial scales. Chapters 5 and 6 centre on the borderland experience at the micro-level and territorial scale of Ukraine by analysing the perspectives of individuals living in the state's peripheral regions of Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, respectively. Chapter 7, conversely, approaches Ukraine as a borderland on a macro-level level—as the geographical area between Europe and Russia—and examines the views of citizens living in the state's centremost region of Kirovohrad. To uncover the complexities, contradictions, and intersubjectivities embedded in local experiences, the first section of each chapter is thenceforth subdivided by age group: young adults (aged 18-29 years), middle-aged adults (30-49 years), and older adults (50 years and older). By bringing the residents' verbal and visual expressions of their spatial awareness together with statistical analyses using data from the cognitive maps, the second sections of the chapters in Part II explore how experiences with territoriality, borderity, and locality shape ordinary peoples' conceptualisations of homeland and senses of national belonging. Specifically, the three chapters collectively show the continuous ethnosymbolic ties to local places for national groups, and thus, the value of studying representational spaces for shedding light on the dynamism of nationalism in the contemporary state system. The wider political implications of the findings, especially around citizenship and nationality are explored in Part III.

5.2 Conceptualising Zakarpattia Within Territorial Ukraine

5.2.1 Cognitively Mapping Place

The opening idioms show that Ukraine's complex history and geographical location beside four EU member states has greatly implicated life in Zakarpattia as both a territorial borderland region in Ukraine and part of the larger borderland of Europe. For this reason, one cannot truly begin to understand the multifaceted and subjective experiences of individuals in Zakarpattia without first considering how space is interpreted, understood, and imbued with meaning by the people who live there. In approaching Zakarpattia as a representational space (Lefebvre, 1991), the chapter begins by unpacking the ways local residents conceptualise themselves within a borderland by drawing on empirical materials collected during in-person fieldwork in Zakarpattia in September 2018 and June 2019, and online in May and June 2020. The second part of this chapter expands on these findings to expound how residents' spatial awareness and relations to certain spatial scales, particularly their region, shape their perceptions of and attachments to their homeland.

Young Adults (18-29 years)

When analysing how Ukrainian citizens understand their state's territory and their placement within it, the insights from Zakarpattia's young adults are particularly noteworthy. Although this age cohort has only lived in independent Ukraine with its current borders, they appear to be well-informed about the country's territorial landscape, their position within it, and its (and their own) relation to other states.[47] Without querying or using the Internet, the young participants were repeatedly able to identify the territory of Ukraine and their own locales from the unlabeled maps of Eastern Europe. While not prompted to mark any particular place, this age group precisely and accurately marked where they and their cities/towns are situated (see Table 5.4). In fact, the youngest participants included in this research appeared to have the best sense of their location within Ukraine and Eastern Europe when compared to the elder residents of the same region. This was further exhibited by the fact that young participants often assisted the older participants in the same focus group when labeling their maps. Also remarkable is that the young adults used simple marks and only depicted their municipalities; no highlights or changes were made to Ukraine's territorial borders on their maps, nor were any references made to the larger territory of the country (see Table 5.1).

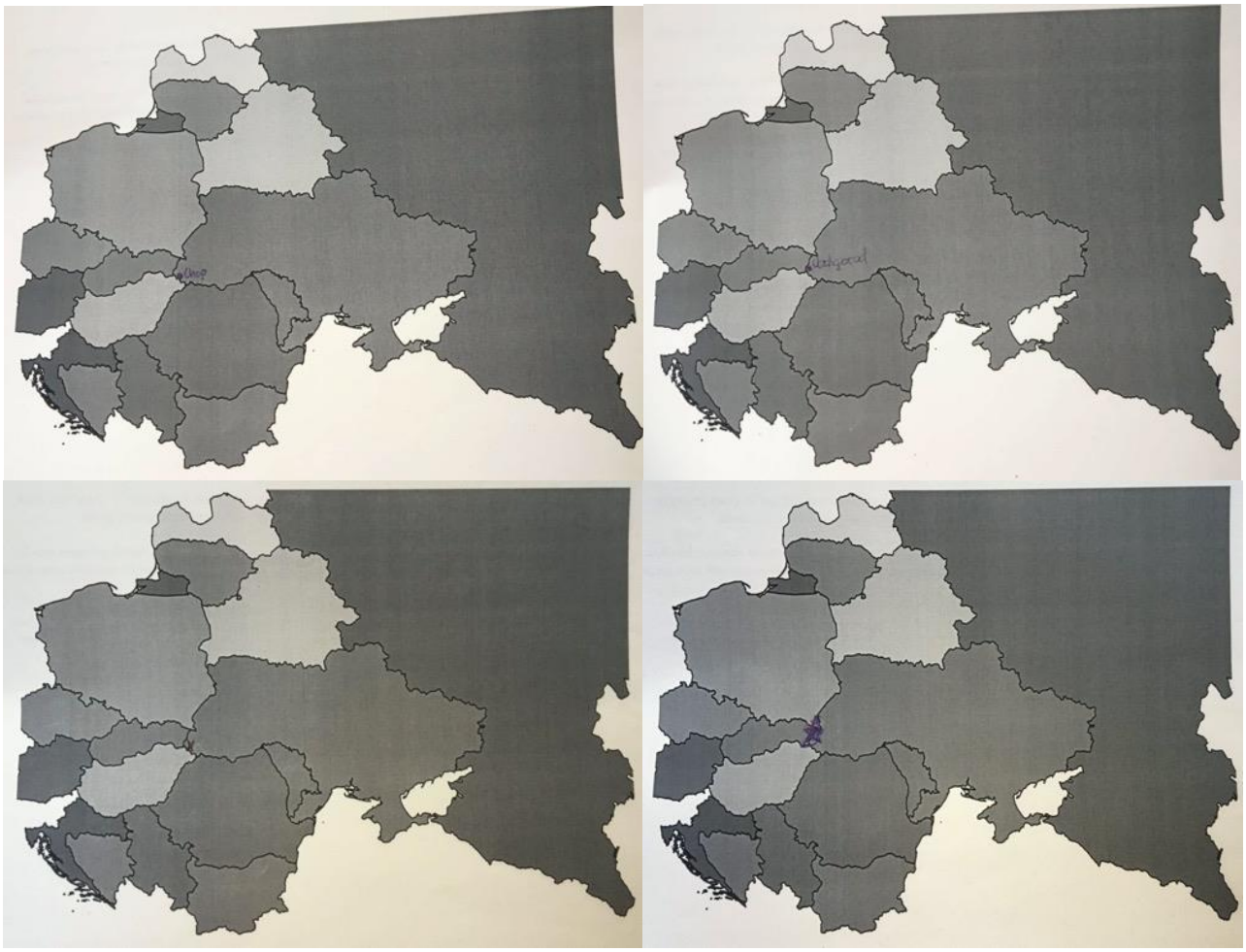
Table 5.1. Difference between the EF and OF of spatial binaries on map #1 drawn by young adults.[48]

Significantly More Frequent	Significantly Less Frequent	Within Expected Range
Locale (in non-Ukrainian) – 53.3% (OF = 8, EF = 2.9, AR = 4.2) Locale (in English) – 53.3% (OF = 8, EF = 2.9, AR = 4.2)		Ukraine as entire country – 0.0% (OF = 0, EF = 0.4, AR = -0.8) Highlighted Ukraine's current territorial borders – 0.0% (OF = 0, EF = 0.4, AR = -0.8)

[47] 'Current borders' refers to the territorial borders found on contemporary maps of Ukraine since 1991, which include Donetsk, Luhansk, and Crimea as part of the state's territory. At the time of writing, Crimea and parts of Donbas are under Russian occupation.

[48] N = 15. Only the statistically significant (p-value ≤ 0.05) binaries are included.

Figure 5.1. Select young adults' responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1.



The top two maps were drawn in Uzhhorod on 18 June 2019; bottom left in Shyshlivtsi on 18 June 2019; and bottom right in Velyka Dobron' on 17 June 2019.

The young adults were also the only individuals from Zakarpattia to regularly include names of places on their maps. Even though this was not required nor explicitly suggested in the exercise's instructions, nine of the fifteen respondents added the name of their locale to their maps. Importantly, more than half of the total number of young participants, and eight of the nine who added names, wrote their labels in a non-Ukrainian language (i.e. English), while only one wrote in Ukrainian (see Table 5.1). Although the use of English as the non-Ukrainian language for labeling may be partly in response to me and my positionality as a researcher from an English-speaking country, the fact that the tongue appeared significantly more often than expected across the young adults' maps suggests this age group collectively has a relatively high level of education and knowledge about the world, including possible training in foreign languages. Furthermore, it is striking that so few maps were labeled in Ukrainian, as it is the country's official language, and that the choice of a non-English language was English rather than Russian or one of the languages of the countries neighbouring Zakarpattia, such as Hungarian or Slovakian. Also noteworthy is that the individuals who did not write the name of their city or town on their map still placed some type of mark in almost the exact location of what would be their hometown, or the municipality

where the focus groups took place. When taken together, these observations suggest young people in Zakarpattia are not only aware of where they are situated within the territory of Ukraine, and are able to demonstrate this through representations of space, but are confident in their understandings. The findings additionally indicate the young adults very much conceptualise themselves both within the distinct territory of Ukraine and the wider context of Eastern Europe. Remarkably, no notable differences were observed between the maps or the approaches taken by the young participants in urban and rural locales.

Middle-aged Adults (30-49 years)

In contrast to the young adults, the middle-aged participants in Zakarpattia were less precise when locating themselves within the territory of Ukraine and the larger geographical area that is Eastern Europe. Although their demarcations were slightly unclear and less defined than those made by the young adults, most participants from this age group were still able to identify Ukraine's territory and their municipalities on an unlabeled map (see Figure 5.2). Whilst some individuals used different types of marks and checks on their maps, rather than simple dots, they still demonstrated accuracy when distinguishing their locations (see Table 5.4). Unlike the young adults, though, the middle-aged participants wrote the name of their locales at a rate significantly less often than expected—the first map presented in Figure 5.2 was the only one drawn by a participant from this age group to include a place name, which was written in Ukrainian. Given this finding, it is thus not surprising that place names were written on the maps in non-Ukrainian languages at a frequency less than expected across all maps by middle-aged interlocutors. While adding names of locales was not a specific instruction for the cognitive mapping exercises, the distinction between the regular appearance of place names on the younger age groups' maps and the lack thereof on those by the middle-aged participants of the same region is particular noteworthy. Also remarkable and starkly contrasting the findings from the younger adults' maps is that none of the spatial binaries appeared more frequently than expected on the middle-aged participants' maps.

Table 5.2. Difference between the EF and OF of spatial binaries on map #1 drawn by middle-aged adults.[49]

Significantly More Frequent	Significantly Less Frequent	Within Expected Range
	Locale (in non-Ukrainian) – 0.0% (OF = 0, EF = 4.0, AR = -3.1) Locale (in English) – 0.0% (OF = 0, EF = 4.0, AR = -3.1)	Ukraine as entire country – 0.0% (OF = 0, EF = 0.5, AR = -1.0) Highlighted Ukraine's current territorial borders – 0.0% (OF = 0, EF = 0.5, AR = -1.0)

[49] N = 21. Only statistically significant (p-value ≤ 0.05) binaries are included here.

Figure 5.2. Select middle-aged adults' responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1.

The top left map was drawn in Mali Heivtsi on 16 June 2019; top right in Velyka Dobron' on 17 June 2019; bottom left in Storozhnytsya on 19 June 2019; and bottom right in Shyshlivtsi on 18 June 2019.

Although not definitive, these observations suggest the middle-aged residents in Zakarpattia may be comparatively less confident or even less knowledgeable about their spatial locations within representations of space. Supporting this supposition is the uncertainty and apprehension overtly demonstrated by the middle-aged adults during the focus group discussions—participants regularly consulted each other and the younger individuals when marking their maps, especially when presented with the mapping exercise for the first time. In some instances, the middle-aged adults used their phones to look at photos and maps for reference in order to confirm to themselves and others that the places they had marked were indeed 'correct' when compared to standards maps of Ukraine. Whilst not every participant used their phones, those who did, unsurprisingly, had more precise markings than their colleagues who did not. The bottom left map in Figure 5.2 also shows that not every middle-aged participant was able to identify the territory of Ukraine on their own, nor their location within the country.[50] Of note here is that this individual was the only one who denoted a country that is not Ukraine (see Table 5.4), although her

[50] Notably, the participant who drew this map stated in the focus group that she lived in Zakarpattia, which she described as "Ukraine's westernmost region" (not Czech Republic which she marked on her map).

words suggest she may have accidentally marked Czech Republic rather than Zakarpattia. Nevertheless, both the map drawings and statistics presented in Table 5.2 indicate the interlocutors from this age group may still be less confident in their spatial awareness or knowledgeable about Eastern Europe's geography, at least when compared to the younger participants included in this study. When taken together, the maps drawn by this age group also reveal that Zakarpattia's middle-aged residents cognise themselves in a way similar to the younger participants: as living within Ukraine's territory or, at the very least, on the very 'edge' of Ukraine's territory.

Older Adults (50 years and older)

Of the three age groups, the older adults were the least precise when marking their maps. As is demonstrated in Figure 5.3, their markings were neither as clear as those found on the maps by the younger two groups, nor did any of their maps include place names. Furthermore, the older adults' maps were less accurate than those of the other participants, as could be seen with more instances wherein the maps were labeled or marked in locations that did not match the places where the participants said they were from or where the focus groups took place. The lack of precision suggests the participants from this age group may be the least cognitively aware of their locations within the larger territory of Ukraine and geography of Eastern Europe. This was acutely observed during the focus group discussions, specifically in the villages of Storozhnytsya (located approximately two kilometres from the border shared with Slovakia) and Velyka Dobron' (located approximately eighteen kilometres from the borders shared with Slovakia and Hungary). In both instances, young adults in the focus groups helped the older participants identify the location of Ukraine and their locales on the maps, as the latter explicitly stated they did "not know where" their villages were located, and pointed to different parts of their maps while asking if "[t]hat is Ukraine?"[51] While divulging that their spatial awareness is less than that of the younger residents, this uncertainty further reveals that representations of territory are not necessarily a 'given' in the elderly participants lives, nor a tool to help them understand spatial relationships (Harley, 1989). Importantly, it must be stated that the markings by the older adults which appeared to be 'incorrect,' when compared to where they stated they lived or where the focus groups took place, may actually be other places they feel attached to or have lived throughout their lifetimes given their ages and the possibility that they have previously moved for work and education, including with their families, both during the USSR and following its collapse (Table 5.4).

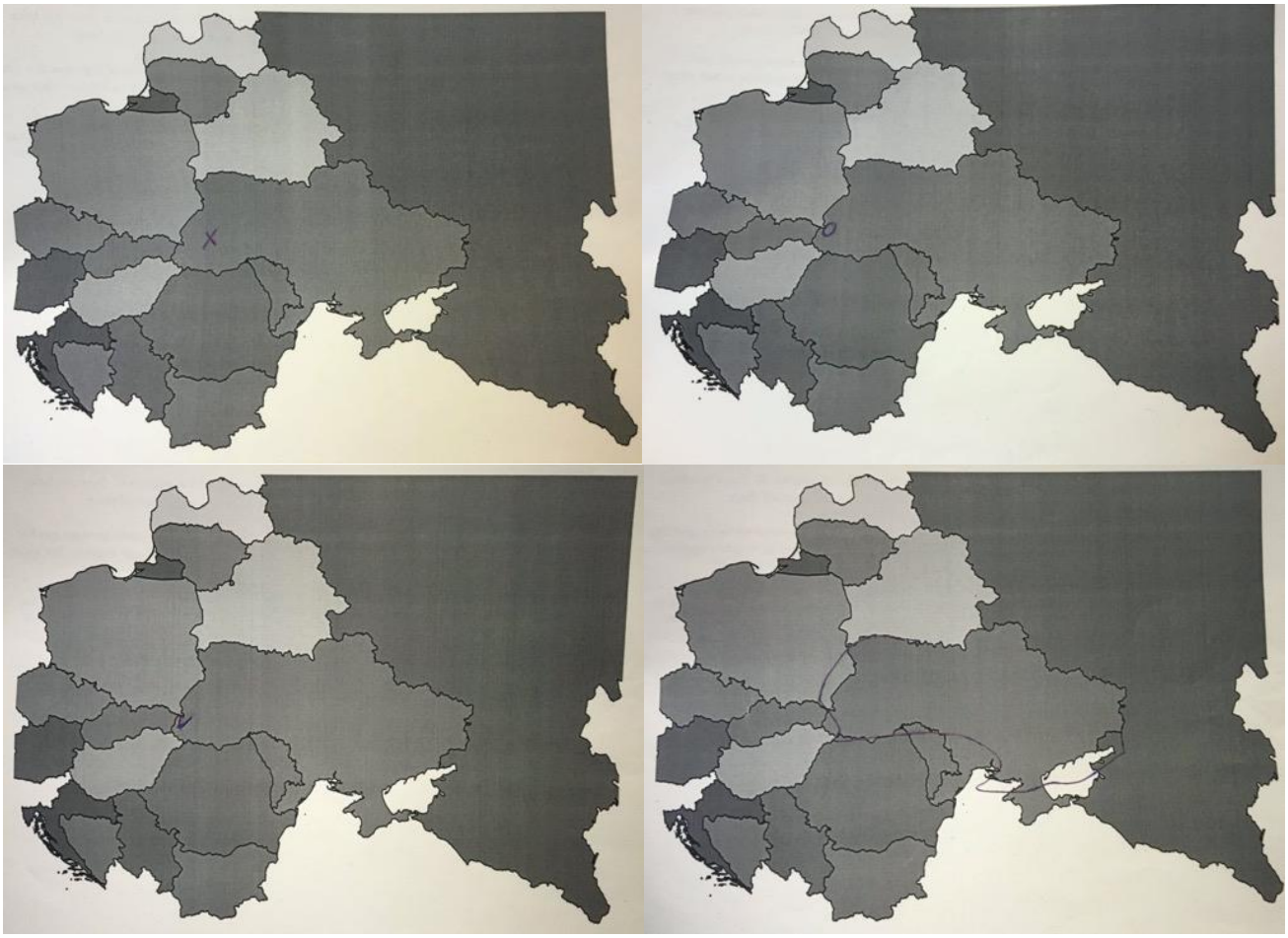
Table 5.3. Difference between the EF and OF of spatial binaries on map #1 drawn by older adults.[52]

Significantly More Frequent	Significantly Less Frequent	Frequency Within Expected Range
Ukraine as entire country – 16.7% (OF = 1, EF = 0.1, AR = 2.5) Highlighted Ukraine's current territorial borders – 16.7% (OF = 1, EF = 0.1, AR = 2.5)		Locale (in non-Ukrainian) – 0.0% (OF = 0, EF = 1.1, AR = -1.3) Locale (in English) – 0.0% (OF = 0, EF = 1.1, AR = -1.3)

[51] Focus group conducted in Storozhnytsya on 19 June 2019.

[52] N = 6. Only statistically significant (p-value ≤ 0.05) binaries are included here.

Figure 5.3. Select older adults' responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1.



The top left map was drawn in Shyshlivtsi on 18 June 2019; top right in Storozhnytsya on 19 June 2019; and bottom two in Palad'-Komarivtsi on 19 June 2019.

It must furthermore be noted that a map drawn by an individual from this age group was the only one of all drawn by residents of Zakarpattia to highlight the entirety of Ukraine's territory (see bottom right map in Figure 5.3). In contrast to how all other participants approached their maps—particularly by highlighting and/or labeling a specific place when answering where they are from—the author instead indicated he feels a greater sense of attachment to the spatial scale of Ukraine's territory than to the smaller scale of a certain locale below the state.[53] In outlining the post-independence territory of Ukraine without suggesting changes to the borders, the participant consequently showed he understands, and even accepts, how the country's borders are currently drawn. Notably, the maps from this age cohort also display the interlocutors' awareness of their locations within Ukraine, specifically as all placed their locales within the country's contemporary borders. Although the older participants were less accurate and seemingly less confident than the younger individuals included in this research when placing themselves within

[53] Importantly, this cannot conclusively be discerned based on the map drawings. As the sample size of older adults from Zakarpattia is limited due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this map may also be an outlier; nonetheless, it is still a noteworthy finding that points to the residents' diverging spatial attachments.

representations of Eastern Europe, these findings evidently show that they still cognitively understand themselves and their locales within the larger territory of Ukraine.

Table 5.4. Observed frequencies of stylistic elements on map #1 by all ages.

Stylistic Element	Young Adults (N = 15)	Middle-Aged Adults (N = 21)	Older Adults (N = 6)	Total (N = 42)
Precise dot/checkmark	86.7% (OF = 13)	90.5% (OF = 19)	66.7% (OF = 4)	85.7% (OF = 36)
Erasure/remark	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
More than one place detailed	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Specific place not clearly marked	13.3% (OF = 2)	9.5% (OF = 2)	33.3% (OF = 2)	14.3% (OF = 6)
Different place (locale, region, or country) explicitly denoted	0.0% (OF = 0)	5.0% (OF = 1)	16.7% (OF = 1)	4.8% (OF = 2)

5.2.2 Unpacking Local Attachment

Since cognitive mapping is an exercise that allows people to express their spatial awareness without restrictions or limitations (Pacione, 1978), the places marked on the participants' maps very much indicate the relationships they have with those particular spatial scales. Given Ukraine's Soviet history and mass internal migration within the USSR—to both 'fill up' the constructed national territories (Beissinger, 1997; Brubaker, 1996) and ensure a significant Russian population in the constituent republics so as to promote 'proletarian internationalism' (Smith, 1999) and deter primordial strategies (Roeder, 1991) as was detailed in Chapter 3—it would be expected that contemporary Ukrainian citizens do not feel particularly rooted in their locales or hold strong place attachments (see also Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2017; Wittenberg, 2006). The findings from Zakarpattia are therefore considerably counterintuitive, as even while incongruity can be observed in terms of the spatial awareness of the age groups, the region's inhabitants' attachments to particular locales appear to be stronger than to the territory of Ukraine or its institutions. Even though the younger adults more frequently added place names to their maps, and evidently expressed greater spatial awareness than the older two age groups, the statistics presented above reveal the participants in Zakarpattia almost unanimously emphasised attachment to their locales; only six of all surveyed participants in this region did not clearly denote a specific municipality on the maps drawn during the first mapping exercise (see Table 5.4). As all marks except for one were placed within the territory of Ukraine, the maps collectively indicate the residents conceptualise themselves as situated within the larger entity that is the contemporary Ukrainian state, yet feel stronger affective and behavioural bonds with particular places below the state (Campbell, 2018; Gustafson, 2001a). Though their attachments may exist subconsciously, their decisions to add certain municipalities and place names to their maps when asked where they are from, rather than emphasising their country by highlighting the larger territory of Ukraine or even writing 'Ukraine,' also points to a greater sense of familiarity and ease with these local-level sites (Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977). In this way, the participants' cognitive approaches to their maps insinuate these unique communities are places of particular significance for them (Weinreich et al., 2003), and embedded within

their individual and group consciousness in providing a sense of belonging (Campbell, 2018; Canter, 1997; Groat, 1995; Hubbard, 2005; Tuan, 1977).

The contributors' deep attachments to certain locales were further divulged during the focus group discussions. Long-standing connections with particular sites were overtly expressed through many remarks resembling the following: "I love this place and I would never leave it" and the "place where I live…[i]t is my favourite place."[54] A similar deep-rooted bond was demonstrated by an elderly woman in the village of Velyka Dobron': after explaining that the residents "like it here very much," she offered a personal tour of the community and extended an invitation to her home so that she could show how special her village is.[55] These expressions of attachment very clearly support the findings from the cognitive mapping exercise in suggesting that local places hold significant importance for the residents of Zakarpattia. Notably, the participants who conveyed the strongest feelings of attachment to their communities during the focus groups were from the middle-aged and older age groups, living in rural areas, and had minimal travel experience, especially internationally. Whilst this is not especially surprising given the reality that rural settings typically have more stable social networks (including during the USSR as Soviet policies were felt more in urban centres)—which have subsequently aided in the intergenerational replication and perpetuation of particular political attachments and identities (Peisakhin, 2012)—it must be stated that when speaking about the places they feel most attached to, participants voiced that their feelings are directly linked to their locales' idiosyncrasies, including the unique historical sites, sounds, smells, micro-cultures, and behaviours (Gustafson, 2001a; 2001b; Hay, 1998; Tuan, 1977). The historical connections were similarly reflected by many participants' positive evaluation of and sense of familiarity with their particular townships because of their ancestral associations with the places (Breuilly, 1996; Coakley, 2018; Weinreich et al., 2003); participants in Mali Heivtsi, for example, explained their grandparents had been born in the same village, and thus, the community is not only their home, but "[their] culture is [t]here. Traditions."[56] The participants from this community also explained their village is surrounded by two others—Velyki Heivtsi and Rus'ki Heivtsi—which were founded on Ukrainian and Rusyn cultures, especially Rus'ki Heivtsi, as the Rusyn people who had historically lived in the Carpathian mountains were re-settled in the lower lands.[57] In the village of Palad'-Komarivtsi, interlocutors likewise expressed their familial attachments, referencing the fact that their parents, themselves, and now their children had all been born, grew up, and even married in the same town and, accordingly, their entire social networks are located in the community. Disclosed through the participants' statements is hence an underlying belief of shared memories and traditions within the particular place where they reside (Smith, 1996; 1998; 2009). Further divulged through these strong attachments is the reality that certain locales have been imbued with historical and socially constructed meanings by the people for whom the places hold importance (Agnew, 2011; Gustafson, 2001a; 2001b; Hay, 1998; Hubbard, 2005; Tuan, 1977).

At the same time, the residents showed what has been stated in previous literature in that their attachments to certain places not only stem from a felt connection to a physical site, but intimate and powerful associations with the other people living there as part of a long-standing, historical community

[54] Focus groups conducted in Palad'-Komarivtsi on 19 June 2019 and online on 4 June 2020, respectively.

[55] Focus group conducted on 17 June 2019.

[56] Focus group conducted on 16 June 2019.

[57] The ethnonym 'Rusyn' predominantly refers to the people living in Zakarpattia who historically come from the Eastern Carpathians/Carpathian Ruthenia and in the borderland areas where Ukraine, Slovakia, Romania, and Poland meet (for more, see Magosci and Pop, 2005). It must be noted that this was the only reference to Rusyn people or culture by participants from any of the studied regions.

(Coakley, 2018; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977). Specifically, the focus group discussions highlighted the importance of knowing and having good relations with the others in one's community, including the place-bound traditions, local organisations, and friendships established in the physical site (Gustafson, 2001b; Hay, 1998). Such was most clearly disclosed through repeated mentions of the fact that it is the other people living in the same cities or villages who help the participants feel 'at home.' One woman, for example, explained she had moved to Palad'-Komarivtsi from another village seventeen years ago, but because of the "friendly and nice people" in the village, she has always felt "as if [she] were at home."[58] This participant specifically divulged she feels comfortable because of the good friends she met after joining the women's choir five years ago. A similar bond between residents of the same village was described in other focus groups, too, such as in Shyshlivtsi wherein several women expounded they would not move from their village because everyone knows each other and therefore they always know where to find help when they need it.[59] Although these sentiments were typically expressed by the middle and older participants, it is important to note that several young people still demonstrated strong attachments to their local communities, especially those living in more rural communities. A young interlocutor in the village of Storozhnytsya, for instance, explained that while she dreams of living in Europe because she believes there is no future for young people in Ukraine: "at home (in Storozhnytsya) it is better… [because] many friends…I am at home."[60] Other young people equally expressed that their friends and family are, in their opinion, the most important feature of their hometowns, as the locales would hold minimal significance without them, and life there "does not [and would not] matter."[61] Whilst strong local attachments in modern Ukraine may appear counterintuitive in light of Soviet history—although it must still be acknowledged that Zakarpattia joined the Ukrainian SSR later than other regions and after *korenizatsiya* had ended—the findings nonetheless show the symbolic meaning of these primordial sites for the residents of the region in tying them together through emotional connections, social networking, and a broader sense of community (Breuilly, 1996; Hobsbawm, 1992; Muller, 2008; Smith, 1996; 1998; 2009; Wilcox, 2004).

5.3 Borderland Zakarpattia as Homeland

5.3.1 Zakarpattia as Homeland

Beyond the participants' affectual bonds with their particular locales, verbal nuances from the focus groups and interviews revealed the larger region wherein these communities are located actually holds the greatest significance. Evidencing this is the fact that interlocutors across all focus groups, types of municipalities, and age groups routinely asserted 'Zakarpattia' is the first place that comes to their minds when asked where they are from. In Mali Heivtsi, for example, all participants stated they are first and foremost from Zakarpattia, and identify "[m]ore with oblast" than with their village or country.[62] Similarly, in the village of Palad'-Komarivtsi, residents unanimously explained they feel a sense of belonging to their village, but their attachments are strongest to Zakarpattia. Even the few interlocutors who felt an equal sense of connection with their locale and their region, or even a slightly stronger relation with their locale than their region, still explicitly conveyed a relationship with Zakarpattia, such as by mentioning the region or using it as a point of reference when describing the location of their towns and villages. This was exemplified by the

[58] Focus group conducted on 19 June 2019.
[59] Focus group conducted on 18 June 2019.
[60] Focus group conducted on 19 June 2019.
[61] Focus group conducted in Uzhhorod on 18 June 2019.
[62] Focus group conducted on 16 June 2019.

comments of one middle-aged woman, who stated she feels attached to both her region and her village, but typically tells people she is from Zakarpattia because "nobody knows where Mali Heivtsi is."[63] An older woman in Storozhnytsya likewise outlined that she feels attached to both her village and region through a depiction of where she lives: "I live by the river, Slovachyni…Zakarpattia, well, maybe, but still Storozhnytsya it is."[64] In addition to showing the residents' deep love and attachment to their municipalities, and especially those of the older age groups—because their particular locale "is [their] home"—the numerous references to Zakarpattia as the place where they 'are from' demonstrates the affectual bonds at the spatial scale of their region are stronger than to their individual locales.[65]

Figure 5.4. Response to 'where are you from?' on map #1.

Map drawn in Palad'-Komarivtsi on 19 June 2019 by older participant.

Further reinforcing the intrinsic importance of Zakarpattia is how participants vernacularly talked about and expressed feelings of attachment to the region, explicitly using the terms 'home,' 'homeland,' and 'motherland.' Although these words and 'fatherland' have traditionally referenced the territory belonging to Ukrainian people (Gradirovsky, 1999), many participants asserted that they consider Zakarpattia to be a more significant spatial area as they are "first from Zakarpattia, then from Ukraine."[66] As demonstration: one political figure asserted she "was born in, and will always be *from*, Zakarpattia" and accordingly feels most "at home" when she crosses the Carpathian Mountains from the neighbouring regions into Zakarpattia.[67] This homely sense of attachment was likewise depicted by other participants who stated the region's inhabitants almost always "come back home to Transcarpathia" after traveling and

[63] Focus group conducted on 16 June 2019.
[64] Focus group conducted on 19 June 2019.
[65] Focus group conducted in Palad'-Komarivtsi on 19 June 2019.
[66] Interview conducted in Uzhhorod on 18 September 2018.
[67] Interview conducted in Uzhhorod on 20 September 2018.

migrating abroad because they feel so "attached to their motherland" and have no desire to ever move from the region.[68] A young 'elite' even openly detailed her own experiences, explaining that she has traveled and worked extensively around both Ukraine and the world, but, ultimately, always "comes back home" because she loves it and wants to contribute to change in the region.[69] This powerful connection to Zakarpattia was echoed in a nearly identical statement from a young woman from Vynohradiv:

> I see a lot of countries and my main job is to travel to different countries, visit different events and projects, but still I always want to come back home, because it is mine, it is my motherland, I want to contribute in development of this place, because I belong here. You anyways want to come back home, because you are attached here. It happened to me several times to live abroad for a month and I feel uncomfortable, I want to go back home. Even in Kyiv, if I have a chance, I come back here.[70]

The participants' desire to help develop Zakarpattia in a socio-economic sense, as is depicted in the above quote, thus reinforces the region as a homeland, or a place which supports the residents' livelihoods (Tuan, 1977). Moreover, the high level of comfort with and in Zakarpattia also portrays the occupants' strong attachments to their region, and its symbolic construction as their 'home' (Altman and Low, 1992; Gustafson, 2001a; 2001b; Low, 1992; Smith, 1996; 1998; 2009). Still, it is noteworthy that 'home,' 'homeland,' and 'motherland' were the precise words used to describe Zakarpattia, rather than the alternatives thought to be used more often in contemporary Ukraine to define a smaller area as a homeland (see Gradirovsky, 1999). Though 'fatherland' was not referenced at all, the interchangeable use of the other terms signifies they are thought to be synonymous and indicative of similar sentimental and behavioural connections, hence pointing to the residents' conceptualisations of the region as their homeland.

Similarly reinforcing Zakarpattia's homeland status, although contrary to what might be expected thirty years after Ukraine's independence, is that the contributors' attachments to their smaller region nested within the larger territory of Ukraine are more significant than to their state. Whilst the residents very clearly showed they cognise themselves, their locales, and their region to be "part of Ukraine," they expressed during both the focus groups and 'elite' interviews that they are "from Ukraine, but [predominantly] Zakarpattia."[71] One individual elucidated that contemporary residents feel a "kind of schizophrenia" in being attached to both their region and state, but stressed they are first and foremost "native" to the region.[72] These feelings of (de)attachment were most acutely exhibited when those participating in this research discussed the location of their cities and villages. When describing his city, for example, one young man in Uzhhorod outlined that "of course it is Ukraine's land. Definitely we understand where we are living, not a problem…legally, everything is in Ukrainian…but in our heads, it is like Transcarpathia, our region."[73] Related sentiments were also repeated by others when asked about

[68] Interviews conducted online on 3 June 2020 and 29 May 2020, respectively. It was outlined that Ukrainian citizens typically stay abroad for three to six months before returning to the region; however, several residents explained many people working abroad returned during the COVID-19 pandemic as they were worried about the situation in Ukraine.

[69] Interview conducted online on 21 May 2020.

[70] Interview conducted online on 2 June 2020.

[71] Focus group conducted in Mali Heivtsi on 16 June 2019.

[72] Interview conducted online on 28 May 2020. Similar sentiments were also expressed in focus groups in both Shyshlivtsi on 18 June 2019 and Velyka Dobron' on 17 June 2019.

[73] Focus group conducted on 18 June 2019. 'Transcarpathia' is the English variation of 'Zakarpattia' and was used by some participants who spoke in English. The statements using 'Transcarpathia' have not been changed from their original form, although all other references have consistently used or been translated from their original form to 'Zakarpattia.'

whether they feel attached to Ukraine, such as the middle-aged woman in Mali Heivtsi who affirmed, "[h]onestly no. Maybe, somebody has a different opinion, but here is mine," or the interlocutor in Storozhnytsya who explained that she feels a much stronger attachment to her region and so she "would not say 'Ukraine.'"[74] Other individuals took firmer stances, going so far as to explain they would say they are 'from Ukraine' only if a foreigner asked them, as they recognise foreigners may not understand where Zakarpattia is located.[75] A participant from Palad'-Komarivtsi furthermore showed their attachment to the region over both a particular locale and Ukraine through the mapping exercise, during which they explicitly distinguished the smaller geographical area of Zakarpattia from the state's larger territory (see Figure 5.4). In highlighting a clear distinction between the inside and outside of Zakarpattia, this map drawing and the above sentiments align with prior works in demonstrating the region, as a smaller and more 'intimate' geographic scale, is locational and defined by the occupants through its relation to other spatial structures within territorial Ukraine (Agnew, 2001; Löw and Weidenhaus, 2017; Lukermann, 1964; Paasi, 1996).

While most participants indicated that they acknowledge their region's location within contemporary Ukraine, they also specified—both implicitly and explicitly—that a distinction exists between their region and the larger socio-political reality of the state, or "the rest of Ukraine."[76] This cognitive divorce was overtly depicted by one academic who highlighted that "when people leave Zakarpattia and go to Kyiv, Kirovohrad, Chernihiv, Lviv, they say: 'we are going to Ukraine,' as if it is not Ukraine here."[77] A sense of detachment from the larger territory of Ukraine was similarly underscored by other residents, too, such as a young interlocutor in a focus group in Uzhhorod who clarified, "we identify this region as Transcarpathia…No one says Ukraine…Ukraine is there and Transcarpathia is here."[78] In another conversation, both the director and an assistant professor from an institute for higher education reinforced Zakarpattia's separation from what they called "big Ukraine" by explaining the region is actually geographically closer to several European capitals—including Budapest, Prague, Bratislava, Warsaw, Belgrade, Bucharest, Vienna, and Zagreb—than to Ukraine's capital city, Kyiv, which is more than 800 kilometres away.[79] The pair further expounded that they—like most residents in the region—fittingly recognise Zakarpattia to be a "small part of the country," whereas the term 'Ukraine' refers to the "big part of the country," or the area on the other side of the Carpathian Mountains.[80] The mountains were additionally referenced by many other participants when discussing the region's particular location; it was most commonly stated that since Zakarpattia is positioned on the territorial peripheries of Ukraine, it is "isolated from [both] Ukraine and Europe by the borders and Carpathians."[81] This distinction was also seen through the map drawings from the second mapping exercise, as residents from various age groups and in both urban and rural locales routinely distinguished the geographical area of Zakarpattia from Ukraine's territory on their maps (see Figure 5.5). In fact, 31.7 percent of the participants indicated this division by drawing a line along the region's perimeter where the Carpathian Mountains are found, thus separating Zakarpattia from the state's twenty-four smaller regional administrative units (see Table 5.5). Of

[74] Focus groups conducted on 16 June 2019 and 19 June 2019, respectively.

[75] This comment is particularly interesting as it was a foreigner (myself) who asked this question; however, a gatekeeper was also present and may have prompted this nuanced statement.

[76] Interview conducted in Uzhhorod on 20 September 2018.

[77] Interview conducted online on 24 May 2020.

[78] Focus group conducted on 18 June 2019.

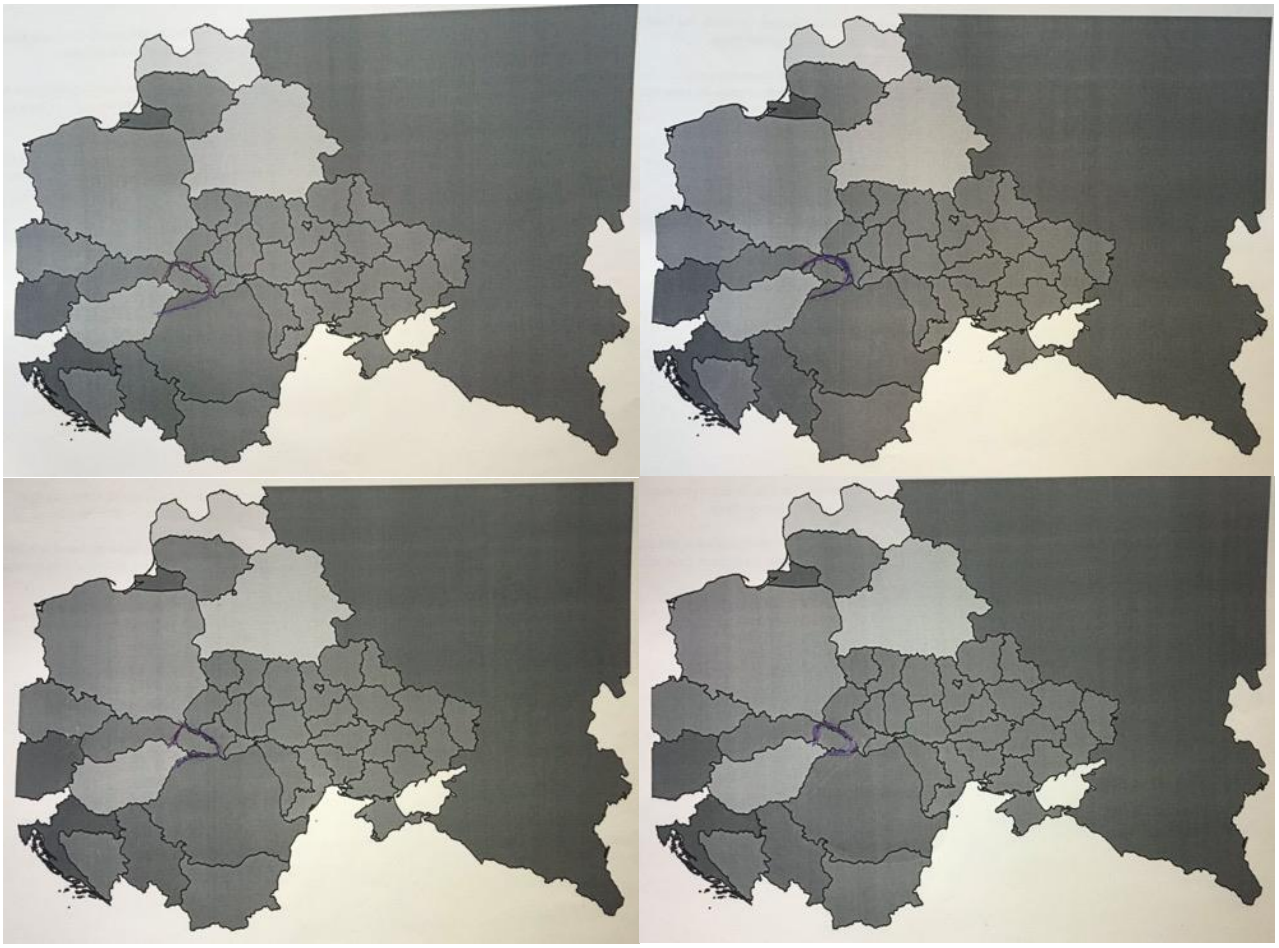
[79] Interview conducted in Uzhhorod on 18 September 2018.

[80] Interview conducted in Uzhhorod on 18 September 2018. Of note, the Carpathian Mountains do align closely with the region's peripheries.

[81] Interview conducted online on 30 May 2020.

all participants, the only person who highlighted the territory of Ukraine during the second exercise was the same older man who had outlined the territorial borders on his first map (see bottom right map in Figure 5.3). In showing the region's physical detachment from Ukraine, these findings thenceforth align with the existing literature on place attachments in implying the precise section of space that is Zakarpattia is collectively experienced and realised as meaningful for the region's residents, even whilst these feelings do not necessarily extend to the entirety of Ukraine (see Brubaker, 2005; Kaiser, 2002; Lovell, 1998; Safran, 2005; Tuan, 1977). They also align with Agnew (2001) and Paasi (1996) in showing the significance of institutionalised regions for groups and individuals at the grassroots. Of note, Zakarpattia's separation from the rest of Ukraine—both felt/imagined and topographical/physical—is also etymologically reinforced by its name: 'Zakarpattia' directly translates to 'the land after Karpaty.'[82]

Figure 5.5. Select responses to 'where are you from?' on map #2.



The top two maps were drawn by young adults in Velyka Dobron' on 16 June 2019, and bottom two on 19 June 2019 in Palad'-Komarivtsi by young and older adults, respectively.

[82] In Ukrainian, 'za' (за) in Zakarpattia (Закарпаття) translates to 'from' or 'after,' whilst 'Karpaty' (Карпати) refers to the Carpathian Mountains.

Table 5.5. Observed frequencies of binaries on map #2 by all ages.[83]

Stylistic Element	Young Adults (N = 15)	Middle-Aged Adults (N = 20)	Older Adults (N = 6)	Total (N = 41)
Distinct and labeled locale	33.3% (OF = 5)	15.0% (OF = 3)	0.0% (OF = 0)	19.5% (OF = 8)
Changed Ukraine's territorial borders	33.3% (OF = 5)	45.0% (OF = 9)	33.3% (OF = 2)	39.0% (OF = 16)
Erased territorial borders between Ukraine and EU	0.0% (OF = 0)	5.0% (OF = 1)	16.7% (OF = 1)	4.9% (OF = 2)
Erased territorial borders between Ukraine and Russia	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Zakarpattia separated from Ukraine	33.3% (OF = 5)	35.0% (OF = 7)	16.7% (OF = 1)	31.7% (OF = 13)
Chernihiv separated from Ukraine	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Zakarpattia with Hungary	33.3% (OF = 5)	25.0% (OF = 5)	16.7% (OF = 1)	26.8% (OF = 11)
Zakarpattia with Poland	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Zakarpattia with Romania	0.0% (OF = 0)	5.0% (OF = 1)	0.0% (OF = 0)	2.4% (OF = 1)
Zakarpattia with Slovakia	6.7% (OF = 1)	20.0% (OF = 4)	0.0% (OF = 0)	12.2% (OF = 5)
Chernihiv with Belarus	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Chernihiv with Russia	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)

Also evident through the above sentiments is that the significance attributed to Zakarpattia is connected to the region's ecology and natural environment. This was exhibited by the participants' detailed and frequent references to the region's physical and aesthetic landscape when discussing their regional attachments. In many instances, the respondents described Zakarpattia as a 'very beautiful' place that is even more scenic than other regions in Ukraine. One exemplification is the following quote by a middle-aged participant: "[w]e have many forests here with rivers. The nature here is very picturesque. It is amazing, we have the wonderful air. It is fresh. Not as in other regions. For example, Zaporizhzhia, Mykolaiv. It is a really nice atmosphere here."[84] Similarly, several others stated they love living in Zakarpattia because the mountains, rivers, and temperate climate provide opportunities for hiking, skiing, or simply relaxing and vacationing. Some residents likewise showed their feelings of attachment to the physical environment by referencing the region's landscapes, specifically the trees, forests, and the good "black earth," which provides them with wood and food.[85] One young adult went so far as to label the region "a little country" due to its geographical, cultural, and ideological separation from both Ukraine and the neighbouring EU states because it has its own mountains, beautiful rivers, and climate.[86] The region's geological distinctiveness was purported by others, too, including one 'elite' in Mukachevo who used a similar metaphor when calling Zakarpattia both the "most beautiful place in Ukraine" and a miniature

[83] Fewer participants completed the second exercise as one middle-aged participant in the focus group in Velyka Dobron' on 17 June 2019 left halfway through the discussion.

[84] Focus group conducted online on 4 June 2020.

[85] Focus group conducted in Velyka Dobron' on 17 June 2019.

[86] Focus group conducted in Storozhnytsya on 19 June 2019.

"world" with its own "special climate," mountains, valleys, and vegetation ranging from alpine to subtropics.[87] Through their descriptions of the physical environment, the participants thence exhibited their association with this particular spatial scale below the state, as well as revealing that their feelings of attachment are closely connected to their personal experiences with, and sensuous perceptions of, Zakarpattia's natural elements and landscapes (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992; Häkli, 1999; Hastrup and Olwig, 1997; Hubbard, 2005; Keith and Pile, 1993; Lovell, 1998; Schama, 1995; Tilley, 1994). Since discussions about the region's landscapes arose in focus groups in both urban and rural settings, it can accordingly be determined that feelings of attachment to the more intimate geographical scale of Zakarpattia are shared across the region and not determined by the size or level of urbanisation of the residents' locales.

Still, some individuals articulated they feel Zakarpattia's geographical area is exceptionally unique and should not only be separated from Ukraine by a topographical divide, or even a territorial border, but fully integrated into the neighbouring states' territories. This is demonstrated in Table 5.5, where it can be seen that 39.0 percent of all participants disclosed a desire to alter the contemporary territorial borders around Zakarpattia by either re-drawing the linear divides to include the region within the territory of a neighbouring country or abolishing the territorial borders that currently stand between Ukraine's territory and those of the adjacent states. Several examples of how participants of various ages changed Ukraine's borders are shown in Figure 5.6. Importantly, it must be noted that among those who indicated Zakarpattia should be re-assigned to a different polity, heterogeneous opinions exist regarding which country the land belongs to; most participants specified Zakarpattia should be incorporated into Hungary's territory, although some also indicated it should be part of Slovakia or Romania (see Table 5.5).[88] Especially remarkable is that of the suggested border adjustments, the territorial borders between Zakarpattia and the neighbouring EU states were the only ones referenced—no participants made reference to other border disputes, historical or modern, such as around Crimea, Kuban, Donbas, and Starodubshchyna. Also striking is that a regional 'elite' expressed "only radical people" would want to change the territorial arrangement of Ukraine as most citizens "have adapted" since 1991; however, the above findings from a relatively random sample of residents in Zakarpattia conversely reveals that ordinary people actually hold mixed opinions about where the perimeters of their region (and even Ukraine) should be.[89] While these views, coupled with localised events and sentiments by local political parties of recent years, beg the question of whether underlying separatist sentiments could lead to a situation similar to the ongoing war in eastern Ukraine, participants included in this research explained that the media have overblown the disputes as "there is no issue with separatism" in Zakarpattia, and ethnic Ukrainians very much view ethnic Hungarians "like family."[90] At the same time, though, several participants still indicated they would do anything to protect Zakarpattia's land if an external state attempted to invade, including even starting a war; for instance, one political 'elite' detailed that "[i]f the same happens in Zakarpattia [as in Donbas], the

[87] Interview conducted online on 27 May 2020.

[88] It is noteworthy that no authors suggested Zakarpattia's inclusion within Poland's territory, although this may be because the territorial border between Ukraine and Poland in Zakarpattia is the smallest of those shared with the four neighbouring states, and because fewer inhabitants in the region have historical ties to Poland than the other countries.

[89] Interview conducted in Berehove on 19 September 2018.

[90] Interviews conducted online on 2 June 2020 and in Uzhhorod on 20 September 2018, respectively. Recent examples include efforts by Viktor Orban's Hungarian government to support the development and preservation of the Hungarian language and culture in Ukraine, and the two arsons in February 2018 at the Zakarpattia Society of Hungarian Culture in Uzhhorod by Russian-backed Polish citizens.

same thing, there are many people here, ready to protect our motherland."[91] The region thus does not necessarily appear ripe for separation, as the need to safeguard the land is seemingly more important.

Figure 5.6. Select responses on map #2 depicting changes to Ukraine's borders.

The top two maps were drawn by young adults in Uzhhorod on 18 June 2019, and the bottom two in Palad'-Komarivtsi on 19 June 2019 by middle-aged and older participants, respectively.

Comparable debates also arose during the focus groups and interviews as residents contemplated whether Zakarpattia, and Ukraine more largely, should be considered part of the neighbouring states and, more specifically, Europe.[92] Some participants, such as those who drew the maps in Figure 5.6, showed they did not cognitively acknowledge a separation between their region and Europe and, instead, suggested the boundary line should be removed to unite the two entities. When talking about Zakarpattia, one

[91] Interview conducted online on 27 May 2020.

[92] While 'Europe' and 'European' were regularly referenced, it was revealed through larger discussions that the terms are linguistic placeholders for 'the EU' and the larger values that the organisation represents (such as "respecting laws, protest to violation of rights, being ready to stand for your rights"), rather than Europe in a geographical or continental sense. The aforementioned quote is from an interview conducted online on 27 May 2020.

scholar even overtly asserted, "geographically, it is Europe…[I]n one of the rayons in Zakarpattia, there is the geographical centre of Europe," whilst another individual noted, "Transcarpathia is a (very) original region in Central Europe."[93] Conversely, other participants suggested Zakarpattia is not part of Europe at all, as 'Europe' is an entity separate from both the region and Ukraine. This conceptualisation was clearly illustrated through the use of particular syntaxes, such as the participants' frequent mentions of going 'to Europe.' Demonstrating this point further is one young adult who confessed she aspires to move "to somewhere in Europe," and that even her father tells her, "go please, go to Europe [to work]."[94] Other contributors took more mediated positions in stressing that although Zakarpattia is not "fully European," it is still influenced by the cultural and societal values of its European neighbours.[95] As one political figure further detailed: the local people feel connected to Europe, but "want to live in Zakarpattia" and not in Hungary or other any other country as they generally enjoy life in the region.[96] Again, these findings reinforce that Zakarpattia's residents feel strong ties to their region, but not to the territorial scale of Ukraine nor its institutions, despite the state's thirty year independence.

5.3.2 Constructing Borderland Zakarpattia as Homeland

As is implicitly revealed through the above discussion, the smaller geographical area of Zakarpattia has been imbued with particular meanings through the inhabitants' lived experiences and phenomenologies of locality (Tilley, 1994). These deep-rooted attachments most prominently stem from the construction and perpetuation of various narratives, myths, and historical descriptions of the spatial area of the region as a borderland. The persisting "historical memory and experience" of Zakarpattia was elucidated during several conversations, wherein it was explained that the residents feel innately tied to the land and thus believe their "homeland is Transcarpathia" due to the region's historical fluctuations in state affiliation.[97] Lucidly illustrating how this history is evoked and collectively remembered as part of the region's present-day socio-cultural milieu is a *zhart* (joke) that was frequently cited in an affectionate, yet somewhat serious way, in focus groups and interviews across the region; namely, that the possibility exists for someone from Zakarpattia to have lived in several different countries throughout their lifetime without ever moving from the same town.[98] Further reinforcing this reality was an interlocutor who voiced that his grandfather "had traveled to six countries, though he never left his own home," while participants in Mali Heivtsi explained their village was situated within Austria-Hungary's and Czechoslovakia's territories for several generations and then part of Hungary when their grandparents were born.[99] Another 'elite' individual told a similar story when outlining the life of his elderly companion: "[she] was born in Czech Republic. And at that time, Transcarpathia was a part of Czech Republic…and she lived in Hungary because it was during [the[Second World War. She lived during the *Karpatska Ukraina*…She lived in [the] Soviet state. And now, she is living in Ukraine."[100] Relatedly, many others detailed they live in the same town they were born in, but it

[93] Interview conducted online on 1 June 2020 and focus group conducted in Uzhhorod on 18 June 2019, respectively.

[94] Focus group conducted in Storozhnytsya on 19 June 2019. Importantly, several other mentions were made to Zakarpattia being similar to, and even part of, 'Central Europe' both geographically and culturally.

[95] Interviews conducted online on 27 May 2020 and 2 June 2020, respectively.

[96] Interview conducted in Berehove on 19 September 2018.

[97] Interviews conducted online on 24 May 2020 and 28 May 2020, respectively.

[98] Different versions of this idiom were told using either a village or plot of land as a point of reference.

[99] Interview conducted online on 27 May 2020.

[100] Interview conducted online on 28 May 2020. *Karpatska Ukraina* refers to Carpatho-Ukraine, or the autonomous region within the Second Czechoslovak Republic created in December 1938. The region became an independent republic on 15 March 1939, but was conquered by the Kingdom of Hungary on 18 March 1939.

is now located in a different country; for instance, an older woman in Shyshlivtsi stated, "back in 1963, it was not Ukraine—it was the USSR," whereas some admitted they still "remember the times when the Soviet Union came…the life before the Soviet Union."[101] On this front, it is particularly striking that even those who have only lived in independent Ukraine depicted a similar sense of nostalgia for the region's past. The perpetuation of historical discourses is exhibited in the following statement by a young adult:

> [It is very] weird to see tourists from Slovakia walking on the streets and talking, 'oh, this was built by Czechoslovakia'…'[O]h, it is our place'…'[W]e own these'…'Our grandparents were building this city.' They talk like that…Slovakia and Czech people say it was part of Czechoslovakia long ago.[102]

Shown through these sentiments is that the inhabitants' strong sense of belonging to the particular piece of land that is Zakarpattia has been constructed around the region's complex past and the associated discourses, which have subsequently been embedded within their collective memory and perpetuated to the modern day (Agnew, 2001; Kaiser, 2002; Kaiser and Nikiforova, 2006; Liu and Hilton, 2005; Lovell, 1998; Nicholson, 2017; Paasi, 1996; Safran, 2005). In this way, the 'emotive' attachments to Zakarpattia stem from the fact that the region provides a sense of ancestral continuity and organic rootedness (Breuilly, 1996; Hobsbawm, 1992; Muller, 2008; Smith, 1996; 1998; 2009; Wilcox, 2004).

Hence, even in spite of the historical re-drawing of the boundary lines around Zakarpattia's spatial area, historical attitudes and behaviours are still very much remembered at the local level. The ways these legacies continue to implicate everyday life at the grassroots was lucidly depicted by one 'elite' participant:

> I don't know…like, how many times everything just changed, like people, families, language, culture…[but] as the result, we have, like, a different people, cultures, and families with different meaning, with different minds. And, just like that, it is kind of madness and mystery in the same place.[103]

The comparable sense of belonging shown by residents of different ages thus highlights the durability of intergenerational attachments connected to the region's unique atmosphere which, in many ways, counters the conventional view that the socio-political attitudes and behaviours of younger and older generations are significantly dissimilar (see, for example, Putnam, 2001). Specifically, it was explained that the 'stitching' together of populations through cartographic processes (Graziano, 2018; Peisakhin, 2015; Salter, 2012) has created a multicultural or 'transnational' dynamic in Zakarpattia due to the prevalence of diverse linguistic, ethnic, religious, cultural, and national attachments, which, over time, have shaped socio-cultural and linguistic structures (Berezhnaya, 2015; Stokes, 1998). As was likewise outlined by an ethnographer included in this research: the re-drawing of borders throughout history, the region's peripheral location, and the impossibility of contemporary territorial borders to coincide directly with ethnic identifications as territorial 'ethnoscapes' (Smith, 1998)—"unless you [physically] relocate people"—has created a situation where diverse peoples live together.[104] Though precise socio-demographic information is difficult to determine as Ukraine's last census was conducted in 2001, one 'elite' estimated that more than one hundred nationalities and dialects can be found within Zakarpattia, thus demonstrating a lack of

[101] Focus group conducted on 18 June 2019 and interview conducted online on 24 May 2020, respectively.
[102] Focus group conducted in Uzhhorod on 18 June 2019.
[103] Interview conducted online on May 15, 2020.
[104] Interview conducted online on 24 May 2020.

homogeneity within the region (Pirie, 1996; Ther, 2013).[105] It was therefore cited that elements from the dominant cultures—specifically Ukrainian, Hungarian, Slovakian, Polish, Romanian, and Russian—have been blended to create costumes, clothing, dances, songs, and music unique to Zakarpattia.[106] Mixed marriages and families were similarly mentioned as evidence of multiculturalism, including their combined traditions. The precise socio-cultural practices cited by interlocutors include the sharing of cuisines, such as borshch (a traditional Ukrainian beetroot soup) often cooked in Hungarian homes; the adoption of religious rituals like the blessing of Easter baskets (a Ukrainian Catholic and Orthodox tradition) in Protestant churches; and the combination of Hungarian and Ukrainian embroidery patterns on table cloths and blouses.[107] Also cited were cultural exchanges and festivals held in Zakarpattia, wherein individuals from multiple different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and neighbouring countries come together.[108] These findings suitably point to a *modus vivendi* dynamic within Zakarpattia through the incorporation and co-existence of diverse phenomena, attachments, and identities (Hartshorne, 1958; Martinez, 1994).

The participants in this research furthermore detailed that their region's distinct socio-cultural milieu stems from ever-increasing, multi-faceted, and complex cross-border interactions due to its 'in-between' position as the space separating Ukraine from the EU. The residents therefore suggested that Zakarpattia is neither fully Ukraine nor Europe (Balibar, 1998; Delanty and Rumford, 2005; Eder, 2006; Rumford, 2006), as the values, ideas, customs, and traditions associated with the neighbouring states have been blended to create a particular atmosphere with competing socio-cultural meanings and experiences (Andersson, 2014; Diener and Hagen, 2018; Martinez, 1994; Rumford, 2006; Van Schendel, 1993). Several participants therefore reinforced that Zakarpattia is a 'communication region' (Berezhnaya, 2015) as cross-border interactions with Europe have become normalised so that most people "do not feel borders at all, it is a usual thing for [those living nearest the borders] to speak with a neighbour who may live in a different country."[109] This reality was illustrated by a female interlocutor in Shyshlivtsi who told a story of her father regularly cycling between Slovakia and Zakarpattia twice in one day to visit his relatives across the territorial borderline, whereas other individuals outlined that certain roads and rivers historically served as the divides between the region and adjacent states so people simply "crossed the [territorial] border by crossing that street (or river)."[110] In many locales, like Palad'-Komarivtsi, participants alluded to a similar phenomenon in admitting they often travel the short distance to Hungary for shopping because certain products are better quality than in Ukraine—clothing and laundry detergent were specifically mentioned.[111] Notably, these inter-state interactions and exchanges, including smuggling, have increased significantly as more residents have acquired citizenships from the neighbouring states and now regularly travel to the EU for both leisure and economic opportunities (Andersson, 2014; Van Schendel, 1993). A group of young adults, for instance, explicated that cross-border mobility "to Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, and Czech Republic…is easy" now that Ukraine and the EU have a visa-free agreement (since 2017), as only a

[105] Interview conducted on 18 September 2019.

[106] Interview conducted in Uzhhorod on 18 September 2018.

[107] Interview conducted in Uzhhorod on 20 September 2018. The table cloth on the desk in the office where the interview took place was handsewn by the participant and included both Ukrainian and Hungarian patterns.

[108] Interview conducted in Uzhhorod on 18 September 2018. I was invited to attend a similar festival with the participant in September 2018.

[109] Interview conducted online on 2 June 2020. This was the reality prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, so it is recognised that circumstances may have fundamentally changed.

[110] Interview conducted online on 1 June 2020. Similar sentiments were expressed in Storozhnytsya.

[111] Focus groups conducted on 18 June 2019 and 19 June 2019, respectively.

biometric passport is required for entry.[112] In fact, it was detailed that cross-border mobility—whether permanent or temporary, including commuting daily for work—is now so common that a name for these people has colloquially emerged: '*Zarybyshany*.'[113] The findings thus point to the ways Zakarpattia's location within the geopolitical borderlands—or outermost 'ring' of Europe (Agnew, 2001; Balibar, 1998; Delanty and Rumford, 2005; Eder, 2006)—has shaped the residents' everyday socio-economic and political practices.

Similarly, the region's philological dynamics show the role of cartography and geography in creating a sense of group solidarity within Zakarpattia. As was implicitly revealed through the participants' language choices during the focus groups and interviews: many residents do not speak, or even understand, Ukrainian, even though it is the official state language of Ukraine. It was also often explained that as the USSR's language laws banned the Ukrainian language through forced Russification (see Brubaker, 1996; Shulman, 2002; Smith, 1999), most of the region's inhabitants now have relatively limited knowledge of the tongue.[114] In order for the diverse ethnic populations to overcome their linguistic differences without a common language, the historically dominant languages in the region—Russian, Ukrainian, and Hungarian—have consequently been combined into a sort of dialect or creole "mixed up with foreign words" unique to Zakarpattia.[115] Although this dialect is spoken most often by participants in small towns and villages, it was heard throughout the region in locales of various sizes.[116] Several 'elites' stressed this hybrid language is an important element of Zakarpattia's identity; it was cited the dialect is so distinctive that native Ukrainian-speakers and ethnic Ukrainians outside of Zakarpattia have difficulties understanding it, particularly because of the inclusion of the Hungarian language.[117] Accordingly, it can be seen that the interactions initiated by the region's borderland position, and the historical legacies associated with cartographic processes, have created a unique socio-cultural milieu within the region that is dissimilar from the rest of the country (Andersson, 2014; Martinez, 1994; Schama, 1995; Tilley, 1994; Van Schendel, 1993).

At the same time, the populations of some locales, especially those located nearest to the borders, remain almost exclusively monolingual and ethnic Ukrainian, Slovakian, Hungarian, or Romanian, depending on their geographical locations.[118] A clear illustration is the city of Berehove situated by the territorial border shared between Ukraine and Hungary—one 'elite' estimated that approximately eighty percent of the population speaks only Hungarian.[119] Other participants expounded that the local dialect is

---

[112] Focus group conducted in Uzhhorod on 16 June 2019.

[113] Interview conducted online on 15 May 2020. Notably, the Law on Citizenship of Ukraine recognises a unique citizenship within the state, so while it does not explicitly deny the holding of foreign citizenships (or dual citizenship), citizens are considered solely Ukrainian citizens within Ukraine's territory.

[114] In the modern day, the Ukrainian government and the region's rayon and oblast administrations work to provide resources and support for every minority group's culture and language, in addition to Ukrainian culture and language. Nonetheless, there are very few Ukrainian language teachers in Zakarpattia, especially outside of the capital city, Uzhhorod, which means younger generations do not have adequate (or any) Ukrainian language training or skills, nor do most regularly interact with Ukrainian-speaking peers.

[115] Focus group conducted in Uzhhorod on 18 June 2019.

[116] Whereas this dialect is typically spoken in rural locales, urban dwellers speak more Ukrainian and other languages like English, and are also more multi-ethnic and multicultural. It was also explained that distinctions between urban and rural dwellers were not as pronounced during the Soviet era because mobility was limited, yet increased travel, migration, and intercultural exchanges, especially in recent years with increased globalisation, have amplified these distinctions.

[117] Interview conducted in Berehove on 19 September 2018. In spite of my Ukrainian and Russian language skills, I also struggle to understand the dialect in Zakarpattia.

[118] The Polish culture was not referenced as having a significant impact on either the language or culture of the region because the territorial border dividing Zakarpattia and Poland is very small (only about thirty-three kilometres) and can only be crossed on foot through the mountains.

[119] Interview conducted in Berehove on 19 September 2018.

also significantly influenced by the languages spoken in the states neighbouring; for instance, it was noted that "there is a particular dialect in every part…Northern part of Zakarpattia is mostly Czechs, Slovaks, and they have kind of their own language. The central part is Hungarian. Southern part is Romanian. Basically, you can travel two hours away from here and you may not understand each other."[120] Other languages have also been introduced to the region, like English, as was seen during both the mapping exercises and focus groups discussions. Although few residents admitted to speaking the tongue fluently, as it was cited that English was not effectively taught (or at all) in the Soviet education system or for many years following Ukraine's independence, it was still stated that the language is very popular, especially amongst younger aged adults, as "a necessity of the present time" to communicate with different people from all over the world.[121] It was also suggested that "[t]he majority of those who study English [in Zakarpattia] are those who want to study abroad and stay to work there."[122] Given the region's history and proximity to four countries, it is thus not particularly surprising that diverse languages have been adopted by residents to create a complex linguistic environment; a young 'elite' portrayed this by reflecting on his own family's linguistic nuances during his interview by stating (in English): "in my family, it is quite strange that I am speaking, that I talk with my father [in] Russian and [in] Ukrainian with my mother…but it is the dynamic of the world."[123] Depicted through this example and the above sentiments is hence that the heterotrophic reality at the local level within Zakarpattia both complicates the residents' behaviours and linguistic patterns (Bös and Zimmer, 2006; Berezhnaya, 2015; Brednikova and Voronkov, 1999; Charron and Diener, 2015; Stokes, 1998; Zhurzhenko, 2010), motivating a stronger sense of loyalty to the region than to the larger state of Ukraine.

5.3.3 Experiencing Borderland Zakarpattia as Homeland

Whereas the multifaceted historical legacies and complex mix of ethnicities, languages, and cultures found in Zakarpattia as a result of its borderland position have created an "unique" dynamic at the local level, the participants included in this research stressed that this distinctiveness is what ties them more strongly to the intimate scale of their region than to the territory of Ukraine.[124] Specifically, it was elucidated that the inhabitants' experiences with the contemporary geographical reality of Ukraine's territory—where Zakarpattia is a distinct land mass separated from the rest of the country by a mountain range as a natural border—has ontologically instigated a sense of 'separateness' from their fellow citizenry (Branch, 2010; 2011; Donnan and Wilson, 1999; Sahlins, 1998). Demonstrating this were statements by even the youngest participants included in this research, who emphasised the region's "giant differences" when compared to other Ukrainian regions by referencing multiculturalism and multinationalism, diverse ethnic minority populations, and a high degree of mobility and emigration.[125] One 'elite' further explained that Ukraine's topography has put Zakarpattia's residents in a position wherein they are forced to help one another to survive rather than rely predominantly on the state or other citizens; while the inhabitants are no longer as isolated as they once were, especially as Ukrainian citizens now have a visa-free agreement with the EU,

[120] Interview conducted online on 29 May 2020.
[121] Interview and focus group conducted online on 24 May 2020 and 4 June 2020, respectively.
[122] Interview conducted online on 30 May 2020.
[123] Interview conducted online on 15 May 2020.
[124] Interview conducted in Uzhhorod on 18 September 2018.
[125] Focus group conducted in Uzhhorod on 18 June 2019.

"tolerance, acceptance, and collegiality" were terms used regularly to characterise the region and the people living within it.[126]

Markedly, the word 'tolerance' arose so frequently in the interview and focus group discussions that it became evident the inhabitants believe it to be both a defining feature of themselves and a characteristic that differentiates them from other Ukrainian citizens. It was even explicitly asserted that residents of Zakarpattia are "more tolerant and patient" than those of other regions—people in Lviv oblast, for example, were cited as being less friendly, de-valuing, and resistant to change.[127] A similar comparison was also made with people in Kyiv: "[i]f we compare an average Ukrainian, for example from Kyiv oblast and a person from Zakarpattia, so the one from Zakarpattia will be more tolerant in terms of new tendencies. We do not have big problems related to sexism, racism…because we are close to Europe and we take over a lot [from Europeans]."[128] One political figure further elucidated that because people are "more tolerant," there is "no conflict in Zakarpattia over linguistic or ethnic differences" unlike in Ukraine's eastern regions.[129] The same participant admitted that while Hungary continues to have a significant influence in Zakarpattia's socio-cultural, political, and economic affairs, just as Russia does in the regions in eastern Ukraine, Hungarians in Ukraine are neither separatists nor have they tried to annex the geographical area of Zakarpattia.[130] Another 'elite' correspondingly suggested that the region's pragmatic history with different countries and political regimes, and thus co-existing languages and cultures, has helped to shape an inclusive rather than conflicting atmosphere wherein residents are accepting of one another, as is illustrated by the fact that inhabitants regularly greet each other in other peoples' native languages rather than their own.[131] Whilst the extent to which the region's position bordering four external (and all EU and NATO) states directly influences the inhabitants' levels of tolerance cannot necessarily be proven, nor is it the aim of this project to test such a hypothesis, the above statements still indicate Zakarpattia's idiosyncrasies are related to the presence of several territorial borders and historical legacies associated with the land.

In addition to their perceived tolerance, participants furthermore detailed that the region's particular characteristics have created a special "spirit" which both influences their ways of thinking and being, as well as underscores their dissimilarity from other Ukrainian citizens, simultaneously creating a collective sense of 'We' (Zakarpattia's residents) versus 'They' (other Ukrainian citizens) (Barrington, 2021; Brubaker et al., 2006; Gregory, 1994; Migdal, 2004; Said, 1978).[132] Some referred to this distinctiveness as the Transcarpathian 'pscyho-type,' elucidating that "you can feel [the difference] from the, from the very beginning…between people."[133] For instance, one scholar reinforced that Zakarpattia's residents' have "drastically different" mentalities and self-identifications: "[i]t is about pronunciation, mentality, reaction to different provocateurs…they (other citizens) speak differently, think differently, act differently."[134] In

[126] Interview conducted in Berehove on 19 September 2018.

[127] Interview conducted in Uzhhorod on 18 September 2018. It was suggested that the (perceived) intolerance of people living in the neighbouring regions, like Lviv and Chernivtsi, could be because they share territorial borders with fewer states than Zakarpattia.

[128] Interview conducted online on 2 June 2020.

[129] Interview conducted in Uzhhorod on 20 September 2018.

[130] Interview conducted in Uzhhorod on 20 September 2018. Although this is a simplified version of the current war in eastern Ukraine, the point still stands that divisive conflict and tensions have not yet arisen within Zakarpattia due to interactions and historical ties with the neighbouring countries. Several interlocutors suggested that the media has overemphasised underlying Hungarian separatist sentiments, as they do not perceive any problems regarding separatism in the region.

[131] Interview conducted in Uzhhorod on 20 September 2018.

[132] Interview conducted online on 15 May 2020.

[133] Interview conducted online on 3 June 2020.

[134] Interview conducted online on 24 May 2020.

demonstrating this point, one individual pointed to politics, disclosing that Zakarpattia's inhabitants are different from other people in Ukraine as they do not have strong political positions, like in the centre or eastern parts of Ukraine, and even have a different mindset than Ukrainian citizens living in the neighbouring region of Lviv—these differences were also observed during the last presidential election.[135] The importance and 'historical continuity' (Kaiser, 2002; Liu and Hilton, 2005; Lovell, 1998; Nicholson, 2017; Paasi, 1996; Safran, 2005) of Zakarpattia for framing political and cultural relations, in addition to residents' behaviours and worldviews, was likewise stressed by other interlocutors. As was succinctly detailed by one young man:

> It is not just about the history that Zakarpattia was in different countries. It is a kind of narrative…it is a link to, to many issues. It is linked to identity, linked to culture, linked to land. Yeah, you mean, it is about everything. Relatives, it is about your, your life experience. It is about your, you know, traditions. It is about your view of the world. So you know, many people here, like, they are doing not like in the rest of Ukraine…it is a kind of mindset.[136]

Importantly, a historian interviewed for this research explained that these dynamics are not unlike the situations in other borderland or frontier areas in Ukraine or elsewhere, or even in geographically disparate regions and states; the example he cited is the linguistic diversity between the British cities of Liverpool and Manchester, while similar realities are also detailed in the follow chapters on Chernihiv and Kirovohrad.[137] Still, the residents' ontological understanding of Zakarpattia as homeland indeed informs their 'cognitive templates' through which they conceptualise themselves within the territory of Ukraine (Liu and Hilton, 2005; Lovell, 1998; Nicholson, 2017; Smith, 1996). Though it cannot be discerned whether residents feel a deep connection with Zakarpattia because they cognise themselves as disconnected from Ukraine in a geographical sense, or the region in and of itself as an institutionalised spatial area (Paasi, 1996) has spurred their feelings of disassociation from the rest of their country, a sense of cognitive distinctiveness is nonetheless felt by many living within this smaller geographical area through its construction as their homeland (Agnew, 2001; Ther, 2013). By considering the places of symbolic importance for Zakarpattia's residents (Weinreich et al., 2003), it can thus be seen that historical legacies stemming from the region's administration affiliations have instigated a collective sense of belonging to the region because of the reality that the land that is contemporary Zakarpattia has been the only constant in the residents' lives over time. One elderly participant poignantly summarised this reality by stating, "[t]he country changes, [b]ut Zakarpattia was always here."[138] In providing stability and a sense of belonging for the residents, Zakarpattia hence became their homeland.

[135] Interview conducted online on 28 May 2020. In the 2019 presidential election, Volodymyr Zelensky won all constituencies in Zakarpattia, whilst Petro Poroshenko won all in Lviv. In the 2019 parliamentary election, Servant of the People candidates won all party-list voting constituencies and candidates from a mix of Servant of the People, independents, and smaller other party won the single-mandate constituencies in Zakarpattia. Conversely, Servant of the People candidates won all party-list voting constituencies aside from Lviv city (where Voice won) and a mix of candidates from Servant of the People, Self-Reliance, Voice, European Solidarity, and independent parties won the single-mandate constituencies in Lviv.

[136] Interview conducted online on 28 May 2020.

[137] Interview conducted online on 3 June 2020.

[138] Interview conducted in Uzhhorod on 18 September 2018.

Chapter 6:
Chernihiv as 'the Middle'

"Where does Russia finish and Ukraine start?"

Young adult (2020)
Chernihiv, Chernihiv

"Because of our location, we are, like, in a dead end.
We have Russia, the enemy, [and] Belarus, which feels okay about Russia."

Middle-aged adult (2020)
Chernihiv, Chernihiv

"Near the border,…[i]t is transition territory."

Older adult (2020)
Chernihiv, Chernihiv

6.1 Conceptualising Chernihiv Within Territorial Ukraine

6.1.1 Cognitively Mapping Place

Whilst the previous chapter provided insight into the borderland experience in a region neighbouring four EU member states, this one centres on Chernihiv to uncover the everyday lived experiences of ordinary people in the representational space directly adjacent to Belarus and Russia. To study the residents' spatial attachments, this chapter draws on primary data collected during in-person fieldwork in Chernihiv in February and March 2020. In being Ukraine's only region to neighbour two former Soviet states, this inductive analysis complements the findings from Zakarpattia in investigating how citizens nearest to, and in the larger borderland of, the state's historic imperial power understand and conceptualise themselves within space, place, and territory. As the thesis is interested in uncovering multiple and diverse borderland experiences through an 'individualising' comparison (Tilly, 1984), this chapter resembles the one preceding in exploring how people in borderland Chernihiv construct meaning around different spatial scales, as well as the ways these meanings and attachments shape understandings of homeland. When coupled with the findings from Chapter 5, this analysis of Chernihiv again discloses the significance of ethnosymbolic ties to local places and the necessity of representational spaces for realising nationalism in borderland areas.

Young Adults (18-29 years)

Like their counterparts in Zakarpattia, Chernihiv's young adults demonstrated a strong sense of spatial awareness. The youngest participants from both urban and rural areas in this region regularly and independently identified the territory of Ukraine and the specific position of their own locales within their larger spatial representations of Eastern Europe. Their abilities to cognitively place themselves within space can be seen in the select maps in Figure 6.1, where almost all markings are found in locations matching a

standard map of Ukraine. The precision of the young adults when approaching their maps is reinforced by the clear and simple marks used to denote their municipalities (see Table 6.4). In fact, one participant even erased and re-drew their marking in order for it to be more accurate, whereas others added more than one to show that the places where they were born and they live now are different places (see bottom left map in Figure 6.1). Despite their precision and cognitive awareness, though, it must be recognised that some young adults still portrayed apprehension when approaching their maps; for example, two pairs of young adults in two focus groups in Chernihiv quietly discussed their maps and their whereabouts with each other during the mapping exercise. Further, on the back of one of the three incorrectly drawn maps (i.e. the authors denoted 'Chernihiv' but added markings in the approximate location of the region of Poltava), the participant wrote: 'I am not good in geography, I am not sure about my work and I can't guarantee its accuracy.'[139] Hence, even though the young adults generally exhibited a strong sense of spatial awareness, and especially when compared to the older residents of their region, it must be noted that some individuals are less confident than others in their geographical knowledge.

Table 6.1. Difference between the EF and OF of spatial binaries on map #1 drawn by young adults.[140]

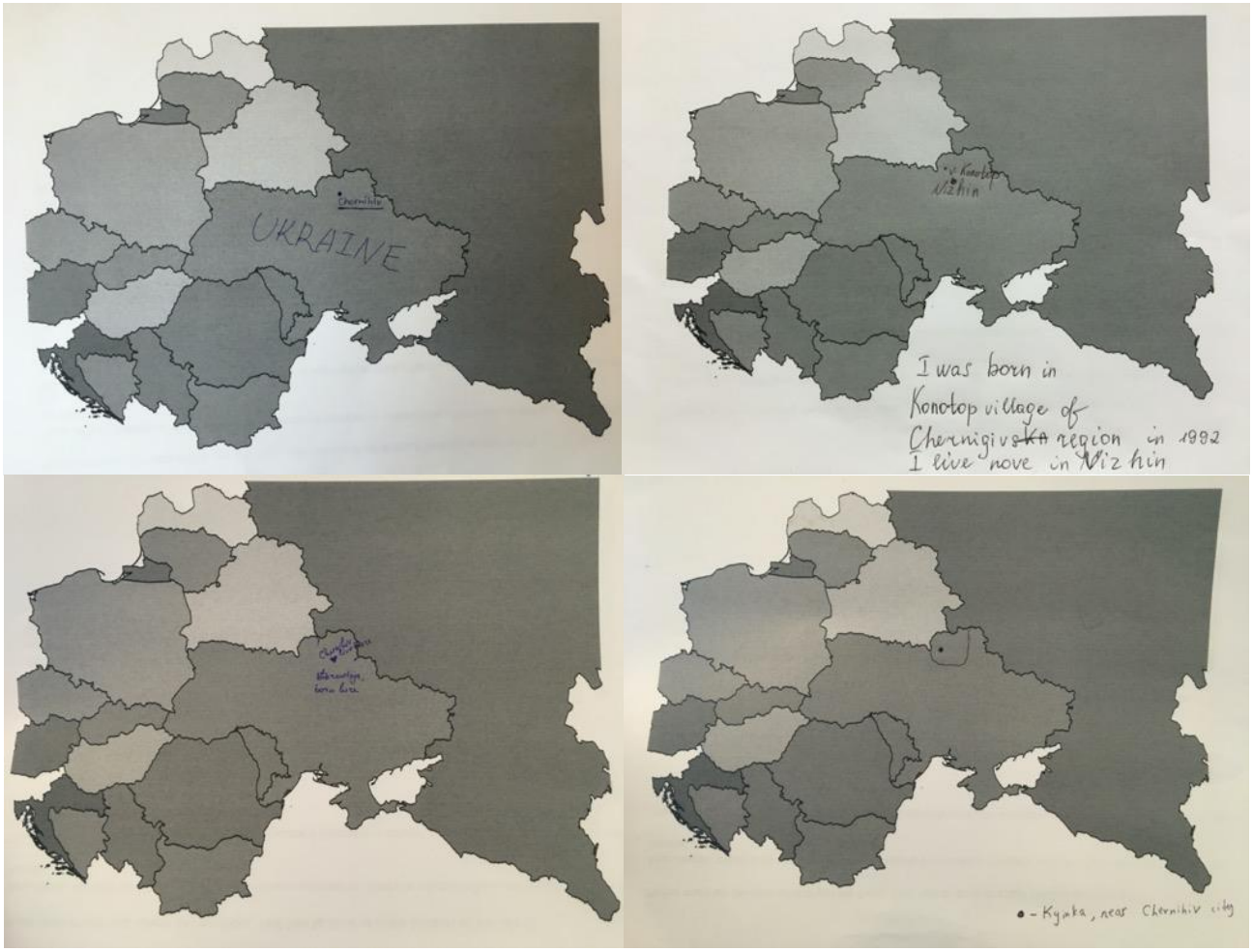
Significantly More Frequent	Significantly Less Frequent	Within Expected Range
	Locale (in Ukrainian) – 0.0% (OF = 0, EF = 3.4, AR = -2.6) Country or city (non-Ukraine) – 0.0% (OF = 0, EF = 2.6, AR = -2.2)	Locale (in non-Ukrainian) – 86.7% (OF = 26, EF = 24.9, AR = 0.7) Locale (in English) – 86.7% (OF = 26, EF = 24.9, AR = 0.7)

Still, when approaching their maps, the youngest participants in Chernihiv depicted their spatial awareness in ways dissimilar to the older participants in their region, as well as their counterparts in Zakarpattia and Kirovohrad, by referencing a variety of spatial scales. Local places appeared most often on the maps drawn by this age group; in fact, all young adults from Chernihiv indicated a particular local-level place on their map, while 86.7 percent also wrote the name of their municipality (see Table 6.1)—those whom did not still placed a dot in an approximate location of their hometown or the site where the focus groups took place. Yet, noticeably different from what was observed in Zakarpattia is that the youngest participants in Chernihiv also often referenced their region by writing its name or even drawing an outline of it within the larger territory of Ukraine (see bottom right map in Figure 6.1). Though not prompted, two of the participants wrote their region's name and eleven of the thirty young adults drew the perimeter of this spatial area around their locale, thus indicating their sense of location within both Chernihiv and Ukraine. The latter was also demonstrated through explicit references to their state, which could be seen on nine maps drawn by young adults in the form of 'Ukraine' or 'UA.' In spite of these citations, though, it must be noted that only one young adult emphasised the larger territory of Ukraine with their pen, and none made explicit changes to Ukraine's territorial borders. Also remarkable is that all of the place names

[139] Focus group conducted on 23 February 2020.
[140] N = 30. Only the statistically significant (p-value ≤ 0.05) binaries are included.

added to the maps of participants from this age group were written in a non-Ukrainian language (English). Again, the use of this tongue to label the maps may be partly in response to me as an English-speaking researcher, however, it still indicates the participants have had foreign language training and/or other opportunities to engage with English speakers through travel opportunities, social media and/or other communicative platforms.

Figure 6.1. Select young adults' responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1.



The top left map was drawn in Chernihiv on 20 February 2020; top right in Nizhyn on 25 February 2020; and bottom two in Chernihiv on 19 February 2020.

Middle-aged Adults (30-49 years)

The maps drawn by the middle-aged adults in both urban and rural locales very much resemble those of the youngest participants. The middle-aged adults were equally precise when marking local-level places, especially when compared to standard maps of contemporary Ukraine, indicating they cognitively understand their location within both the territory of their state and Eastern Europe (see Figure 6.2). Their strong spatial awareness is further evidenced by the fact that only two of the twenty interlocutors failed to

clearly specify a particular municipality on their maps (see Table 6.4), although one still wrote, 'I'm living in Chernihiv,' and the other drew the shape of their region, labeled it, and added, 'I live in Chernihiv.'[141] Notably, this participant was not alone in drawing the outline of their region; four individuals from this age group highlighted a spatial area around their locale in a way analogous to the young adults (see, for example, the bottom left map in Figure 6.2). Also significant and resembling what was observed of the younger participants is that six middle-aged adults wrote 'Ukraine' on their maps and none used their pen to highlight or change the state's territorial borders. Although the number of individuals from this age group who emphasised their region was noticeably fewer than the previous age group, it nevertheless reveals the middle-aged adults' familiarity with their country's territory and the location of Chernihiv within it, as well as demonstrating that the spatial scale of their region helps them to cognise where they are spatially located. This finding also resembles what was exhibited in Zakarpattia, particularly during the second mapping exercise when the participants explicated that the spatial scale of their region is the place they feel most attached to. Paralleling the findings from Zakarpattia is also the reality that no spatial binaries appeared either more or less frequently than expected on the middle-aged participants' maps in Chernihiv as all binaries fell within the expected range (see Table 6.2).

Table 6.2. Difference between the EF and OF of spatial binaries on map #1 drawn by middle-aged adults.[142]

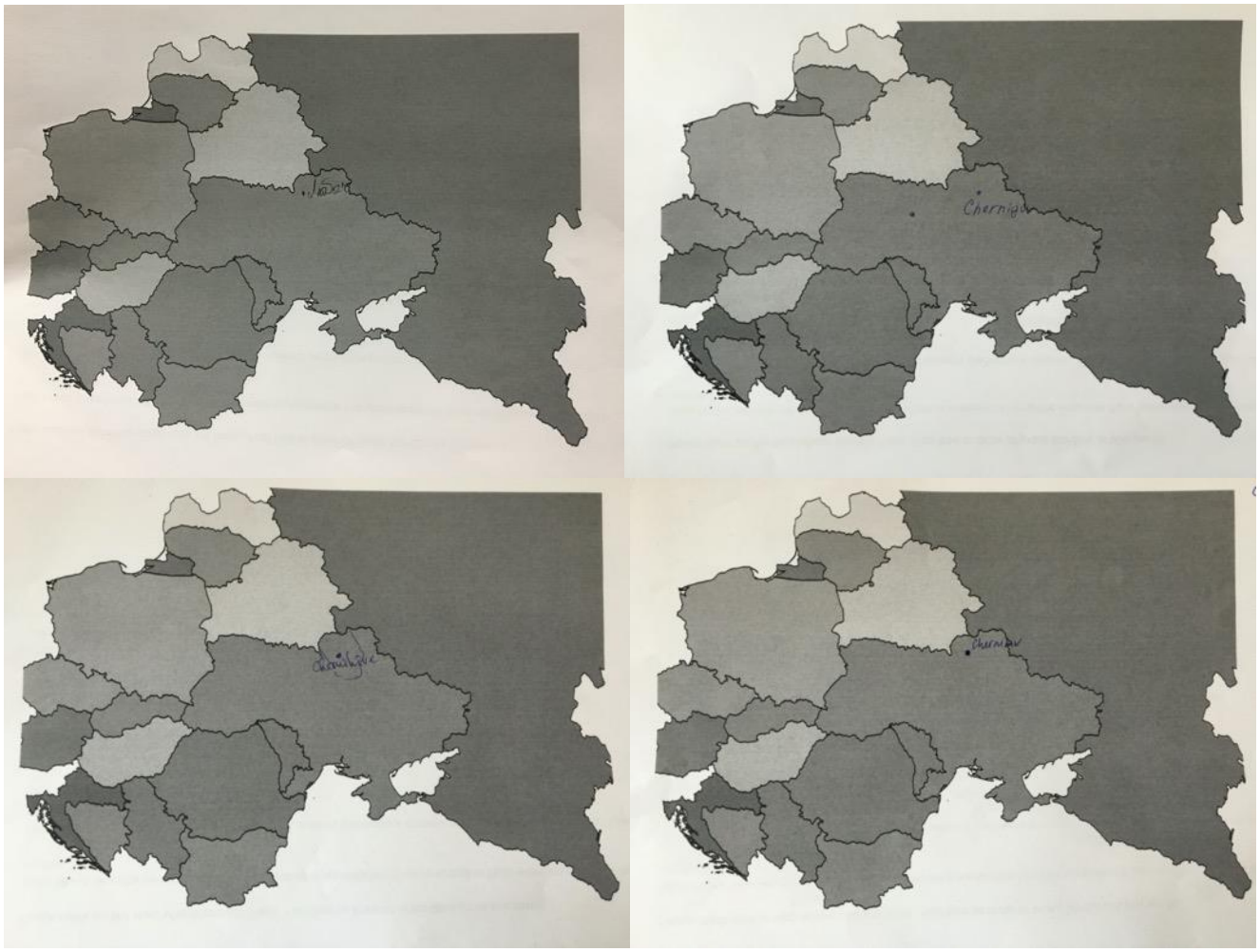
Significantly More Frequent	Significantly Less Frequent	Within Expected Range
		Locale (in Ukrainian) – 5.0% (OF = 1, EF = 2.3, AR = -1.1) Locale (in non-Ukrainian) – 95.0% (OF = 19, EF = 16.6, AR = 1.7) Locale (in English) – 95.0% (OF = 19, EF = 16.6, AR = 1.7) Country or city (non-Ukraine) – 5.0% (OF = 1, EF = 1.7, AR = -0.7)

Moreover, it is striking that every individual from this age group wrote the name of their locale on their map (see Figure 6.2), and some also labeled their region or country. Whilst most of the denoted places are located within Ukraine's territory, two participants referenced other regions (Cherkasy and Donetsk) and one cited the country of Turkey. Of the labels by the middle-aged participants, all except for one was written in English—the one outlier was penned in Ukrainian (see top left map in Figure 6.2). This finding stands in stark contrast to what was observed in Zakarpattia, as no participants from this age group in the former region used English to write their locales' names, therefore suggesting the middle-aged adults in Chernihiv may have had more training in foreign languages, international travel experience, or simply felt

[141] Focus groups conducted in Chernihiv on 18 February 2020 and 26 February 2020, respectively.
[142] N = 20. Only the statistically significant (p-value ≤ 0.05) binaries are included.

more confident in their English language skills than their counterparts across the country. It is also important to note that some middle-aged adults displayed a lack of confidence in terms of their spatial awareness during the focus groups, as was analogously observed in Zakarpattia. Although many contributors from this age group in both regions were able to identify Ukraine and the placement of their municipalities and/or regions on their unlabeled maps, they generally showed less conviction than the younger participants—several asked for help and deliberated over their maps with their colleagues. These findings accordingly show similarities between the middle-aged adults in Chernihiv and Zakarpattia, particularly as they all exhibited a weaker sense of spatial awareness than younger residents of the same region. Also of note is that fewer middle-aged adults than young adults in Chernihiv added two markings to their maps; fifteen percent of the maps drawn by participants from this age group disclosed the authors' attachments to more than one place through a discrepancy between the marked places and the locations of the focus groups (see Table 6.4).

Figure 6.2. Select middle-aged adults' responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1.



The top left map was drawn in Lyubech in 15 February 2020; top right in Chernihiv on 26 February 2020; and bottom two in Chernihiv on 23 February 2020.

Older Adults (50 years and older)

Akin to their counterparts in Zakarpattia, the older adults were also the least precise of all participants from Chernihiv when answering where they are from on their maps. Although every individual from this age group added the name of a locale, the markings themselves were less accurate than those by younger residents. As can be seen in Table 6.4, fifteen of the twenty older adults added precise demarcations to their maps matching standard maps of Ukraine, while the remaining 25.0 percent added vague or unclear markings. Notably, no older adults highlighted the entirety of Ukraine or suggested any changes to the state's territorial borders, and 'Ukraine' was only written on three maps. Also resembling what was observed in Zakarpattia is that the older adults in Chernihiv struggled to correctly identify the location of their municipality and region—and sometimes even their country—within the unlabeled representations of Eastern Europe and, as such, the places they added to their maps did not always reflect the actual location of where they said (or wrote) they were from. In several instances, older adults even asked each other and the younger participants in the same focus groups for assistance in locating their cities and towns. This uncertainty was displayed in the villages of Lyubech (located less than two kilometres from Belarus) and Korobky (located approximately four kilometres from Belarus), for example, as the eldest participants apprehensively approached their maps whilst making assertions resembling that of an elderly woman: "I'm old and I'm stupid and I can't."[143] In a focus group in Chernihiv, another older adult likewise expressed difficulties in identifying the location of their village and thus refrained from adding any marks but wrote: 'village Orlovka, region Chernihiv.'[144] The hesitation and less accurate markings on the maps by individuals of this age group therefore implies they are less aware, or simply less confident, about their position within space and territory when compared to other residents of the same region.

Table 6.3. Difference between the EF and OF of spatial binaries on map #1 drawn by older adults.[145]

Significantly More Frequent	Significantly Less Frequent	Within Expected Range
Locale (in Ukrainian) – 35.0% (OF = 7, EF = 2.3, AR = 3.9)	Locale (in non-Ukrainian) – 65.0% (OF = 13, EF = 16.6, AR = -2.5)	
Country or city (non-Ukraine) – 25.0% (OF = 5, EF = 1.7, AR = 3.1)	Locale (in English) – 65.0% (OF = 13, EF = 16.6, AR = -2.5)	

The languages used by participants from this age cohort when labeling their municipalities are also particularly noteworthy. As can be seen in Table 6.3, and like what was observed in Zakarpattia, fewer participants from this age group than the other two wrote their locales' names in a non-Ukrainian language, opting for Ukrainian instead (see Figure 6.3). Again, this finding demonstrates the differences in English language education between age groups and/or even simply exposure to English or other foreign tongues. At the same time, participants from this age group also labeled a region or country that is not Chernihiv or

[143] Focus group conducted in Lyubech on 15 February 2020.
[144] Focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 26 February 2020.
[145] N = 20. Only the statistically significant (p-value ≤ 0.05) binaries are included.

Ukraine more often than the younger residents from the same region; examples include appearances of the oblast of Luhansk and the countries of Russia, Kyrgyzstan, and Germany on older participants' maps. Table 6.4 also shows that 25.0 percent of participants from this age group added more than one locale to their maps, indicating they have moved throughout their lifetimes or feel attached to more than one place. Given their ages, it is not particularly unexpected that these individuals have lived in other locales or countries, likely due to their own or their families' work and/or educational opportunities or forced internal migration during the Soviet era. The former was demonstrated by the statement written on the top of one elderly participant's map: "I was born in Dresden. My father was a military officer."[146] As most participants added a mark within Ukraine's territory, and typically within the approximate geographical area of Chernihiv, the maps accordingly reveal that older adults may have lived elsewhere, but cognitively imagine themselves to now be located within Ukraine's contemporary territory.

Figure 6.3. Select older adults' responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1.

The top two maps were drawn in Chernihiv on 26 February 2020; bottom left in Korobky on 15 February 2020; and bottom right in Nizhyn on 25 February 2020.

[146] Focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 18 February 2020.

Table 6.4. Observed frequencies of stylistic elements on map #1 by all ages.

Stylistic Element	Young Adults (N = 30)	Middle-Aged Adults (N = 20)	Older Adults (N = 20)	Total (N = 70)
Precise dot/checkmark	100.0% (OF = 30)	90.0% (OF = 18)	75.0% (OF = 15)	90.0% (OF = 63)
Erasure/remark	3.33% (OF = 1)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	1.4% (OF = 1)
More than one place marked	23.3% (OF = 7)	10.0% (OF = 2)	25.0% (OF = 5)	20.0% (OF = 14)
Specific place not clearly marked	0.0% (OF = 0)	10.0% (OF = 2)	25.0% (OF = 5)	10.0% (OF = 7)
Different place (locale, region, or country) explicitly denoted	3.33% (OF = 1)	15.0% (OF = 3)	25.0% (OF = 5)	12.6% (OF = 9)

6.1.2 Unpacking Local Attachment

In depicting the spatial awareness of the different age groups in Chernihiv, the first cognitive mapping exercise thus implicitly reveals the residents' attachments and relationships to various spatial scales (Pacione, 1978). Although the interlocutors exhibited different levels of confidence in terms of their spatial awareness, in addition to diverse degrees of attachment to different spatial scales, the maps drawn in Chernihiv again, perhaps counterintuitively, display that contemporary Ukrainian citizens feel a strong cognitive association with their locale. In spite of the Soviet era dislocations and historical traumas stemming from communism, as well as attempts to circumvent primordial agendas (Roeder, 1991), deep-rooted attachments to local-level places were nevertheless still shown in Chernihiv through the participants' maps: 90.0 percent of all interlocutors (or sixty-three of the seventy participants) added a precise mark to specify a certain locale (see Table 6.4). In comparison, only 25.7 percent of the contributors wrote 'Ukraine' on their maps, and only when highlighting the larger territory to situate their specific locales, while no individuals outlined the country's territorial borders. The participants' decisions—whether conscious or not—to repeatedly mark certain municipalities on their maps, and often without referencing their state, accordingly suggest these smaller places are imbued with symbolic meanings by the people who 'live' them (Smith, 1996; 1998; 2009), and have been essentialised as part of their consciousness through constructed feelings of belonging (Campbell, 2018; Canter, 1997; Groat, 1995; Hubbard, 2005; Tuan, 1977). As only four authors indicated they are from townships in other states (although they all still stated they live in Chernihiv now), it appears the residents of this region cognitively perceive themselves as located within Ukraine's territory and the larger geography of Eastern Europe, albeit feel stronger attachments to more intimate places below the territorial dimension of the state.

The contributors' attachments to their locales were likewise revealed during the focus group discussions across Chernihiv. Showing this innate connection was one young adult in Nizhyn who asserted, "I have lived there for my life, and, and the city is my, is my native town," whilst an older woman in the same focus group displayed her deep-rooted bond with her town by stating, "we like Nizhyn and we like to travel…[but] [w]e like to come back home because it is home."[147] Echoing these sentiments was also a young woman in Chernihiv, who explained why she has decided not to move abroad: "I am asked like, why don't you leave this place? Why don't you go somewhere? You speak languages, so why are you sitting

[147] Focus group conducted on 25 February 2020.

here? What are you doing here? I don't want to move anywhere because…it is not this city. It is my home and I love it."[148] Of note is that participants located within both urban and rural settings equally demonstrated their attachments to certain local-level places. An older woman in the village of Korobky, for example, divulged her long-standing connection to her village by avowing, "I like living here. I was born here, and I have been living here for eighty-two years," whereas a participant in a focus group in the city of Chernihiv similarly proclaimed: "I was born here. And I have lived here all my life."[149] The strong cognitive and affective bonds between people and particular 'home' places depicted through these declarations, particularly the last example, illustrate that the residents' localities are especially meaningful in establishing a sense of belonging for individuals of all ages in both urban and rural settings across Chernihiv (Altman and Low, 1992; Gustafson, 2001a; 2001b; Hay, 1998; Lovell, 1998; Low, 1992). Still, it must be noted that the oldest adults, and especially those living in rural communities, depicted the strongest bonds with their local communities, as was likewise observed in Zakarpattia. Though this can partially be understood given the increased likelihood of attachments and identities persisting within rural communities since they were less disrupted by Soviet policies (Humphrey, 1988; Peisakhin, 2012), the findings are also surprising because of the internal migration which occurred during the Soviet period, specifically as Chernihiv once served as a base for the Russian Imperial Army and since the region later became a popular place for retired military personnel from across the Soviet space upon superannuation. This history was routinely acknowledged by participants, such as by the political analyst who explained diverse peoples now live in Chernihiv "because [a] policy of the Soviet Union [was] to move, always to move people to, to make them go from one region to another."[150] In countering what may perhaps be expected given Soviet population movements, the rootedness disclosed by the participants in Chernihiv, like in Zakarpattia, is particularly acute.

Also similar to what was observed in Zakarpattia is that the participants in Chernihiv divulged that their local attachments stem from the uniqueness of the particular places and, especially, their close relationships with the other people living within the same physical sites (Coakley, 2018; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977; Weinreich et al., 2003). Resembling prior literature by demonstrating the durability of intergenerational ties in spite of precarious socio-political climates (see Alesina and Fuchs-Schuendeln, 2007; Peisakhin, 2012; 2015; Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2017; Wittenberg, 2006), ancestral legacies were often cited in Chernihiv as a reason for the residents' connections to their municipalities (Breuilly, 1996; Coakley, 2018; Weinreich et al., 2003). Evidencing this point are the following two statements expressed by young participants when describing their locales: "[f]or me, I have, some spiritual connection to, to Chernihiv because my parents live here," and "I like everything which is connected with Nizhyn, my native town, because there [lives] my family."[151] Similarly, a political figure detailed his own family's history with the city in stating, "I was born [in Chernihiv], my children grew up here…Tastes differ, [but] I prefer life here."[152] Others explained their attachments to their locales are linked to their personal networks and friends, including an older resident in a Chernihiv focus group who voiced, "[t]his city is for my family, my friends."[153] Like in Zakarpattia, place-bound associations and organisations, such as dance, theatrical, and music groups, were furthermore mentioned by interlocutors in Chernihiv in showing how they connect

[148] Focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 23 February 2020.
[149] Focus groups conducted on 15 February 2020 and 16 February 2020, respectively.
[150] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 21 February 2020.
[151] Focus groups conducted in Chernihiv on 23 February 2020 and Nizhyn on 25 February 2020, respectively.
[152] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 4 March 2020.
[153] Focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 26 February 2020.

with the other people living alongside them.[154] Evident here is that local places have been constructed as meaningful for the residents because of the social relations found within these intimate sites (Agnew, 2011; Gustafson, 2001a; 2001b; Hay, 1998; Hubbard, 2005; Tuan, 1977). In fact, some city dwellers even suggested they feel as though they live in a 'big village' because of how supportive and friendly their fellow inhabitants are; this was explicitly detailed by one individual who expressed that "[s]ome of the people say that Chernihiv is a big village because, like, if you don't know somebody, you can find…a person who knows the person of [whom] you need."[155] Remarkably, these same sentiments were lucidly echoed by a middle-aged man when explaining why he feels a strong attachment to the same city:

> Thing number one: people. People who stay around us…they support each other…That means that we have a great community, and especially, here in Chernihiv. We know each other like a small village, like, 'hi, hello!' Or, for example, I may walk around, 'hey, hello, Serhij. How are you doing?' I am just looking at those people wondering who they really are because they know me, we know each other, we support each other.[156]

This example, like those detailed above, accordingly shows that the participants' locales not only serve as the physical sites where they reside, but are cognitively imbued with significant meanings through their lived experiences (Breuilly, 1996; Hobsbawm, 1992; Muller, 2008; Smith, 1998; Wilcox, 2004).

6.2 Borderland Chernihiv as Homeland

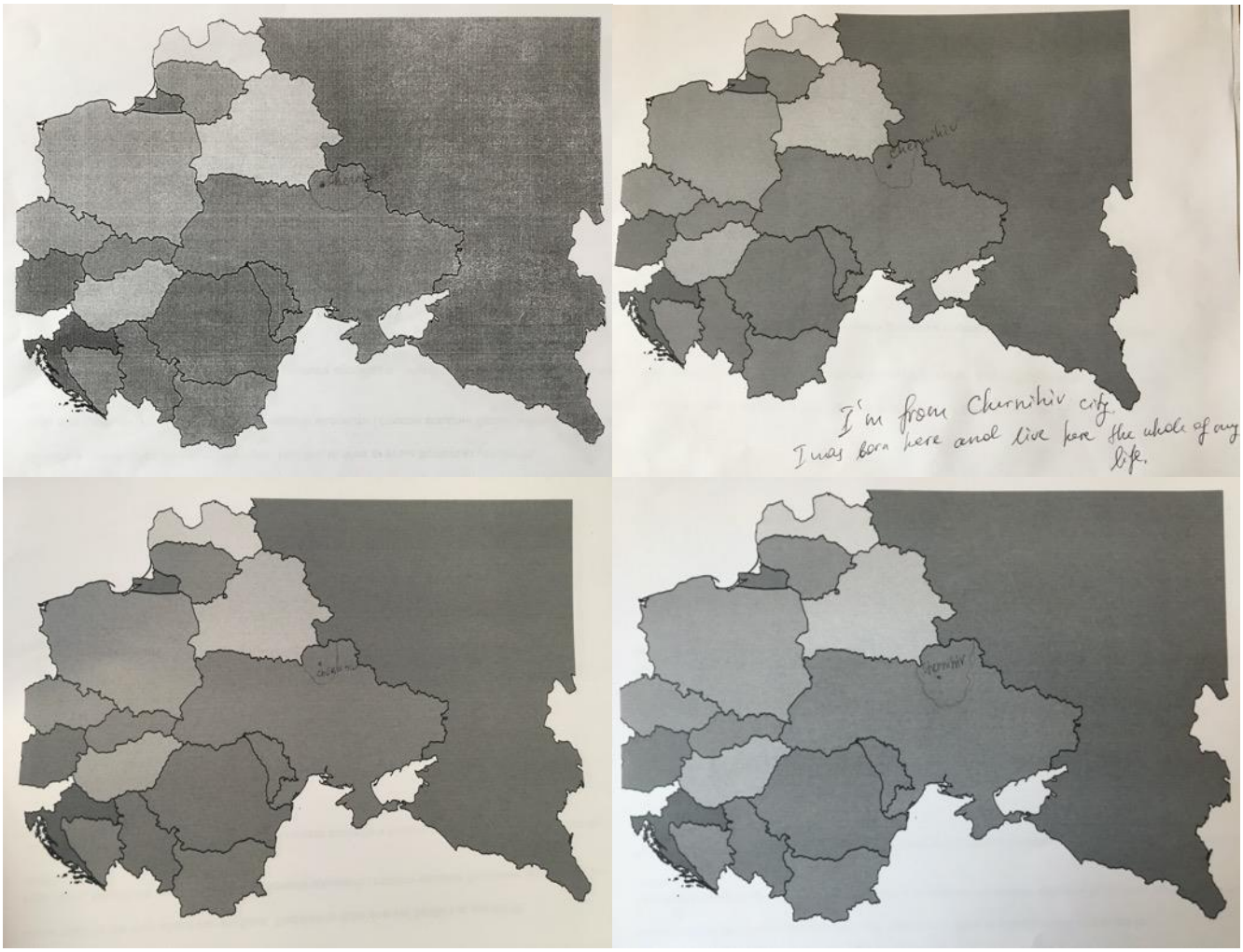
6.2.1 Chernihiv as Homeland

While certain locales are evidently of importance for the residents of Chernihiv, the focus group and interview conversations revealed that the spatial scale of their region holds further, if not the greatest, significance for them. A strong sense of regional belonging was portrayed in both urban and rural areas through proclamations that residents "identify with Chernihiv the most," "love Chernihiv," and "like Chernihiv better" than other regions.[157] The participants' strong "attachments" to their region were furthermore depicted during the first mapping exercise, such as in the maps presented in both Figures 6.1 and 6.2, when participants from various locales and age groups used their pens to visibly distinguish the smaller geographical area of Chernihiv within the larger territory of Ukraine (see also Figure 6.4).[158] By delineating the periphery of their region, and thus abstractly highlighting its symbolic and institutionalised shape (Paasi, 1996), the participants' comments and map drawings resemble what was also observed in Zakarpattia, as well as prior literature, in showing that the particular area of Chernihiv is relationally defined by inhabitants through its location to other spatial structures like small locales and the large territory of Ukraine (Agnew, 2001; Löw and Weidenhaus, 2017; Lukermann, 1964; Paasi, 1996). It deserves restating that most participants in Chernihiv still added locales to their maps within the outlined area of their region, and some admitted to feeling an equal attachment to their region and locale or that their municipalities are the first places that come to their minds when describing where they 'are from.' Yet, the verbal discussions clarified that it is not so much a stronger attachment that residents feel as much as that they perceive their locales and region to be inexplicably connected; for instance, several individuals

[154] I was invited to, and attended, several of these performances with interlocutors during my in-person fieldwork.
[155] Focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 16 February 2020.
[156] Sentiments expressed during an event in Chernihiv on 27 February 2020.
[157] Sentiments expressed during a meeting in Chernihiv on 24 February 2020.
[158] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 18 February 2020.

used the scale of their region as a point of reference when describing where they are from, such as the young female in Nizhyn who explained she is from "a small city in our region."[159] A middle-aged 'elite' in the city of Chernihiv moreover expounded that the region "provides a comfortable life" for her professional career.[160] Like in Zakarpattia, people in Chernihiv also stated their spatial attachments are very much dependent upon who is asking, as they would say 'from Ukraine' when a foreigner asked where they are from, but, in actuality, they feel the strongest connection with Chernihiv and then with their specific locales.[161] Evident here is that the inhabitants' affectual bonds with the region's geographical area 'nested' along the territorial borders of Ukraine (Gradirovsky, 1999) are more significant than, or, at the very least, extend from the smaller localities wherein they live.

Figure 6.4. Select responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1.



The top left map was drawn by an older adult in Chernihiv on 26 February 2020; top right by a middle-aged adult in Chernihiv on 23 February 2020; and bottom two by young adults in Chernihiv on 19 February 2020 and 20 February 2020, respectively.

[159] Focus group conducted on 25 February 2020.
[160] Interview conducted on 12 February 2020.
[161] This particular comment is again noteworthy because it was a foreigner (myself) who asked this question.

Although the terms 'homeland' and 'motherland' were not explicitly used by many interlocutors in Chernihiv when discussing their region, the ways they vernacularly spoke about this spatial scale still shows its inherent symbolic meaning (Smith, 1996; 2009; Weinreich et al., 2003). Of particular note is that participants regularly used the word 'territory' to explain how "special" Chernihiv is, rather than referring to it as their 'homeland' or even 'region.'[162] Clear examples include participants' claims that their "territory has a great history, even on the world-wide level," and their emphasis on the need to protect the "culture of the territory" due to its differentness from other regions.[163] The necessity of more economic and investment opportunities "to develop in this territory" were also cited, as older participants suggested the region is struggling to keep people from migrating elsewhere for work, especially the youngest generation.[164] The use of 'territory' in this latter context is particularly remarkable and resembles the literature on 'homeland' presented in Chapter 2, specifically Tuan's definition as "a region (city or countryside) large enough to support a people's livelihood" (1977: 148). The lexicon used by residents from Chernihiv is also striking as it both aligns with how Paasi (1996) defines regions as institutionalised and established 'territorial' units, and Agnew's (2001) argument that regions are often constructed as homelands through the 'cultural division of labour' within states. Hence, the fact that participants in Chernihiv described their region in the same way as those in Zakarpattia, albeit utilising alternative words, reveals that a 'sense of place' has been created within this representational space located in the larger territory of Ukraine (Relph, 1976), as well as reinforcing the region's distinctiveness as their homeland.

Unlike what was observed in Zakarpattia, though, is that Chernihiv's residents did not insinuate their region is detached from the larger territory of contemporary Ukraine. Instead, and as might be expected three decades following the collapse of the USSR and almost ninety years since the region officially joined the larger Ukrainian territory, interlocutors showed they ontologically understand Chernihiv to be located within Ukraine. For instance, residents detailed they are "very connected to Chernihiv and [the] Chernihivska area, but have some similarities with Kyiv."[165] Many individuals overtly disclosed a relationship between their region and state, such as through statements suggesting they are "very strongly attached to Kyiv" due to its close geographical proximity—residents regularly commute to the capital (including daily) for work and to access the closest airport located in Kyiv.[166] A few participants openly expressed they feel attached to their larger state, asserting they "love Ukraine" and identify themselves with "[their] country;" however, more residents still claimed they uphold a stronger "territorial identity" associated with the small geographical area of their region.[167] Reinforcing that Chernihiv "is [their] ground" are also the markings on the interlocutors' second maps: 16.4 percent of all individuals used their pens to highlight the boundary lines of Chernihiv within the representation of Ukraine, thus accentuating the region's distinctiveness from the state's larger territory (examples can be seen in Figure 6.5).[168] While the number of participants who emphasised Chernihiv's peripheries is approximately half of what was observed in Zakarpattia, it must be noted that a natural topographical border, like the Carpathian Mountains, does not separate Chernihiv from Ukraine's other administrative units, which may have, in some ways, motivated the participants' markings in the previous region (although this cannot empirically

[162] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 12 February 2020.
[163] Interviews conducted in Chernihiv on 4 March 2020 and 19 February 2020, respectively.
[164] Focus group conducted in Nizhyn on 25 February 2020.
[165] Sentiments expressed during a meeting in Nizhyn on 25 February 2020.
[166] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 21 February 2020.
[167] Sentiments expressed during an event in Chernihiv on 23 February 2020 and interview conducted in Chernihiv on 21 February 2020.
[168] Focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 17 February 2020.

be determined). Whilst the Dnipro and Desna Rivers do serve as small segments of the jurisdictional separation between Chernihiv and the adjacent regions of Kyiv and Sumy, respectively, the terrain between Chernihiv and the neighbouring regions and states is relatively unchanged. It thus appears that residents cognitively perceive their region to be a symbolic and meaningful place (Breuilly, 1996; Hobsbawm, 1992; Muller, 2008; Smith, 1996; 1998; 2009; Wilcox, 2004) which is distinguished from Ukraine's larger territory, though not geographically separated like Zakarpattia.

Figure 6.5. Select responses to 'where are you from?' on map #2.

The top left map was drawn by a young adult in Nizhyn on 25 February 2020; top right by a young adult in Chernihiv on 20 February 2020; bottom left by a middle-aged adult in Chernihiv on 26 February 2020; and bottom right by an older adult in Chernihiv on 18 February 2020.

In fact, and whereas the smaller geographical area of Zakarpattia was described as a particular place, or homeland, distinguished from the larger territory of Ukraine, the residents in Chernihiv showed the significance of their region *for* Ukraine. For instance, several participants elucidated that the specific

geographical area where they reside is very "important," as it is where the "history of Ukraine" stems from.[169] As one of the oldest areas of the country, Chernihiv was also cited as a "very historical oblast as it has historical lands," especially as the "place of origin" of the Kyivan Rus' and as a central part of Hetmanshchyna.[170] On this last point, one regional 'elite' detailed that Chernihiv's history as an important site for the Cossack nobility actually helped to develop the region and its cities; colleges and churches were consequently established in municipalities across Chernihiv from the time of the Kyivan Rus' and Magdeburg law was introduced in the seventeenth century.[171] Also noteworthy is that the region's capital city, which was the second city established in Ukraine after Kyiv, is colloquially known as the 'City of Legends' because of the historical myths associated with its land and the city's formative role in Ukraine's development.[172] It was moreover stated that Ukraine's oldest church, the Holy Trinity Cathedral, was built in Chernihiv more than one thousand years ago. Although this remains controversial, as some historians believe Kyiv's St. Sophia's Cathedral is the eldest, Chernihiv's long-standing significance for Ukraine is still evident. Another particularly clear exemplification of Chernihiv's role in Ukraine's history is the reality that the geographical area of the region has continued to physically demarcate the northernmost periphery of Ukraine's territory. Whilst the distinction from Belarus and Russia was less significant during the USSR, as people moved relatively easily between the Soviet republics, participants included in this project detailed that the territorial border between Chernihiv and the neighbouring states, especially Russia, has become more important in recent years. Many interlocutors specifically spoke about the beginning of the Russo-Ukrainian war in 2014 and explained that tanks and military personnel were on standby for almost a year near the city of Chernihiv on the "road which goes to Russia" as there "was a really big risk" that Russia might try to invade Kyiv through Chernihiv.[173] In contrast to the disassociation Zakarpattia's residents felt with Ukraine, these illustrations show people living in Chernihiv cognitively perceive their region to be a small albeit important place both for and within the territory of Ukraine (see Brubaker, 2005; Kaiser, 2002; Lovell, 1998; Safran, 2005; Tuan, 1977).

Furthermore, it can be seen that the shared deep-rooted bonds Chernihiv's residents feel to their oblast, and the locales situated within it, like those in Zakarpattia, are constructed around the region's ecology and natural landscapes. Though few participants admitted Chernihiv may not be "very beautiful in comparison to some other places," the region's "beautiful nature" was still frequently mentioned by individuals from all age groups in both urban and rural locales.[174] For example, when describing the region's "great nature…[and] landscapes," many interlocutors detailed the physical environment includes "lots of rivers, lakes, forests," in addition to a "special climate," which creates opportunities for leisure activities like cycling, hiking, fishing, and swimming.[175] The rivers located in the region—the Desna, Dnipro, Snov, and Stryzhen—were also specifically named, both in the context of serving as part of the boundary line that demarcates the region and as natural defining features of the region. Other individuals more explicitly showed their feelings of attachment to Chernihiv through references to the ecological environment, such as the regional 'elite' who expressed, "I prefer life here, I like wild nature, more natural

[169] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 12 February 2020.

[170] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 21 February 2020.

[171] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 17 February 2020. It was stated that Chernihiv was the easternmost area where Magdeburg law was introduced, thus suggesting Chernihiv is the "most Eastern part of Europe." The aforementioned quote is from an interview conducted in Nizhyn on 25 February 2020.

[172] Focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 20 February 2020.

[173] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 21 February 2020.

[174] Focus groups conducted in Lyubech on 15 February 2020 and Chernihiv on 23 February 2020, respectively.

[175] Focus groups conducted in Chernihiv on 20 February 2020 and Nizhyn on 25 February 2020, respectively.

nature, which cannot be found everywhere," or the young adult in a focus group in Chernihiv who asserted, "I like the air. I like the nature. I like the water…it suits to my temper so I feel comfortable and calm."[176] Of all natural elements, forests were cited most often during the interviews and focus groups as it was explained "there are a lot of forests in [the] region;" one 'elite' even specified that due to the extensive woodlands, Chernihiv has approximately only six people per square kilometre of land compared to the average of sixteen per square kilometre across Ukraine.[177] This finding is not particularly surprisingly given the region's location within the ethno-geographical area of 'Polissia,' which encompasses one of the largest forests on the European continent, running from the furthest edge of Central Europe through parts of Russia, Belarus, and Poland.[178] In translating to 'the land along/in the forest,' Polissia thus etymologically reflects this landscape, as is reflected in Chernihiv's terrain.[179] But despite these woodlands, Chernihiv's participants explained logging and forestry are not major industries in the region due to the significant distance required to transport wood exports to European markets. As such, agriculture and agronomy have instead become "highly developed" sectors, at least near the Dnipro—it was detailed the "the richest soil in the world," the famous 'black earth,' can be found in Chernihiv once the tress are removed.[180] Taken together, these findings illustrate that the residents' affectual feelings associated with the intimate scale of their region are connected to the politics of landscape (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992; Häkli, 1999; Hastrup and Olwig, 1997; Hubbard, 2005; Keith and Pile, 1993; Lovell, 1998; Schama, 1995; Tilley, 1994), as the region's ecological features not only provide their livelihoods (Tuan, 1977), but shape their everyday practices and experiences at the local level.

Notwithstanding the residents' attachments to their region, sentiments still arose regarding the spatial area that is Chernihiv. While no interlocutors from any age group erased the territorial borders standing between Chernihiv and Belarus or Russia on either map, and only young adults suggested changes to Ukraine's territory (see Table 6.5), several overt remarks revealed that residents indeed have opinions about their state's contemporary cartography. For instance, one academic asserted the borderline between Chernihiv and the neighbouring states should be re-drawn as the residents living nearest it actually "want to be with Russia."[181] While the woman did not suggest precisely where the dividing line should be located, her comment indicates that the people near it may live in a country they do not feel particularly attached to. An interlocutor in Nizhyn also elucidated that a discrepancy exists between Ukraine's territory and where ethnic Ukrainians are located: while the contemporary Ukrainian state mostly includes their lands, at least when compared to the Ukrainian SSR's smaller geography within the USSR, it is "not exactly [Ukraine's] territory" when compared to the Kyivan Rus'.[182] In reinforcing this statement, one significant political figure disclosed that "if you go deep into history, the [land] where there is now the Russian border used to be a part of Ukraine."[183] The interlocutor thus cited Starodubshchyna, a geographical area north of Chernihiv in Belarus and Russia that was part of Ukraine's ethnographic territory prior to the USSR and

[176] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 4 March 2020 and focus group conducted on 23 February 2020, respectively.

[177] Focus group conducted in Nizhyn on 25 February 2020 and interview conducted in Chernihiv on 13 February 2020, respectively.

[178] Within Ukraine, 'Polissia' encompasses the regions of Chernihiv, Sumy, Zhytomyr, Kyiv, and parts of Volyn, which share unique linguistic, cultural, and traditional elements.

[179] In Ukrainian, 'po' (по) in Polissia or Polesia (Полісся) translates to 'on,' 'in,' or 'along,' whilst 'lis' (ліс) means forest.

[180] Sentiments expressed during a meeting in Chernihiv on 27 February 2020 and focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 23 February 2020, respectively. It was explained by several participants that Chernihiv, like Zakarpattia, also has a problem with illegal deforestation.

[181] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 18 February 2020.

[182] Sentiments expressed during a meeting on 25 February 2020.

[183] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 4 March 2020.

Ukraine-Soviet War of 1917-21. Several other participants in focus groups and interviews across Chernihiv likewise expressed that "Starodubshchyna is Ukraine's," which again reinforces discrepancies between the territorial cartographies of the contemporary state system and the imaginative cartographies held by individuals and collectives.[184]

Table 6.5. Observed frequencies of binaries on map #2 by all ages.[185]

Stylistic Element	Young Adults (N = 31)	Middle-Aged Adults (N = 21)	Older Adults (N = 21)	Total (N = 73)
Distinct and labeled locale	83.9% (OF = 26)	76.2% (OF = 16)	33.3% (OF = 7)	67.12% (OF = 49)
Changed Ukraine's territorial borders	12.9% (OF = 4)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	5.5% (OF = 4)
Erased territorial borders between Ukraine and EU	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Erased territorial borders between Ukraine and Russia	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Zakarpattia separated from Ukraine	9.7% (OF = 3)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	4.1% (OF = 3)
Chernihiv separated from Ukraine	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Zakarpattia with Hungary	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Zakarpattia with Poland	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Zakarpattia with Romania	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Zakarpattia with Slovakia	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Chernihiv with Belarus	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Chernihiv with Russia	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)

The region of Kuban was also mentioned by participants from Chernihiv, and it was equally purported that this geographical area—which has been part of Russia's territory since the collapse of the USSR—rightfully belongs to Ukraine.[186] For instance, numerous participants expressed "Kuban was Ukraine's territory historically" and that Russians only live in Kuban now because Stalin killed the ethnic Ukrainians living there.[187] Some participants also re-drew the territorial borders of Ukraine on their second map in an effort to show that the spatial area understood to be Kuban should be included within

[184] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 18 February 2020.

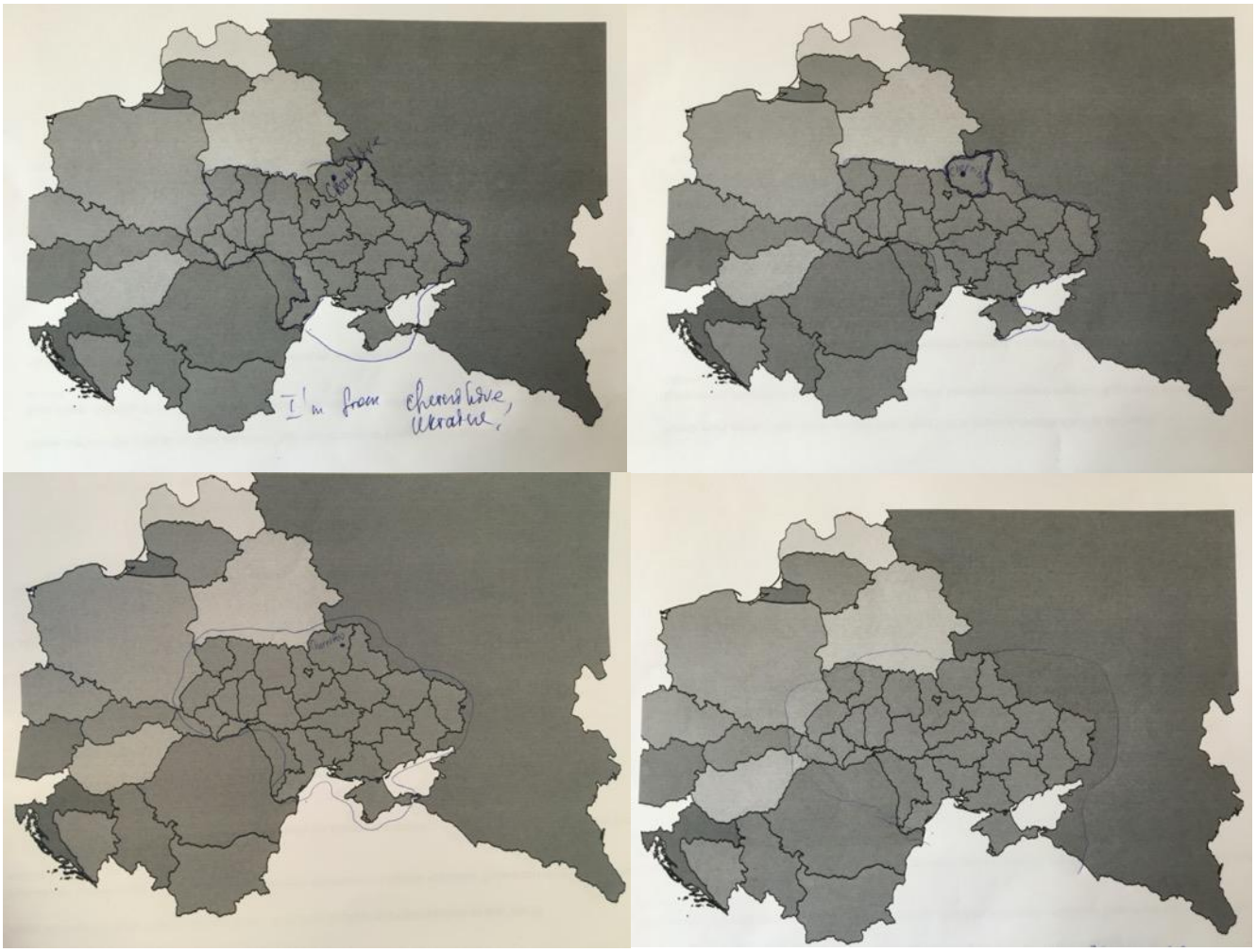
[185] More participants completed the second exercise because four participants (two young adults, one middle-aged, and one older adult) were late joining the focus group in Chernihiv on 23 February 2020. One young adult also left mid-way through the meeting in Chernihiv on 19 February 2020.

[186] The region of Kuban does have strong ties to Ukraine as it was settled by ethnic Ukrainians throughout the 1700s, who constituted more than fifty percent of the population until the 1900s when forced Russification and famines, such as the Holodomor, devastated the population.

[187] Interview and focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 18 February 2020 and 16 February 2020, respectively.

contemporary Ukraine (see, for example, bottom right map in Figure 6.6). As neither Starodubshchyna nor Kuban were included in post-Soviet Ukraine's territory, and the number of ethnic Ukrainians living in these regions has exponentially declined since their separation from Ukrainian lands, the residents' attachments to these regions may be surprising or counterintuitive. However, they still reflect the findings of prior works in showing that certain attitudes and behaviours persist in spite of antagonistic socio-political climates (see Alesina and Fuchs-Schuendeln, 2007; Peisakhin, 2012; 2015; Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2017; Wittenberg, 2006).[188] Insofar as the participants disclosed affective bonds with Kuban and Starodubshchyna, though, it must be noted that these sentiments do not appear significant enough to instigate attempts at separatism or annexation.

Figure 6.6. Select responses on map #2 depicting changes to Ukraine's borders.



The top two maps were drawn by young adults in Chernihiv on 23 February 2020; bottom left by a young adult in Chernihiv on 19 February 2020; and bottom right by a young adult in Chernihiv on 23 February 2020.

[188] The decrease in the number of ethnic Ukrainians living in these geographical areas is due to significant conflict, oppression, and violence.

At the same time, other interlocutors expressed their support for the territorial borders formalised around Ukraine in 1991. Exemplifying this was one young adult in Chernihiv who specified that she would like to see the borderlines returned to how they were when she was born in 1995, whilst an elderly participant in Korobky said "the way they (the territorial borders) were" prior to the annexation and occupation of Crimea and Donbas was "correct."[189] Some contributors more vehemently asserted Ukraine's original territory needs to be reinstated and "emphasised," as well as that the country "needs to decide on its borders" in order to prevent neighbouring states from continuing to annex parts of its territory.[190] The maps presented in Figure 6.6 similarly show the participants' desire to reinforce Ukraine's post-independence territory and reclaim Crimea. During one interview, a political 'elite' even fittingly begrudged the fact that Ukraine's territorial borders—and thus sovereignty—are still not viewed as legitimate by external states, especially Russia, stating that in more developed countries, "people would not doubt [the state's territory]," nor "raise this question" about the territorial borders being re-drawn to include historical lands like Kuban.[191] As territorial borderlines are one of the crucial "characteristics of a country," he thus concluded that the desire of Ukrainian citizens or foreign parties to separate (or annex) parts of Ukraine's contemporary territory like Donbas or Zakarpattia is "breaking the law and [an act of] separatism."[192] This example, in addition to those outlined above, thus reinforces that both Ukraine's and the region's complex histories have been embedded within the residents' consciousness (Agnew, 2001; Kaiser, 2002; Kaiser and Nikiforova, 2006; Liu and Hilton, 2005; Lovell, 1998; Nicholson, 2017; Paasi, 1996; Safran, 2005). When coupled with the discussion above, these sentiments show that Chernihiv's residents feel a sense of connection to Ukraine, which is not particularly unforeseen given the region is part of historical Ukrainian lands, but that the smaller spatial scale holds greater significance.

6.2.2 Constructing Borderland Chernihiv as Homeland

Although Chernihiv is not a distinct land mass topographically separated from Ukraine's territory like Zakarpattia, the inhabitants' lived experiences and phenomenologies of locality have still been embedded within their consciousness, ontologically tying them to the intimate scale of their region (Tilley, 1994). Similar to what was observed in Zakarpattia, persisting narratives associated with Chernihiv have inspired a sense of collective belonging (Brubaker, 2005; Liu and Hilton, 2005; Lovell, 1998; Kaiser, 2002; Nicholson, 2017; Safran, 2005). Many of these discourses are related to Chernihiv's 'middle' status—both socially and geographically—between Ukraine and its former imperial power. In fact, remarks about Ukraine's history with Russia arose in almost every discussion, echoing what was highlighted by a major political figure:

> [C]olonisation has had its impact. Mentality and bordering on Asian Russia, it causes this lack of development in society. To my mind, the Soviet Union and Stalin conducted the worst physiological experiment on the largest number of people. Communism, I mean its practice, not ideology—because these are different things—was even worse than Nazism in Nazi Germany for one reason…Hitler tortured other people, but here, they tortured their own people. They mixed different nationalities, then came up with some 'average' personality, who did not know their history, where they belonged to. And so, now, we cannot get rid of this.[193]

[189] Interview conducted on 10 February 2020 and focus group conducted on 15 February 2020, respectively.
[190] Interviews conducted in Chernihiv on 13 February 2020 and 18 February 2020, respectively.
[191] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 4 March 2020.
[192] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 4 March 2020.
[193] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 4 March 2020.

Whilst imperial legacies indubitably affect citizens across the country, it was cited that the historical traumas caused by Russia are especially felt in Chernihiv. In particular, it was expounded that since much of the region's population lived in rural communities during the USSR, and the Soviet government banned travel without official permission, these "historical preconditions" still implicate contemporary residents' spatial attachments.[194] One government official elucidated that in contrast to other regions, and even other countries where people are more mobile and often "attached to where they work," such as in the US, the Chernihiv's inhabitants are instead "attached to where they live."[195] Several others supported this claim, disclosing that most people from Chernihiv do not travel outside of their communities, especially the elderly or those living in rural areas; an 'elite' estimated that ninety percent of inhabitants have never been abroad, while numerous others stated they know people whom have lived their entire lives "without traveling and seeing the rest of the world."[196] Notably, many residents admitted they have a desire to travel abroad, but the region's poor infrastructure and road conditions, weak post-colonial economy, and "very big territory" serve as significant barriers to mobility.[197] Though some individuals suggested the youngest residents may not feel such impediments as they are "'high-tech' youth" who are globally connected, and that older people have "another point of view because they [grew up] in the Soviet Union," it was repeatedly conceded that "even the new generation" is implicated by Ukraine's Soviet history.[198] In again showing how the state's complex past is collectively remembered and embodied (see Agnew, 2001; Kaiser, 2002; Kaiser and Nikiforova, 2006; Liu and Hilton, 2005; Lovell, 1998; Nicholson, 2017; Paasi, 1996; Safran, 2005), these remarks thence counter the popular view that socio-political attitudes and behaviours vary across generations (see, for example, Putnam, 2001).

The perpetuation of intergenerational attachments, and thus construction of Chernihiv as a homeland, is moreover connected to the region's unique milieu as a result of its 'middle' position between Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia (Berezhnaya, 2015; Martinez, 1994; Zhurzhenko, 2010; 2014). As with other borderland areas around the world, and comparable to what was observed in Zakarpattia, complex and multi-faceted relationships have evolved across the territorial borderlines as the residents "get along well with their neighbours" (Rumford, 2006; Sahlins, 1998; Wilson and Donnan, 1998).[199] This was evidenced by an elderly woman in Korobky who voiced that she does not feel the presence of the territorial demarcation as Belarus is "right across the Dnipro" from her village, and by an interlocutor in Lyubech who spoke about her travels to Belarus without a passport during the USSR to pick mushrooms.[200] Mirroring what was expressed in Zakarpattia about Hungary, several contributors also disclosed they travel to the neighbouring states for shopping or for trading goods; it was cited that Chernihiv's residents go to Homel in Belarus since a visa is not required for travel and the quality of products is better, especially food, whereas Belarusians regularly come to Chernihiv because commodities are cheaper.[201] In addition to these

[194] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 21 February 2020.

[195] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 21 February 2020.

[196] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 4 March 2020 and sentiments expressed during a meeting in Sosnytsia on 28 February 2020, respectively.

[197] Interviews conducted in Chernihiv on 21 February 2020 and 19 February 2020, respectively.

[198] Focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 19 February 2020, interview conducted in Chernihiv on 4 March 2020, and focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 20 February 2020, respectively. This reality was also observed during the first mapping exercise when the young adults' English language skills and spatial awareness proved to be stronger than the older participants'.

[199] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 1 March 2020.

[200] Focus groups conducted on 15 February 2020.

[201] This was the reality prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, so it is recognised that circumstances may have fundamentally changed. Participants also revealed that the price differences between Ukraine and the neighbouring states have prompted smuggling, particularly of alcohol and tobacco, and illegal immigration.

cross-border interactions and exchanges, it was detailed that residents have historically emigrated to Russia and Belarus for work, although more to the former due to higher salaries. Of note is that a greater number of residents have gone to EU countries since 2017; one political 'elite' elucidated that Russia is less than thirty kilometres away and Poland is more than one thousand, but "in Russia, there would be about 100 [migrants] and in Poland, about 300."[202] Still, cross-border exchanges implicate the region's socio-economic and political situation in other ways, too, such as through telecommunication networks from both Belarus and Russia, particularly television and radio. It was subsequently stated that due to the region's physical size, disparate population, and weak infrastructure, the people living in the borderlands are greatly detached from larger political and economic processes within Ukraine, and thus predominantly access information from the neighbouring states—several interlocutors called this "propaganda."[203] Whilst controversial, these dynamic interactions, especially with Russia, have nevertheless allowed Chernihiv's residents to access globalised circuits of information and resources inaccessible to their counterparts in more central areas (Diener and Hagen, 2018; Rumford, 2006). Though the borderlines separating Chernihiv from Belarus and Russia have been legally defined since 1991, and the requirement of a foreign passport for entry into Russia came into effect on 1 March 2020, the cross-border interactions and inherited Soviet socio-structural mentalities, which were "so entrenched in the USSR," remain prominent today and continue to implicate the residents' everyday processes and practices.[204]

As a 'communication region,' the region's atmosphere was moreover described by participants as *zmishannya,* or a 'mixture' of socio-cultural meanings and experiences (see Andersson, 2014; Berezhnaya, 2015; Diener and Hagen, 2018; Martinez, 1994; Rumford, 2006; Van Schendel, 1993). Although some participants admitted they "do not really feel the influences from [neighbouring] countries" because Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Russian cultures share Slavonic similarities (for more see Kuzio, 2006; Solchanyk, 1994; Zhurzhenko, 2010), most still referenced the region's "multicultural and multinational" dynamic by explaining they have adopted the values, customs, and traditions of their counterparts in the neighbouring states, especially in the northernmost parts of Chernihiv.[205] In addition to mixed marriages with shared cultural celebrations and traditions, residents explicated that influences from Belarus and Russia can be seen in the form of costumes, dances, and music; for instance, it was cited that a Belarusian choir has been established in the city of Chernihiv and that the region's main philharmonic will often use the mixed languages spoken by people in villages near the boundary line to introduce performances.[206] The adoption of Belarusian cuisine—such as *sirina paska* (a cheese dish) and potato pancakes—was also used to portray Chernihiv as a "transition territory," in addition to the region's architecture, such as the wooden

[202] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 21 February 2020.

[203] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 19 February 2020. I experienced this firsthand when visiting communities near Ukraine's territorial borders and entering Belarus' telecommunications networks. It was explained that geopolitical problems have arisen because people living there regularly receive political information from Russia and Belarus; one 'elite' interviewed in Chernihiv on 1 March 2020 explained that the people in Novhorod-Siverskyi (located approximately forty-five kilometres from Russia) were even against the efforts in 2014 to deconstruct the Lenin statues across Ukraine.

[204] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 10 February 2020.

[205] Interviews conducted in Chernihiv on 17 February 2020 and Nizhyn on 25 February 2020, respectively. It was noted by some participants that the region can be understood as two zones: the North zone is more significantly influenced by Belarusian and Russian language and culture, and the South zone is more similar to the neighbouring and more central regions of Kyiv and Cherkasy where Ukrainian language and culture are more prevalent. Prior to 2014, the connection between Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia was also annually celebrated at a festival in the town of Senkivska (located at the axis of the three countries in northern Chernihiv).

[206] Sentiments from a meeting in Sosnytsia on 28 February 2020 and interviews conducted on 21 February 2020 and 19 February 2020, respectively.

houses in the northern parts of Chernihiv which include both Ukrainian and Belarusian features.[207] The region's unique socio-cultural milieu is likewise portrayed in Houses of Culture, libraries, and museums across the region—a museum in the town of Dobrianka, located on the Ukraine-Belarus border, was precisely noted for its exhibitions. Participants moreover revealed a popular colloquial joke: that the city of Chernihiv is both a Ukrainian city and "the most Belarusian city in Ukraine" due to the significant number of Belarusians living and visiting there and the fact that Belarusian cultural elements have been adopted by locals.[208] Like in Zakarpattia, these sentiments reveal socio-cultural heterogeneity within the region (Pirie, 1996; Ther, 2013), or a *modus vivendi* borderland dynamic (Hartshorne, 1958; Martinez, 1994).

The residents' linguistic patterns further depict a sense of cohesion at the local level in Chernihiv. Similar to Zakarpattia, it was outlined that the region's inhabitants, and especially those in rural areas and nearest the borders, speak a distinct language—called *Surzhyk*—which is a "mix of Belarusian, Ukrainian, and Russian."[209] In the village of Lyubech, for example, an older participant voiced that most residents speak four languages: Ukrainian, Russian, Belarusian, and the "local" dialect which combines these languages into one.[210] Interlocutors in Korobky additionally explained this 'mixed,' or *zymish*, language stems from the influence of the neighbouring states, asserting, "[w]e have Belarus here, right across the Dnipro, and so our language is mixed."[211] Another individual whom was born in a village approximately three kilometres from Belarus similarly detailed this hybrid language in stating, "we have mixed language like Ukrainian and Belarusian on the border."[212] The inclusion of Belarusian words was noted in several other conversations as well, as participants underscored this feature is what distinguishes the tongue from those spoken in other Ukrainian regions, including even neighbouring Kyiv and Sumy, making Chernihiv's dialect "difficult for the persons from other regions to imitate."[213] Also noteworthy is that every village has a slightly different accent or phonology as words from each language are used at different times by different people; a cultural historian pointed to these pronunciation differences in declaring that "somewhere they say 'o,' somewhere 'a.'"[214] Although many interlocutors admitted they recognise it is not necessarily correct for them to speak Surzhyk since it is not an official language, they expounded it is much easier and "more natural for them" than speaking only Russian or Ukrainian.[215] Several others analogously voiced they "feel free to choose" which language they want to speak, and therefore, will switch between languages depending on the setting and with whom they are speaking.[216]

The prevalence of other languages was equally observed through the focus groups and interviews. Russian in particular was demonstrated through participants' language choices; although most people spoke in English and Ukrainian, as was outlined above, Russian was typically used for side conversations between interlocutors. When explaining why Russian is a common street language, one individual noted "the border is close and it has its consequences."[217] Due to the movement of ethnic Russians during the Russian Empire and USSR, it is perhaps unsurprising that historical immigration was cited as an additional

[207] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 21 February 2020.
[208] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 21 February 2020.
[209] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 21 February 2020. Notable here is that Surzhyk is understood in other parts of Ukraine, including Kirovohrad, as a mix of Ukrainian and Russian.
[210] Focus group conducted on 15 February 2020.
[211] Focus group conducted on 15 February 2020.
[212] Focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 16 February 2020.
[213] Focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 19 February 2020.
[214] Sentiments from a meeting in Sosnytsia on 28 February 2020.
[215] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 19 February 2020.
[216] Focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 16 February 2020.
[217] Sentiments from a meeting in Sosnytsia on 28 February 2020.

explanation for the pervasiveness of this tongue: "from the Soviet Union, there was a lot of people who moved from Northern Russia to here. So actually, now, a lot of people speak Russian at home."[218] It was also explained that the USSR's language laws and Russification, which relegated Ukrainian to a language "of the second sort," left Chernihiv's residents, and especially those in urban centres, with limited knowledge of the Ukrainian language—a legacy that has been perpetuated to the modern day (see Peisakhin, 2012; 2015).[219] Further illustrating this reality was one middle-aged woman in Chernihiv who justified her weak Ukrainian language skills by disclosing (in English), "it is not, for instance, my fault because I was born in a Russian-speaking family before the Soviet Union has been…dissolved."[220] In making a similar argument, a regional 'elite' rhetorically queried: "[h]ow are [we] supposed to know Ukrainian if [we] were only taught in Russian?"[221] Notably, rural dwellers admitted to speaking Ukrainian more often than those in urban communities—the latter typically confessed they only speak it "[o]fficially" as it is the state's language, although several asserted they have actively been speaking Ukrainian more often since the events of 2013-14.[222] At the same time, other participants, especially those from the young and middle age groups, detailed they are trying to learn and speak English. Several people elucidated they consume mass media and culture in English, particularly American music, television shows, and films, because it is a "very useful language" if they "want to travel abroad," "access sources of information," or "run away from Ukraine."[223] On this last point, the interlocutors frequently stressed English provides opportunities and a "better life;" one young female even admitted her grandfather told her "a person who does not speak English is worth nothing."[224] Though English is now taught in almost every school in the region and thus spoken by most young people, it was nonetheless revealed that "an average citizen [in Chernihiv] would not speak English" as those who grew up in the USSR did not receive English language training.[225] Taken together, these sentiments point to the ways Russia's continued influence in Chernihiv and the ascribed status subjectively attributed to the English language (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012) have simultaneously implicated the residents' socio-cultural and linguistic behaviours, as well as attachments, within the specific geographical area that is their region (Bös and Zimmer, 2006; Berezhnaya, 2015; Brednikova and Voronkov, 1999; Charron and Diener, 2015; Stokes, 1998; Zhurzhenko, 2010).

6.2.3 Experiencing Borderland Chernihiv as Homeland

Resembling their counterparts in Zakarpattia, the participants in Chernihiv therefore showed that their experiences at the grassroots in light of their region's idiosyncrasies have shaped their feelings of 'separateness' from other Ukrainian citizens (Branch, 2010; 2011; Donnan and Wilson, 1999; Sahlins, 1998). While they did not suggest the same geographical distinctiveness as in the prior chapter—due to the lack of a comparable natural border separating Chernihiv from the rest of Ukraine's territory—nor even a complete sense of disconnectedness from Ukraine, it was regularly depicted that Chernihiv's residents have

[218] Focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 20 February 2020.
[219] Sentiments from a meeting in Sosnytsia on 28 February 2020.
[220] Focus group conducted on 23 February 2020.
[221] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 19 February 2020.
[222] Focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 16 February 2020.
[223] Focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 23 February 2020.
[224] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 10 February 2020.
[225] Interview conducted in Nizhyn on 25 February 2020. This reflects what was observed during the focus group conversations and mapping exercises as young adults spoke in English most frequently. This point also inherently suggests the middle-aged and older participants' use of English may have been in response to my positionality as a native English speaker.

a "difference in mentality," although this may exist unconsciously for some participants.[226] When discussing how Chernihiv fits within the larger territorial landscape of Ukraine, for example, one 'elite' figure asserted that "mentally, there are some differences, like, in everyday life, in the way we think."[227] This notion was supported by others, too, who suggested the region's inhabitants are "more closed" and conservative than other citizens who are "closer to European mentality."[228] Although the region's physical distance from Europe explains why the residents may feel less 'European' than other Ukrainian citizens located closer to the EU, several people suggested their worldviews are actually distinctive because of where Chernihiv is situated in Ukraine's territory. One young man clarified this in stating, "there are people who talk about polarisation of Ukraine, like, Western, Eastern, and I do not think I feel that here in Chernihiv because it is like north Ukraine. Kind of in the middle of this all."[229] Hence, Chernihiv's particular spatial location—as a borderland of Ukraine's defined territory beside Russia and Belarus—appears to inform the residents' ways of thinking and being "in a different way" than other citizens located in the same state.[230] As in the case of the previous region, these views hint at a cognitive distinction between Chernihiv's inhabitants and other Ukrainian citizens, or a 'We/Us' versus 'They/Them' dichotomy (Barrington, 2021; Brubaker et al., 2006; Gregory, 1994; Migdal, 2004; Said, 1978).

Relatedly, the participants in this region also stressed they have an unique 'psycho-type' and "special mentality" due to the influence of the neighbouring states, especially their former imperial power.[231] Similar to the multiculturalism and multifaceted historical socio-cultural legacies persisting at the grassroots in Zakarpattia, Chernihiv's residents explained their mindset resembles both Russians' and Belarusians' because of their shared past and the region's location "in the middle of Belarus and Russia."[232] Still, it was repeatedly emphasised that the impact of Russia is felt much more significantly than that of Belarus. As one political figure detailed:

> The consequences of Ukraine being colonised by Russia can still be found…For instance, why is the Belarusian language not developed here? We border on them, so it could have been quite possible. The answer is that Belarus is not an imperial country. And it does not even invest in the development of the language and culture in its own territory, so, of course, it would not invest in the expansion of it here. And, if we compare Belarus to Russia—why is Russia so interested in that? Because it is an empire. It is their nature—they cannot act differently.[233]

A participant in Sosnytsia accordingly clarified that "this colonial way of thinking still remains in many minds and very seriously influences behaviour, decisions, and so on."[234] In addition to the references to language patterns previously discussed, the actions and behaviours of inhabitants were cited as illustrations of the perpetuated Soviet history in Chernihiv, specifically corruption, smuggling, duplicitous behaviours,

---

[226] Focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 20 February 2020.

[227] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 4 March 2020.

[228] Sentiments expressed during a meeting in Nizhyn on 25 February 2020.

[229] Focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 16 February 2020.

[230] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 4 March 2020.

[231] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 14 February 2020.

[232] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 14 February 2020. Notably, it was often stated that Belarus and Russia have similar Soviet mentalities, cultures, and politics, although in recent years, Belarus has been trying to "strengthen the connection" and "go to Europe" (at least prior to Belarus' 2020 presidential election). These quotes are from an interview conducted in Chernihiv on 3 March 2020.

[233] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 4 March 2020.

[234] Sentiments expressed during a meeting on 28 February 2020.

and socialist worldviews.[235] Of particular note is that participants underscored their particular mindset is not so much connected to contemporary Russia—as Ukrainian citizens indeed have a "different character in comparison with the Russian people"—but rather the legacies of a shared, historical "Soviet mentality."[236] As was seen in the previous chapter, these sentiments show that the residents' 'cognitive templates' have been shaped by both multifaceted historical legacies; the mix of ethnicities, languages, and cultures co-existing in the region; and a relationship with the smaller geographical area of their region. Unlike in Zakarpattia, the participants in this region did not openly purport they are particularly tolerant in nature—although one participant did assert that "people from Chernihiv are open-minded."[237] However, the fact that the region has remained peaceful despite the shared border with Russia and ongoing conflict in other parts of Ukraine, especially along the territorial borderline standing between Ukraine and Russia, hints at a similar sense of diplomacy.

The varied socio-economic impacts of the USSR across the Ukrainian SSR were also offered as an explanation for the distinct mentalities of Chernihiv's residents and the region's lack of infrastructural development, especially when compared to other Ukrainian regions. In fact, it was often divulged that Chernihiv's idiosyncrasies stem from more significant Sovietisation: "we [had] big enterprises in Chernihiv with a good amount of people who [worked] there…different from western regions because they [are] more adapted to be entrepreneurs."[238] Furthermore, a historian interviewed for this project explained that "the West knew only forty years under the Soviet Union and Chernihiv, a bit more than seventy. So, for the West it is two generations, for Chernihiv it is three generations."[239] This man advanced that 'three generations' has "crucial" effects on future generations as "a grandfather can talk to a grandson and share some information with him, but not to a great-grandson." These ancestral bonds very much points to the historical continuity of Chernihiv for the residents' cognitive perceptions of themselves within larger Ukraine, Eastern Europe, and the world (Kaiser, 2002; Liu and Hilton, 2005; Lovell, 1998; Nicholson, 2017; Paasi, 1996; Safran, 2005), as well as a sense of organic rootedness within the region (Breuilly, 1996; Hobsbawm, 1992; Muller, 2008; Smith, 1998; Wilcox, 2004). Although the fact that a pro-Ukrainian party won all constituencies in the last presidential election reinforces that residents recognise their location within the Ukrainian state, when taken together, the above sentiments reveal the region's borderland situation and perpetuated historical legacies, simultaneously, implicate life at the local level (Graziano, 2018; Peisakhin, 2012; 2015; Salter, 2012).[240] Even though Chernihiv's residents did not overtly state that their attachments to their region are greater than their senses of belonging with Ukraine in the way seen in Zakarpattia, they accordingly still implicitly showed the importance of this smaller geographical scale for the ways they conceptualise themselves within Ukraine (Agnew, 2001; Ther, 2013). In particular, it is critical for the ways they envision their homeland within their state's larger territory.

[235] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 14 February 2020.
[236] Focus group and interview conducted in Chernihiv on 23 February 2020 and on 14 February 2020, respectively.
[237] Sentiments expressed during a meeting on 23 February 2020.
[238] Focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 16 February 2020.
[239] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 21 February 2020.
[240] Volodymyr Zelensky won all districts in the second round, and all but one in the first round (which Yulia Tymoshenko won).

Chapter 7:
Kirovohrad as 'the Centre'

"And when you are in the middle, everybody is trying to refer to you,
like, everybody is influencing you."

Young adult (2019)
Kropyvnytskyi, Kirovohrad

"[T]he centre does not differ much. The East and the West do differ.
The centre absorbs everything."

Middle-aged adult (2019)
Novomyrhorod, Kirovohrad

"And today, in the centre of Ukraine, new politics is being created…
we cannot make up our minds about Europe or Modern *Moskoviya*."

Older adult (2019)
Bobrynets, Kirovohrad

7.1 Conceptualising Kirovohrad Within Territorial Ukraine

7.1.1 Cognitively Mapping Place

Following from the previous two chapters analysing the borderland experience from the territorial peripheries of Ukraine, Kirovohrad is used in this project to uncover the cognitive perceptions of place, space, and territory held by ordinary people in the macro-level geo-ideological borderland that is Ukraine. The opening quotations remind us that Kirovohrad is the centremost region of the country and, as such, this chapter complements the previous two in Part II in uncovering the spatial attachments of individuals living in the middle of both Ukraine's territory and the geographical area between Russia and Europe. As this project is interested in the 'individualising' intricacies and distinctiveness of the overall borderland experience (Tilly, 1984), uncovering the particularities of Kirovohrad is again more important than a comparison of this region's findings to those of Zakarpattia and Chernihiv. By drawing on primary data conducted in-person in Kirovohrad in June and July 2019, this chapter therefore resembles the previous two in exploring how borderlanders' experiences and relationships with various spatial scales inform their attachments to, and ways they construct meaning around, both local-level places and the territory of the Ukrainian state (Pacione, 1978). Like the previous two chapters, this one's exploration of Kirovohrad also shows the value of including representational spaces and the continuous and ethnosymbolic ties to space in analyses of nationalism. Hence, when the observations from Kirovohrad are considered with those from Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, they offer fundamental insights into the everyday experience of nationalism in borderland areas.

Young Adults (18-29 years)

The cognitive maps drawn by the young adults in Kirovohrad offer important insight into the spatial awareness of this age group through the ways they are both similar and dissimilar to those drawn in Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, as well as by the older residents of the same region. Like their counterparts, residents under the age of thirty in Kirovohrad appear to know exactly where they are located in their region, where their region is located in territorial Ukraine, and where Ukraine is located in Eastern Europe. Their precision when marking where they are from during the first mapping exercise is demonstrated by the select sample presented in Figure 7.1, where it can be seen that the authors—like all young adults from this region—placed their marks in almost identical locations in the centre of Ukraine. In some instances, and as was also done by young adults in Chernihiv, the interlocutors in Kirovohrad crossed out their original markings to draw a second one in what they believed was a more 'accurate' position, or, verbally explained they needed to add two locales to their maps in order to best show where they are from (see Table 7.4). The bottom right map in Figure 7.1 is an example of this approach, as the author clarified that he was not confused about where he 'is from,' but rather needed to add two marks to correctly answer the question—one where he was born (Lviv) and one where he lives now (Kropyvnytskyi). The precision of marks by this age group was furthermore revealed through quantitative analyses : Table 7.4 shows that 90.5 percent of participants used a defined dot or other mark to denote their locale. Remarkably, even the two individuals whose demarcations were less clear than the others still added a place name in the approximate location of their locales, which matched a standard map of Ukraine.

Table 7.1. Difference between the EF and OF of spatial binaries on map #1 drawn by young adults.[241]

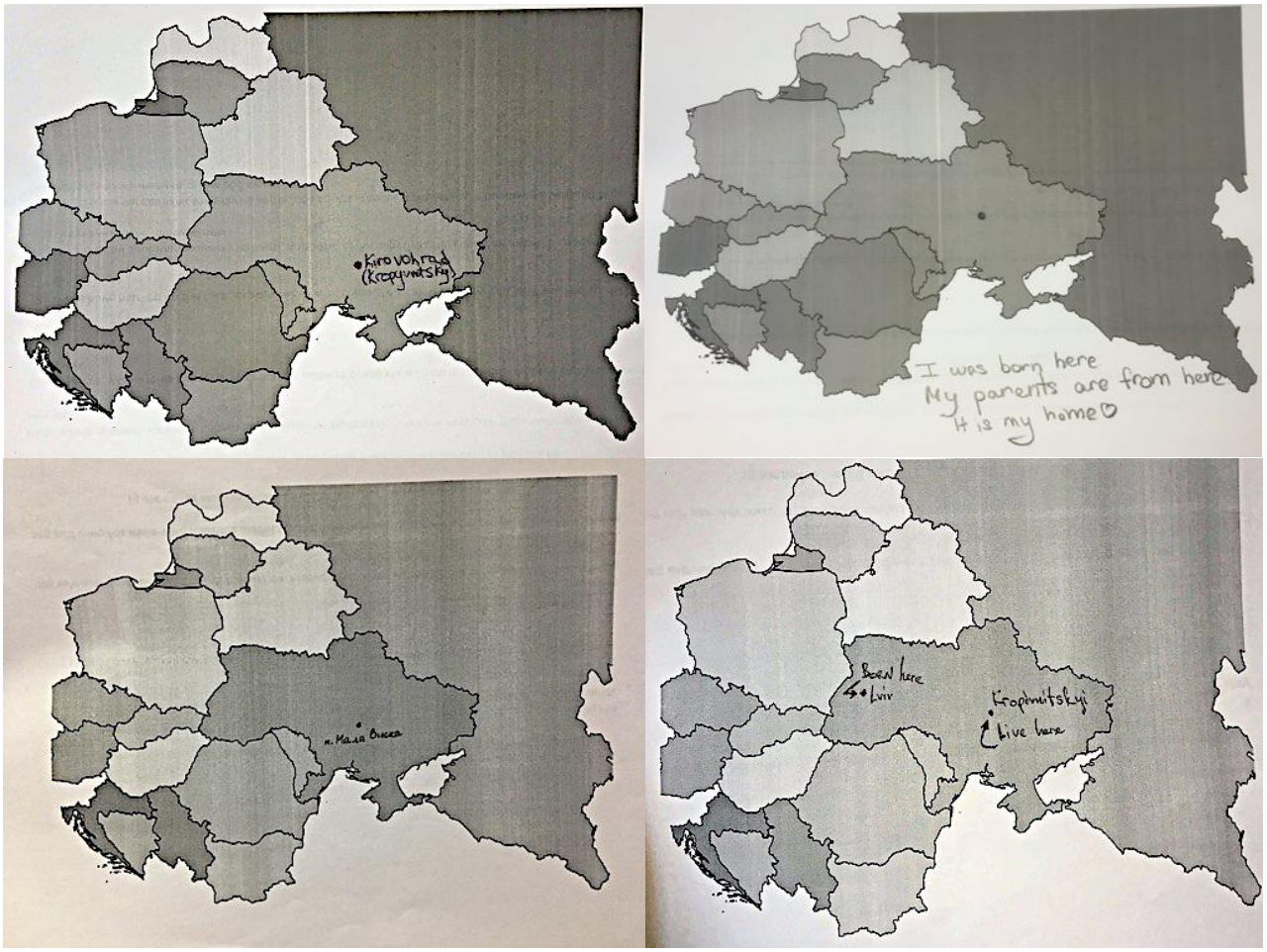
Significantly More Frequent	Significantly Less Frequent	Within Expected Range
Locale (in non-Ukrainian) – 52.4% (OF = 11, EF = 6.1, AR = 2.7)	Locale (in Ukrainian) – 19.0% (OF = 4, EF = 11.4, AR = -3.8)	Region (in Ukrainian) – 4.8% (OF = 1, EF = 2.4, AR = -1.1)
Locale (in English) – 52.4% (OF = 11, EF = 5.3, AR = 3.3)	Ukraine (in Ukrainian) – 0.0% (OF = 0, EF = 4.0, AR = -2.6)	

The maps drawn by young adults in Kirovohrad are also similar to those of the young adults in Zakarpattia and Chernihiv in that place names appeared frequently. Whilst no instruction suggested it was necessary to add labels, fifteen of the twenty-one participants in Kirovohrad wrote the names of their cities and villages on their maps. The statistics presented in Table 7.1 indicate that place names appeared in a non-Ukrainian language significantly more frequently than expected on the maps drawn by this age group. Similar to what was also seen in the other two regions is that the 'non-Ukrainian' language used by participants was English—more than half of the young adults wrote a locale name in this tongue. Conversely, the use of the Ukrainian language to write the names of their locales, region, or even country appeared significantly less frequently than expected, and neither Russian nor Surzhyk appeared on any maps drawn by participants from this age group. Again, these findings resemble what was observed in

[241] N = 21. Only the statistically significant (p-value ≤ 0.05) binaries are included.

Zakarpattia and Chernihiv in terms of young adults' language choices, and point to possible foreign language training, in addition to engagement and knowledge about the world, travel experiences, and access to and/or use of the Internet and other telecommunication technologies. The fact that no young adults in this region used their phones or consulted others during the focus groups (something that was done regularly by older participants in all three regions) further illustrates their high level of spatial awareness and confidence in terms of identifying both Ukraine within the representation of Eastern Europe and their own locations within the territory of Ukraine. Importantly, no differences could visibly be observed in the maps or the approaches taken by young people living in urban and rural locales.

Figure 7.1. Select young adults' responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1.



The top two maps were drawn in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019; bottom left in Kropyvnytskyi on 3 July 2019; and bottom right in Mala Vyska on 13 July 2019.

Middle-aged Adults (30-49 years)

When compared to the cognitive maps drawn by the young adults, the middle-aged adults in Kirovohrad conveyed where they are from in similar, albeit slightly different ways. As can be seen in Figure 7.2, the markings by participants from this age group in both urban and rural locales were again quite precise,

resembling standard maps of contemporary Ukraine. Also similar to the young adults is that the middle-aged adults regularly added place names to their maps; twenty-eight of the thirty respondents wrote the name of a locale on their map during the first exercise. Unlike the younger participants, though, those from this age group used Ukrainian significantly more often than any other language when labeling their maps (see Table 7.2). When a non-Ukrainian language was used to write the name of a place (on eight of the thirty maps), English was used in every instance. Dissimilar to what was seen on the maps drawn by younger participants, the middle-aged adults in Kirovohrad also regularly labeled their country (by adding 'Ukraine')—this binary was also the only one to appear at a frequency significantly higher than anticipated on the maps by this age group. At the same time, middle-aged adults labeled their regions on their maps at a rate significantly less often than expected; only three participants wrote their region's name and all used English to do so. This finding is particularly noteworthy as it stands in contrast to what was observed in both Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, as well as suggesting the participants may feel a greater attachment to their locales or country than to their region, which is discussed further below.

Table 7.2. Difference between the EF and OF of spatial binaries on map #1 drawn by middle-aged adults.[242]

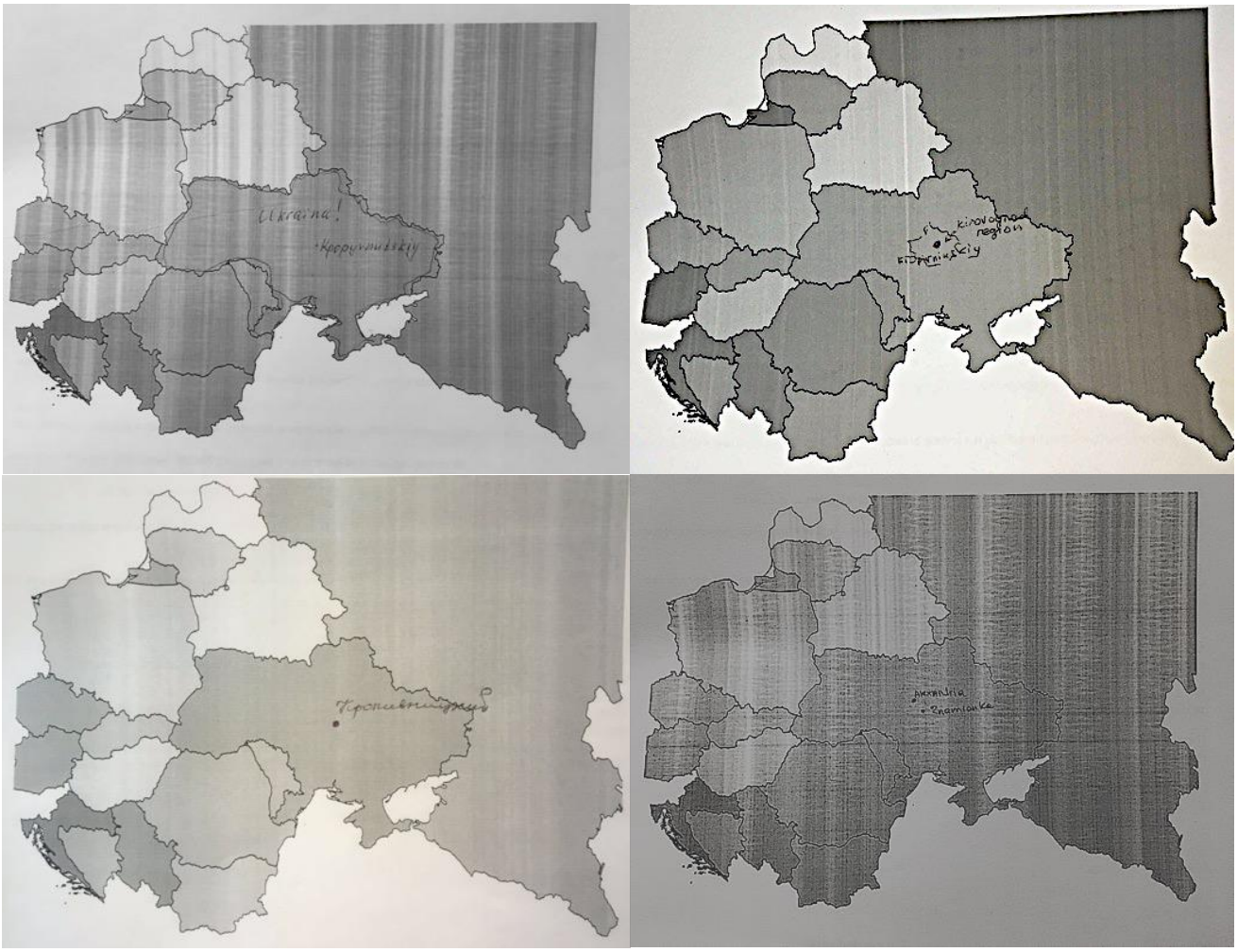
Significantly More Frequent	Significantly Less Frequent	Within Expected Range
Ukraine (in Ukrainian) – 33.3% (OF = 10, EF = 5.7, AR = 2.5)	Region (in Ukrainian) – 0.0% (OF = 0, EF = 3.4, AR = -2.5)	Locale (in Ukrainian) – 66.7% (OF = 20, EF = 16.3, AR = 1.7) Locale (in non-Ukrainian) – 26.7% (OF = 8, EF = 8.7, AR = -0.4) Locale (in English) – 26.7% (OF = 8, EF = 7.6, AR = 0.2)

It must also be noted that the middle-aged adults, like their counterparts in the other two regions, exhibited some uncertainty about the precise location of their locales within representations of space. This was witnessed during the focus groups when they consulted each other in order to confirm the placement of their locales. Four individuals from this age group also added vague or unclear markings to their maps, although place names were still added within the area representing Ukraine's territory (see Table 7.4). In addition, more interlocutors from this age group than the younger age groups demarcated more than one locale on their maps—this was observed on 20.0 percent of the middle-aged adults' maps. In many of these instances, the participants explained they had added two places because they had moved to Kirovohrad later in life after growing up elsewhere. For instance, one middle-aged man stated, "I was born in Znam'yanka and then I moved to Kropyvnytskyi and I had work there, but, due to some family matters, now I live in Znam'yanka, but go to Kropyvnytskyi to work. Now, I am, like, officially I am from Kropyvnytskyi…actually I am from here (Znam'yanka)."[243] Similarly, an interlocutor from Kropyvnytskyi

[242] N = 30. Only the statistically significant (p-value ≤ 0.05) binaries are included.
[243] Focus group conducted in Znam'yanka on 11 July 2019.

explained she had lived in several places throughout her childhood because her family had moved frequently: "besides Ukraine, I lived in Uzbekistan and Russia."[244] These experiences are not particularly surprising as the middle-aged adults have likely had more opportunities than those younger to travel or migrate for economic and/or educational reasons throughout their lives, including internally within the USSR with their families.[245] Implicitly demonstrated through the maps, then, is that living in several places throughout their lives has indeed impacted the middle-aged adults' spatial awareness and perceptions of Ukraine's territory, if only because it has left them feeling attached to more than one municipality.

Figure 7.2. Select middle-aged adults' responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1.



The top two maps were drawn in Kropyvnytskyi on 16 July 2019 and 1 July 2019, respectively; bottom left in Kropyvnytskyi on 3 July 2019; and bottom right in Znam'yanka on 11 July 2019.

[244] Focus group conducted on 16 July 2019.

[245] As Kirovohrad historically housed a Soviet military settlement, many of the middle-aged participants' parents and grandparents were military personnel who had migrated to the region from other republics during the USSR.

Older Adults (50 years and older)

In contrast to the young and middle-aged participants, significant differences can be observed in how the eldest adults in Kirovohrad demonstrated their cognitive understandings of space, place, and territory. As is depicted through the sample of maps presented in Figure 7.3; older adults from both urban and rural locales were able to identify Ukraine, their region, and their locales within the unlabeled spatial representations of Eastern Europe. In fact, only two maps drawn by individuals from this age group had unclear or ambiguous markings (see Table 7.4), which is particularly noteworthy when compared to the older adults in Zakarpattia and Chernihiv whose maps were often vaguely or incorrectly marked. Additionally, sixteen of the twenty-eight older interlocutors added more than one place to their maps, which is significantly more than the other two age groups (see Table 7.4). When detailing why they had added two marks, the older adults offered explanations resembling those of the younger interlocutors; for instance, one older woman in Bobrynets moved her finger between the two places she had added while stating, "I was born there and then I came here."[246] Another participant in the same focus group told an equivalent story, asserting, "I am a new person to this place, but came here forty-six years ago. I thought I would spend some time here, but people, they made me stay here, and I do not regret it."[247] At the same time that the older adults added more than one locale to their maps, it must still be noted that they demonstrated the least confidence of all participants included from their region; in Bobrynets, for instance, two older women were unable to locate Ukraine and sat quietly until a younger colleague showed them how he had marked their village's location on his own map. Similarly, in Pervozvanivka, there was considerable debate about how close Kirovohrad is situated to the geographical centre of Ukraine, and whether it is indeed the centremost region. As most interlocutors from this age group managed to accurately locate themselves within their maps by consulting one another and the other members of their focus groups, it can therefore be assumed that they cognitively understand their locations within space and Ukraine's territory, but were perhaps unable to translate this spatial awareness visually or in writing.

Table 7.3. Difference between the EF and OF of spatial binaries on map #1 drawn by older adults.[248]

Significantly More Frequent	Significantly Less Frequent	Within Expected Range
Region (in Ukrainian) – 28.6% (OF = 8, EF = 3.2, AR = 3.6)	Locale (in non-Ukrainian) – 14.3% (OF = 4, EF = 8.2, AR = -2.1) Locale (in English) – 3.6% (OF = 1, EF = 7.1, AR = -3.3)	Locale (in Ukrainian) – 67.9% (OF = 19, EF = 15.2, AR = 1.8) Ukraine (in Ukrainian) – 17.9% (OF = 5, EF = 5.3, AR = -0.2)

Also noticeably dissimilar to the maps drawn by the younger participants in this region, who predominantly highlighted their locales or country, is that the older adults often emphasised their region—this was the only binary to appear significantly more often than expected across the older adults' maps,

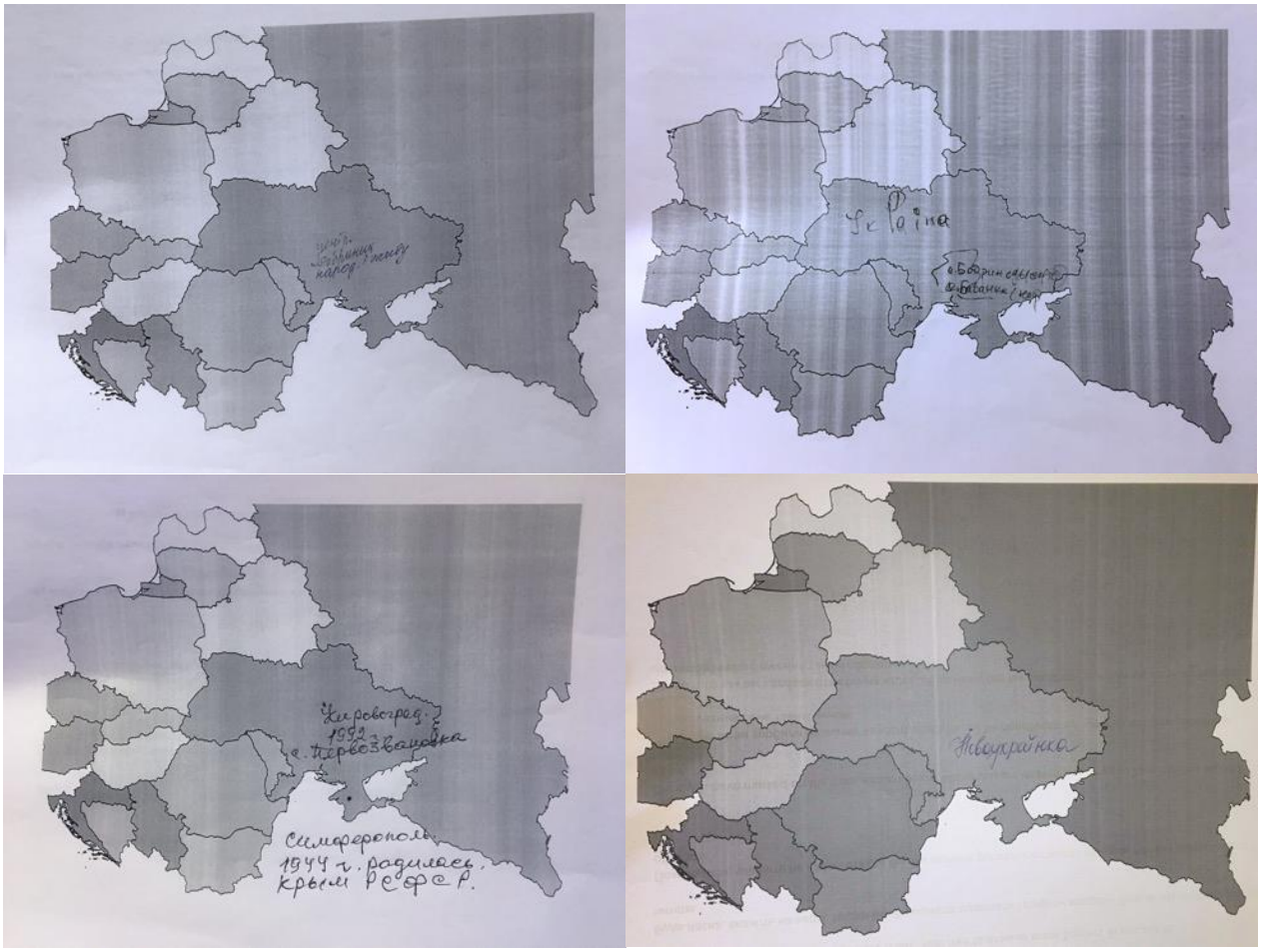
[246] Focus group conducted on 12 July 2019.

[247] Focus group conducted in Bobrynets on 12 July 2019.

[248] N = 28. Only the statistically significant (p-value ≤ 0.05) binaries are included.

although still only observed on eight (see Table 7.3). Another particularly striking observation is that the older participants wrote primarily in Ukrainian, while Russian, Surzhyk, and English were all used as 'non-Ukrainian languages' (an example is the use of Russian by the author of the map found on the bottom left in Figure 7.3). Whereas the younger and middle-aged participants used Ukrainian and English to write place names, as was previously discussed, it is noteworthy that Russian and Surzhyk were observed on maps drawn by participants from this age group in Kirovohrad. Importantly, and like in Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, this finding may be explained by the older participants' formative socialisation in the USSR and the possibility that they have weak English language skills due to fewer opportunities for foreign language training, interactions with people from English-speaking states, and international mobility, as well as minimal engagement with English language media. Although not majorly surprising, these findings nonetheless underscore how age and life experiences shape individuals' spatial awareness and geographical knowledge.

Figure 7.3. Select older adults' responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1.



The top two maps were drawn in Bobrynets on 12 July 2019; bottom left in Pervozvanivka on 14 July 2019; and bottom right in Novoukrainka on 11 July 2019.

Table 7.4. Observed frequencies of stylistic elements on map #1 by all ages.

Stylistic Element	Young Adults (N = 21)	Middle-Aged Adults (N = 30)	Older Adults (N = 28)	Total (N = 79)
Precise dot/checkmark	90.5% (OF = 19)	86.7% (OF = 26)	92.9% (OF = 26)	89.9% (OF = 71)
Erasure/remark	4.8% (OF = 1)	3.3% (OF = 1)	0.0% (OF = 0)	2.5% (OF = 2)
More than one place detailed	9.5% (OF = 2)	20.0% (OF = 6)	57.1% (OF = 16)	30.4% (OF = 24)
Specific place not clearly marked	9.5% (OF = 2)	13.3% (OF = 4)	7.1% (OF = 2)	10.1% (OF = 8)
Different place (locale, region, or country) explicitly denoted	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	10.7% (OF = 3)	3.8% (OF = 3)

7.1.2 Unpacking Local Attachment

In tacitly revealing attachments to various spatial scales (Pacione, 1978), the findings from the first mapping exercise show that the residents from all three age groups in Kirovohrad, like in the other two regions, feel a strong association with their locales. These affective bonds are demonstrated by the frequency at which participants demarcated their cities, towns, and villages when answering where they 'are from' during the first mapping exercise. These attachments are also exhibited by the statistics presented in Table 7.4, where it can be seen that only eight contributors chose not to add a specific locale to their maps. Even whilst individuals' locales could not be determined in these instances, it must be noted that all of the authors still wrote the names of a municipality in a spot that matched its location on a standard map of Ukraine. These findings accordingly suggest Kirovohrad's residents, like those from Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, are both attached to these local places and are cognitively aware of their geographical position within the larger territory of Ukraine—this last point was reinforced by the fact that all maps except for one (of an older participant) added a locale within the spatial representation of Ukraine.[249] The significance of individual municipalities was furthermore seen through the way some interlocutors added a flower or heart to mark local places, rather than using a simple dot or check (see, for example, top right map in Figure 7.5). As these symbols have positive connotations, their appearance infers the authors feel emotional connections with the highlighted places—feelings which have evidently been embedded within their psyche either consciously or subconsciously (Campbell, 2018; Canter, 1997; Groat, 1995; Hubbard, 2005; Tuan, 1977). Hence, in spite of the subtle differences in terms of how interlocutors approached their maps, these intimate places evidently hold immense importance for people of all ages across Kirovohrad.

The focus group conversations in Kirovohrad additionally revealed the participants' associations with their locales. These attachments were overtly disclosed following the first mapping exercise as the contributors spoke about the sites they had marked on their maps. For instance, a middle-aged woman in Kropyvnytskyi conveyed her affection for her municipality above all other spatial scales in stating, "I always identify myself with the city," while an older interlocutor in Pervozvanivka described her attachment to her hometown by asserting, "I was born here. I have been to many countries, and it hurts that people there live better, but I always come back here because it is my home."[250] Several other

[249] Importantly, this participant did not mislabel their map as it was written that they were born in St. Petersburg.
[250] Focus groups conducted on 16 July 2019 and 14 July 2019, respectively.

participants expressed analogous sentiments when speaking about their towns and cities as the places where they feel most at home, as is depicted through statements suggesting they "want to live [there] for the rest of [their lives]" because "all [their] memories" are associated with these specific sites.[251] A woman in Bobrynets exhibited these deep-rooted attachments in elucidating that she feels her town is her family's "nest" because they have always lived there together.[252] A parallel example illustrating the bonds between families and locales is the top right map in Figure 7.1, where a young adult described her particular locale as her and her parents' 'home.' Implicitly disclosed through these expressions is again an underlying belief of ancestral legacies and continuous ties to symbolic places (Breuilly, 1996; Coakley, 2018; Smith, 1996; 1998; 2009; Weinreich et al., 2003), which has aided in the construction of home attachments to particular places (Altman and Low, 1992; Gustafson, 2001a; 2001b; Hay, 1998; Low, 1992). Also of note here, and resembling what was observed in the previous two chapters, is that the participants in Kirovohrad who articulated the strongest sense of belonging with their locales were the middle-aged and older individuals living in rural communities. This was disclosed through statements resembling the following one by the middle-aged participant who lived in Uzbekistan and Russia during childhood: "when I came here (Kropyvnytskyi), surprisingly I liked the wide streets…and I feel comfortable here, the way I did not feel in other cities."[253] Likewise, an older woman in Pervozvanivka articulated a sense of familiarity and ease with her town, avowing, "[i]n my garden, I plant something and relax. This way, I forget about politics and everything."[254] As with the related sentiments expressed in Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, the cognitive and behavioural attachments to local-level places shown by Kirovohrad's residents are somewhat counterintuitive in light of the historical traumas and dislocations associated with the Soviet era, and the fact that Kirovohrad once housed a military settlement and major trading centre, the Fort of St. Elizabeth, which served merchants across the Russian Empire and Eastern and Central Europe. While the rootedness of this region's residents can somewhat be understood given their distance from the cartographic disruptions of Ukraine's territory—which was experienced more directly in Zakarpattia and Chernihiv—and the rural residents' attachments explained by the reality that their communities were less affected by Soviet policies (Humphrey, 1988), which increased the likelihood of attachments and identities enduring in these areas (Peisakhin, 2014), the residents' strong place attachments nonetheless add noteworthy insight into the ongoing discussions around intergenerational legacies in post-Soviet civil society (see Alesina and Fuchs-Schuendeln, 2007; Peisakhin, 2014; 2015; Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2017; Wittenberg, 2006).

In resembling what was mentioned in both Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, the focus group conversations in Kirovohrad also revealed the importance of community bonds and social networks at the grassroots level. When speaking about their fellow residents, for example, one middle-aged participant admitted, "I do not think if I go somewhere, I will find such generosity, such kindness, care [as in Znam'yanka]," while another interlocutor in Kropyvnytskyi asserted she likes her city because that is where "[her] relatives, [her] friends, and friends of [her] relatives" are located.[255] Like in Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, the participants in Kirovohrad similarly revealed their connections with other people through mentions of the formal organisations that have been established in their local communities, such as dance groups, choirs, and cultural associations—participants in a focus group in Pervozvanivka even extended an invitation to a performance by their local dance troupe, '*Garmonia*,' happening the following day. Similarly,

[251] Focus groups conducted in Mala Vyska on 13 July 2019 and in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019, respectively.
[252] Focus group conducted on 12 July 2019.
[253] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 16 July 2019.
[254] Focus group conducted on 14 July 2019.
[255] Focus groups conducted on 11 July 2019 and 2 July 2019, respectively.

interlocutors in Novoukrainka explained that their town has several dance groups for both adults and children as well as four folk choral groups—one of the choirs was invited to the focus group and started the meeting with a surprise concert consisting of several traditional Ukrainian songs. Other activities within the participants' locales were also cited and showed their place attachments, such as the annual celebration of each municipality (also known as *Den Micta* or *Den Sela*), wherein community members come together at cultural centres for festive evenings of music, dance, and food.[256] Local traditional practices were additionally described, and it was elucidated they have been preserved throughout history by being shared amongst community members; beading, embroidery, breadmaking, and music were specifically mentioned, with examples of the first two displayed during focus groups in Mala Vyska, Novoukrainka, and Pervozvanivka. Whilst place-bound traditions are unique across Ukraine's regions—as is simply demonstrated by the different colours and patterns used in embroidery and artwork in the three regions included in this project—they reinforce that attachments and identities persist intergenerationally even in spite of a country's turbulent history (Alesina and Fuchs-Schuendeln, 2007; Peisakhin, 2014; 2015; Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2017; Wittenberg, 2006). The enduring local cultures and place attachments furthermore demonstrate the residents' sense of loyalty to their locales (Gustafson, 2001a; 2001b; Hay, 1998) and symbolism associated with particular places (Breuilly, 1996; Hobsbawm, 1992; Muller, 2008; Smith, 1998; Wilcox, 2004), in addition to meaningful emotional and affective bonds with others living within the same place (Altman and Low, 1992; Low, 1992).

7.2 Borderland Ukraine as Homeland

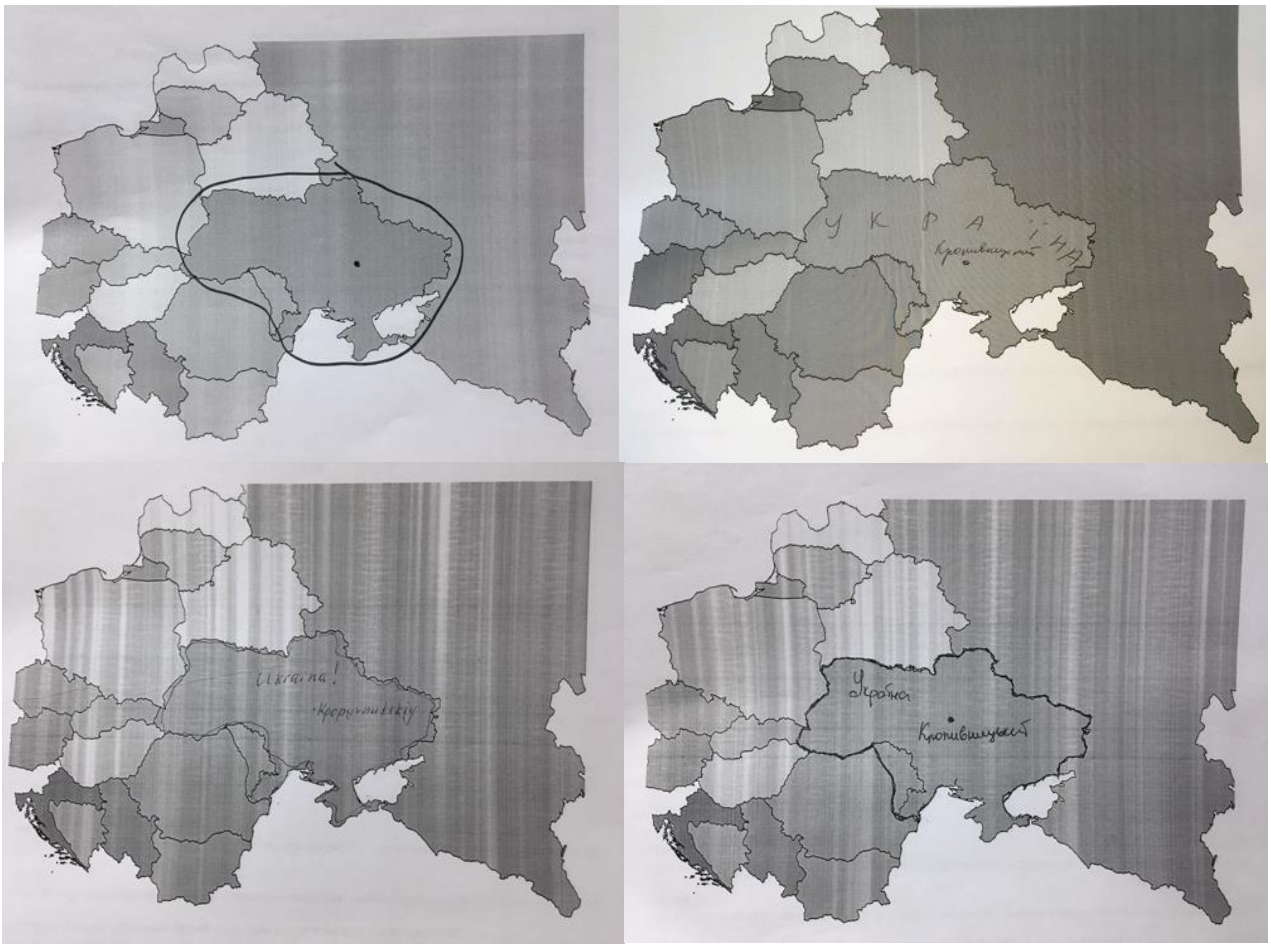
7.2.1 Ukraine as Homeland

Even though local places hold significant meanings for Kirovohrad's residents, as was also observed in Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, Ukraine's centremost inhabitants differ in that they did not depict the same sense of belonging with their region as their counterparts. Instead, the participants from Kirovohrad exhibited comparable affectual bonds with the spatial scale of territory. These feelings of attachment could clearly be seen through the various ways interlocutors spoke about their state during the focus groups and interviews; namely, they repeatedly stated they are first and foremost from Ukraine and then from Kirovohrad or a certain locale. For instance, when explaining where they 'are from,' one middle-aged woman in Kropyvnytskyi specified, "Ukraine, then the central part of Ukraine, then Kropyvnytskyi," while a young man in Bobrynets claimed he identifies "more with the country" than his region or town.[257] While the participants did, in some instances, demonstrate regional attachments—as can be seen in Figures 7.2 and 7.3 where some authors highlighted Kirovohrad's geographical area in addition to specifying their locales—they routinely expressed stronger bonds with Ukraine. This was evidenced by the fact that more people wrote 'Ukraine' than 'Kirovohrad' on their first map: 21.5 percent of participants (seventeen of the seventy-nine) added their country's name compared to the 16.5 percent (thirteen of the seventy-nine) who added their region's name. Although this difference is not incredibly significant, several other contributors from different age groups across Kirovohrad likewise highlighted the state's territory in their own representations of space in a way similar to the maps presented in Figure 7.4. In emphasising the boundary lines of the Ukrainian state on their maps, the participants from this region thus both portrayed their attachments to this larger spatial scale and reinforced its definition (Agnew, 2001; Lukermann, 1964). It

[256] I was invited to, and attended, several of these festivals in Kirovohrad during my in-person fieldwork.
[257] Focus groups conducted on 3 July 2019 and 12 July 2019, respectively.

must be noted that while all four of these authors also demarcated a particular municipality on their maps, none of them wrote their region's name, nor outlined the geographical area of their region.

Figure 7.4. Select responses to 'where are you from?' on map #1.



The top left map was drawn by a young adult in Mala Vyska on 13 July 2019; top right by a middle-aged adult in Kropyvnytskyi on 1 July 2019; and bottom two by middle-aged adults in Kropyvnytskyi on 16 July 2019.

Notably, some contributors did still express a sense of attachment to their region, such as by articulating that Kirovohrad "is the best place in the world" or the "[r]egion is close to me and my soul."[258] Yet, the syntax regularly used by residents when speaking about Kirovohrad inherently suggests their connection to Ukraine is stronger than to this smaller spatial scale, particularly as they repeatedly used Ukraine as a point of reference when describing their region. When asked about Kirovohrad, for example, participants in Kropyvnytskyi elucidated that it is Ukraine's "widest oblast," and "looks like mini-Ukraine: we have East and West, I mean, like miniature."[259] Remarkably, this same analogy was also used in another

[258] Focus group and interview conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019 and 4 July 2019, respectively.
[259] Focus group conducted on 3 July 2019.

focus group when a male adult emphasised that Kirovohrad "is like the whole country in miniature. It represents almost every single part [of Ukraine], the south steppes, the north forests, one river, some coal mines to the east. So it is like the whole [of] Ukraine."[260] When explaining where the region is located in space, individuals from all age groups and in every locale referenced their state in a similar way, such as by asserting that Kirovohrad is in "the centre of Ukraine," "the very heart of Ukraine," and the larger ethno-geographical area, *Tsentralna Ukraina* (or 'Central Ukraine').[261] Another person further explained that the region is located within the interior of Ukraine, meaning "the distance is the same from [them] to every border…It is 800 kilometers to Poland, Kyiv, Vinnytsia, Odesa."[262] The common use of Ukraine as a point of reference thus shows that the residents cognise the small section of space that is Kirovohrad, including its size, shape, and location (Paasi, 1996; Safran, 2005), in relation to the larger spatial area of Ukraine's contemporary territory (Agnew, 2001; Lukermann, 1964). In contrast to the regions nearer to the state's borders, where locales and regions were described vis-à-vis the neighbouring states, Kirovohrad's residents drew on the territory of Ukraine to illustrate its significance for understanding and defining—though not necessarily consciously—their habitat and the people within it, including themselves (Brubaker, 2005; Burghardt, 1973; Gottmann, 1973; Herb, 1999; Knight, 1982).

In elucidating the inherent symbolic meaning of this spatial scale, the participants in Kirovohrad thus demonstrated that they perceive Ukraine to be their 'homeland.' The residents' expressions of attachment to their state and its territory, as was outlined above, implicitly display this reality, as well as their vernacular descriptions of where they 'are from' and assertions that Ukraine is their "homeland."[263] Additionally evidencing this were individuals' assertions that they feel "love" for Ukraine as a "native place that is [their] home."[264] Important to note here, and like in Chernihiv, is that interlocutors admitted their feelings of attachment to Ukraine may be connected to the fact that they have not experienced living in many other places as they were not encouraged to go abroad during the USSR and international travel is now expensive. Still, several contributors detailed they would want to live in Ukraine even if they had the opportunity to go abroad, such as the young man who stated he does not want to leave Ukraine: "I think my country needs me at this difficult time. That is why I am here."[265] Furthermore, and in line with prior literature and what was detailed in the prior chapters, is that participants in a focus group in Mala Vyska stated Kirovohrad as a smaller spatial entity could equally be called their 'homeland' (Kaiser, 2002; Lovell, 1998; Paasi, 1996; Safran, 2005; Tuan, 1977); however, several other residents argued against this idea in stating that their region is only a small version of homeland, whereas "big Ukraine country" is their true homeland.[266] Also striking is that 'homeland,' 'motherland,' and 'fatherland' were all used interchangeably by interlocutors when referencing the larger territory of Ukraine. For instance, during a joint interview in Kropyvnytskyi, two individuals expounded that within their "fatherland," they live at the "symbolic border between East and West marked by the Dnipro."[267] When asked about their regional attachments, a female interlocutor also affirmed that Ukraine "is [her] motherland," although she was quickly interrupted by

[260] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019.

[261] Focus groups conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 3 July 2019 and Bobrynets on 12 July 2019, respectively. 'Central Ukraine' refers to the historical, cultural, and geographical area in the middle of Ukraine encompassing the regions of Kirovohrad, Poltava, and Cherkasy, which share unique linguistic, cultural, and traditional elements.

[262] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 1 July 2019.

[263] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 16 July 2019.

[264] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019.

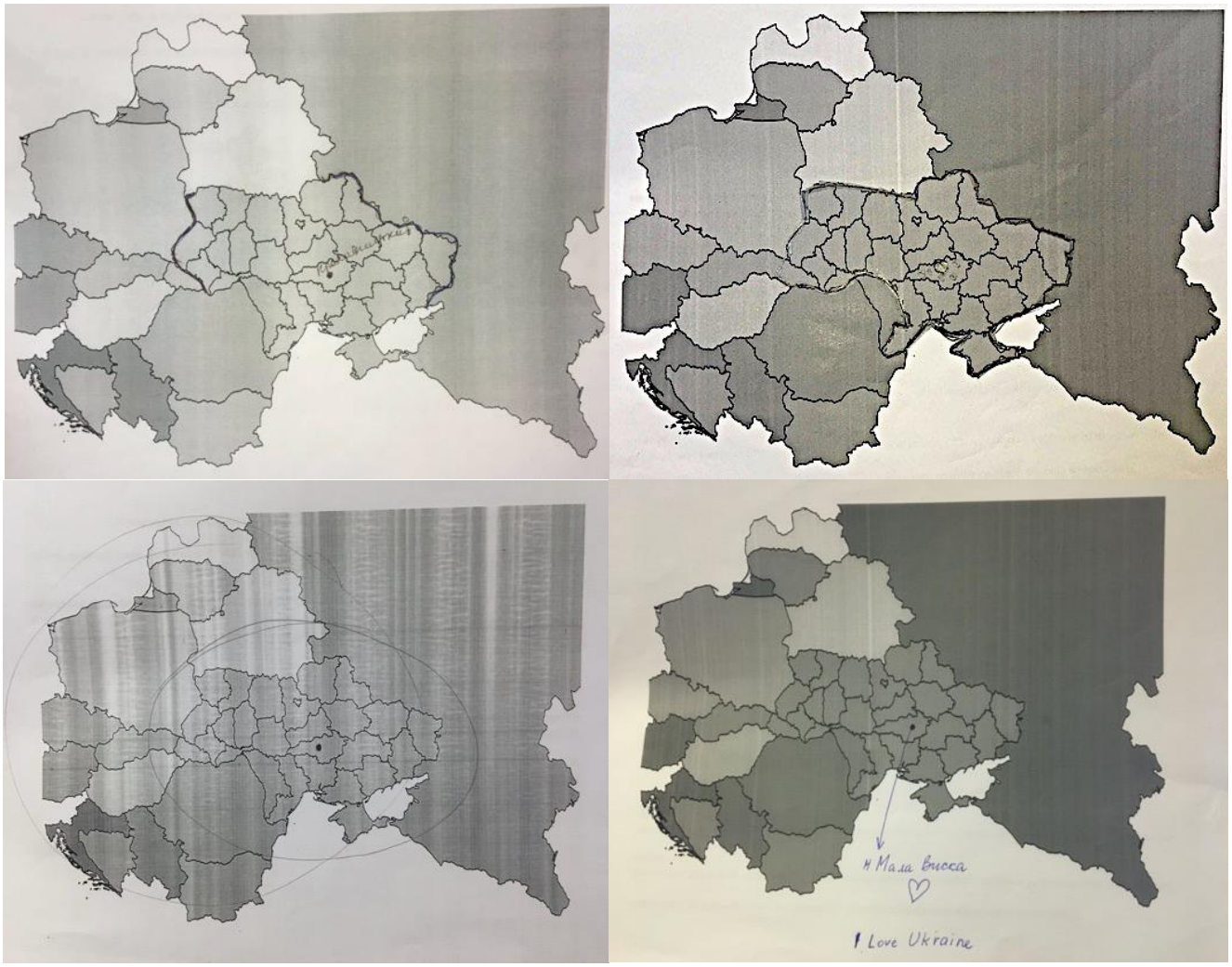
[265] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 29 June 2019.

[266] Focus group conducted on 13 July 2019.

[267] Interview conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 9 July 2019.

another participant in her focus group who explained that such views about Ukraine were not relevant as the question specifically asked "about the region."[268] Particularly noteworthy here is that the woman's second attempt at answering the question still showed her attachment to her country, as she again used Ukraine as a reference point in stating that she likes Kirovohrad because "it is the very centre of Ukraine." In contrast to the findings of the previous two chapters, these sentiments accordingly indicate that Kirovohrad's residents feel stronger affective attachments to their state than to their region.

Figure 7.5. Select responses to 'where are you from?' on map #2.



The top left map was drawn by a middle-aged adult in Kropyvnytskyi on 3 July 2019; top right by a young adult in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019; and bottom two by young adults in Mala Vyska on 13 July 2019.

Yet, similar to what was observed in Zakarpattia and Chernihiv is that Kirovohrad's participants disclosed that imagery and landscapes of Ukraine, including its natural environment and ecology, play a

[268] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 16 July 2019.

significant role in the construction of Ukraine as their homeland. In addition to the aforementioned references to Ukraine's landscapes when describing their region as a 'miniature Ukraine,' the contributors regularly specified that their territory has "beautiful nature," which they described as "a mixture of fields and forests."[269] The "beautiful sceneries, fields, rivers" were also frequently illustrated, and residents explained the country has "a very nice climate" that allows them to spend time outdoors for activities like walking, boating, and gardening.[270] In addition to what was previously mentioned about Ukraine's steppes in the south, forests in the north, and coal mines in the east, the country's particular climate and environment were additionally referenced as a way to show its distinctiveness from other territorial entities, neighbouring or not. One clear demonstration is the following description by a young interlocutor in Mala Vyska: "Ukraine is the biggest country in Europe. I mean, its territory. So every part of it has something unique about it. The West is mountains, fields. The south is the sea. And we, the central part and Kirovohrad oblast, are famous for fields."[271] On this last point, Ukraine's steppes and 'black earth' were regularly emphasised in interviews and focus groups across the region, like in Zakarpattia and Chernihiv; in Kirovohrad, it was again elucidated that this is "the best soil in the world," which "leads to very rich crops and plants."[272] These finding are particularly noteworthy as they align with traditional discourses of an internal longitudinal division in Ukraine along an East-West axis, wherein the Dnipro river serves as a natural border dividing the 'Ukrainian' agricultural right bank and the colonised 'Great Steppe' left bank (Andrukhovych, 2005). Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Dnipro River was often referenced by participants from this region, and especially when they described the ecology of their region and its location; for instance, one interlocutor asserted that Kirovohrad is located near the Dnipro between the "prairies, forest, and steppe."[273] While the region is geographically located in the area known as *Dniprynshina* (which translates to 'near the Dnipro'), residents nonetheless stressed they live directly at the topographical "[l]ine that divides pro-Soviet and pro-European" forces in the country.[274] By describing Kirovohrad as located in a "50-50" position directly beside this 'symbolic natural border,' the interlocutors also implicitly revealed the ways historical narratives and discourses associated with the territory's landscapes and imagery have been perpetuated and (re)produced in the modern day (Häkli , 1999; Kaiser, 2002; Knight, 1982; Lovell, 1998).[275] In also resembling historical literature and discourses (see Andrukhovych, 2005), these discursive constructions of Ukraine's landscapes suitably show that the territory has been instilled with symbolic meanings as the homeland of its occupants (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992; Häkli, 1999; Hastrup and Olwig, 1997; Hubbard, 2005; Keith and Pile, 1993; Lovell, 1998; Schama, 1995; Tilley, 1994).

Affectual and emotive bonds with Ukraine were moreover exhibited when the participants were given a second map which included the smaller administrative regions. In addition to outlining and circling their state's territorial borders, interlocutors demonstrated their attachments to their state by adding 'Ukraine' or even 'I Love Ukraine,' as can be seen on the bottom right map in Figure 7.5. Although only 9.2 percent of all participants from Kirovohrad highlighted the entirety of Ukraine's territory, many still showed their deep-rooted connections by voicing that adjustments need to be made to Ukraine's territory

[269] Focus groups conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019 and 3 July 2019, respectively.
[270] Focus groups conducted in Bobrynets on 12 July 2019 and Kropyvnytskyi on 3 July 2019, respectively.
[271] Focus group conducted on 13 July 2019.
[272] Interview and focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 7 July 2019 and 2 July 2019, respectively.
[273] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 3 July 2019.
[274] Focus group conducted in Znam'yanka on 11 July 2019.
[275] Interview and focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019 and 1 July 2019, respectively. Notably, Zakarpattia was also previously conceptualised as the mid-way point between 'Europe' and 'non-Europe.'

because it is currently "divided" and needs to again be "independent, united, and inseparable."[276] Of the total number of interlocutors, 13.2 percent amended the borderlines of Ukraine represented on their maps (see Table 7.5). Among all of the revised maps, 9.2 percent indicated that the geographical area of Crimea should be recognised as Ukraine's territory, despite its current status under Russia's control (see, for example, the top right map in Figure 7.5).[277] Whereas some individuals drew lines around Crimea in order to underscore that it belongs to Ukraine, others verbally expressed their opinions about its annexation. Like in Chernihiv, several interlocutors in Kirovohrad asserted it is illegal, according to international law, to cut "the land…from one country to another country."[278] Several residents likewise affirmed Ukraine's current territory is not correct, as 'correct' would mean Crimea is returned "back to Ukraine," thus reinforcing that Ukrainian citizens "want to save [their] territory…[and] live in [their] country" without giving their land to Russia.[279] An activist in the region also articulated that Crimea rightfully belongs to Ukraine and, therefore, "[s]eeing Crimea as Russia makes [her] sad."[280] A middle-aged man in Kirovohrad's capital city relatedly advocated for a return to Ukraine's territorial status from 1991; when asked whether changes should be made to the state's territory, the participant circled Crimea on his map with his finger and stated that "for Ukrainians, for those who live in the central part of the country, the borders…until 2014 were fine."[281] Equally, a young adult in Kropyvnytskyi briefly looked at his own map (showing Ukraine's territory from 1991) and expressed: "I would prefer to turn reality into this map and get back our territory."[282] Evident here, though perhaps intuitive, is that Russia's continued antagonism in Ukraine has strengthened both the occupants' attachments to their state and desire for it to be better defined.

These feelings were likewise exhibited through interlocutors' assertions about reclaiming other occupied zones, principally Donetsk, Luhansk, and even Kuban. In fact, many people vehemently asserted that Donbas, like Crimea, is part of Ukraine's legal territory and "Russia does not have a right to own them."[283] Comparable views were expressed during a focus group in Kropyvnytskyi when one woman stressed, "Donbas is [ours]," in response to another participant's claim that "we wish [foreign states] did not care about [our borders]."[284] An older resident in Pervozvanivka asserted a similar opinion about the occupied areas, stating, "let it be like it used to be…There should be a policy of unity, for all Ukrainians, it does not matter where they live. We should have had borders with Russia twenty-eight years ago. Fixed."[285] The author's pen marks on the top left map in Figure 7.5 moreover display that some residents believe the borderline between Ukraine's and Russia's territories should lie where it was drawn in 1991—with Donetsk and Luhansk on the Ukrainian side—even though these areas have been under the control of pro-Russian and Russian forces since 2014. The frustration felt as a result of Russia's continued violation of Ukraine's sovereignty was equally articulated by contributors across the region, depicted through statements stressing that Ukrainian citizens are not "invaders" nor "aggressors," and merely "want to save [their] territory, to

[276] Focus group conducted in Novomyrhorod on 15 July 2019.

[277] Whilst this number is not particularly significant, it stands in contrast to the fact that no participants in Zakarpattia highlighted Crimea on their maps or spoke extensively about Russia's occupation.

[278] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019. With this, the participant was hinting at Russia's aggression in Ukraine.

[279] Focus groups conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 29 June 2019 and in Novoukrainka on 11 July 2019, respectively.

[280] Interview conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 5 July 2019.

[281] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 16 July 2019.

[282] Focus group conducted on 2 July 2019.

[283] Focus group conducted in Mala Vyska on 13 July 2019.

[284] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 1 July 2019.

[285] Focus group conducted on 14 July 2019.

live in [their] country" without disturbance.[286] Further demonstrating this stance was one political analyst who voiced his own anger for several minutes about neighbouring states' efforts to "take [Ukraine's] territory and oppress [Ukrainians]," as well as an academic who aired that "twenty percent of [his] country is occupied!"[287] Evidenced by these assertions is that the territory of Ukraine—including the areas annexed in 2014—holds significant meaning for the country's residents because of their direct association with it and, intrinsically, also as a way to institutionally define both those who rightly belong to Ukraine and those who are excluded from it (Burghardt, 1973; Gottmann, 1973; Knight, 1982).

Table 7.5. Observed frequencies of binaries on map #2 by all ages.[288]

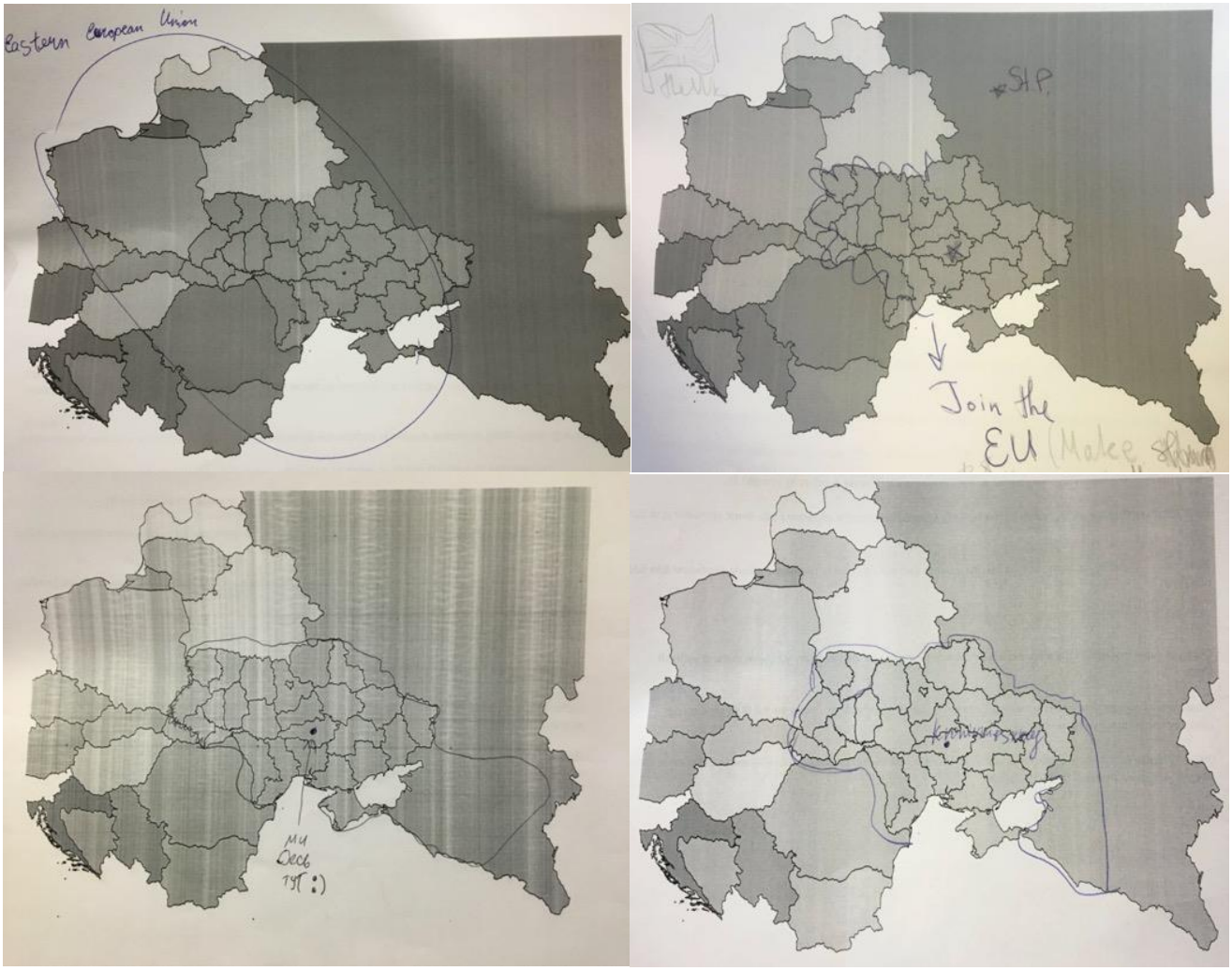
Stylistic Element	Young Adults (N = 23)	Middle-Aged Adults (N = 28)	Older Adults (N = 25)	Total (N = 76)
Distinct and labeled locale	34.8% (OF = 8)	53.6% (OF = 15)	48.0% (OF = 12)	46.1% (OF = 35)
Changed Ukraine's territorial borders	26.1% (OF = 6)	14.3% (OF = 4)	0.0% (OF = 0)	13.2% (OF =10)
Erased territorial borders between Ukraine and EU	17.4% (OF = 4)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	5.3% (OF = 4)
Erased territorial borders between Ukraine and Russia	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Zakarpattia separated from Ukraine	0.0% (OF = 0)	7.1% (OF = 2)	0.0% (OF = 0)	2.6% (OF = 2)
Chernihiv separated from Ukraine	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Zakarpattia with Hungary	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Zakarpattia with Poland	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Zakarpattia with Romania	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Zakarpattia with Slovakia	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Chernihiv with Belarus	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)
Chernihiv with Russia	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)	0.0% (OF = 0)

[286] Focus group conducted in Novoukrainka on 11 July 2019.

[287] Interviews conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019 and 3 July 2019, respectively.

[288] Fewer participants completed the second exercise as several individuals left their focus groups before the discussions had finished: one middle-aged adult in Kropyvnytskyi on 1 July 2019, one middle-aged adult in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019, two older adults in Novoukrainka on 11 July 2019, and one older adult in Bobrynets on 12 July 2019. One young adult also joined the focus group mid-way through the discussion in Mala Vyska on 13 July 2019.

Figure 7.6. Select responses on map #2 depicting changes to Ukraine's borders.



The top left map was drawn by a young adult in Kropyvnytskyi on 29 June 2019; top right by a young adult in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019; bottom left by a young adult in Mala Vyska on 13 July 2019; and bottom right by a middle-aged adult in Kropyvnytskyi on 3 July 2019.

Remarkably, and similar to what was seen in Chernihiv, sentiments resembling those detailed above about Crimea and Donbas were also communicated about Kuban. For example, it was argued that the region of Kuban is "historically Ukrainian territory" and the Ukrainian people living there, along with their language, culture, and traditions, have been long oppressed by Russia.[289] The view that "Kuban is Ukraine" could furthermore be seen on several maps drawn by participants, such as the bottom two presented in Figure 7.6.[290] Notably, and dissimilar to what was observed in Chernihiv, Starodubshchyna was not mentioned by any participants in this region when speaking about historical Ukrainian lands. Still, the suggestion that Kuban should be included within Ukraine's territory is perplexing both because the

[289] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 3 July 2019. Through these statements, the participants were referring to the USSR's oppression of Ukrainians in Kuban with forced collectivisation and Russification from the early 1930s.

[290] Focus group conducted in Mala Vyska on 13 July 2019.

geographical area has been part of Russia's territory since the collapse of the USSR, and as these sentiments were expressed in Kirovohrad, a region which is not located near the borders with Russia like Chernihiv. Inherently, then, this finding again resembles prior literature in showing the intergenerational perpetuation of attitudes and worldviews despite disruptive socio-political dynamics and traumas (Alesina and Fuchs-Schuendeln, 2007; Peisakhin, 2014; 2015; Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2017; Wittenberg, 2006). Whilst the participants disclosed a sense of attachment to Donbas, Crimea, and Kuban, it must still be stated that their appearances on the second maps did not generate statistically significant results, nor did their sentiments—whether written or verbal—suggest strong support for separatism or a possible escalation in the tensions with Russia in order for these historical and annexed lands to be returned to Ukraine. Nevertheless, the frequency at which the contributors included in this project cited these geographical areas still points to the arbitrary reality of borders in both uniting and separating, as well as defining, groups of people (Diener and Hagen, 2018; Tägil et al., 1977; Torpey, 2000). The significance of Ukraine as a territorial entity for the ordinary people living within it can thence be seen.

7.2.2 Constructing Borderland Ukraine as Homeland

Similar to how homelands were constructed in Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, the historical and symbolic narratives linked to the spatial area of Ukraine and the interactions initiated by the drawing of the state's territorial borders have inspired a sense of belonging within the territory that has been embedded in the residents' common and collective consciousness (Häkli, 1999; Herb, 1999; Kaiser, 2002). Most prominently, the perpetuated legacies are related to the state's location as a geo-ideological borderland between Europe and Russia. Like how the inhabitants of the regions discussed in Chapters 5 and 6 described their peripheral locations as 'in-between' or 'in the middle,' the contributors in Kirovohrad also typically conceptualised themselves as 'in the centre'—rather than between Ukraine and an external political entity like their counterparts, they meant within Ukraine as a state that is "in the borderlands…between two geopolitical centres."[291] One female 'elite' even admitted that most people living in the easternmost and westernmost parts of the country do not understand that Kirovohrad is in fact "in the centre" of Europe and Russia, as they think it is only the centre of Ukraine.[292] Nevertheless, the region is indeed the centre of Ukraine which, as was outlined in Chapter 3, is the geographical midpoint between 'Europe' and 'Russia' on a macro-level, the equidistant of the East-West ideological and cultural axis on a micro-level (see Eder, 2006; Neumann, 1997; Plokhy, 2007), and part of the larger borderlands of both of these geopolitical entities. Although the internal and imagined divide between the two geopolitical entities has arguably moved eastward in recent years from what was once thought to be the Dnpiro river (see, for example, Fournier, 2018; Kulyk, 2016), it was still stated that the grassroots of Ukraine feels "so much influence from Russia, so much influence from the West."[293] Even though the mundane, albeit exceedingly multi-faceted, cross-border exchanges depicted in the previous two chapters were not described by residents in Kirovohrad—and some participants even suggested "[n]othing influences [them]" because they are in 'the centre'—it was nonetheless adamantly asserted in every focus group across the region that participants "could not say that [they] do not feel any influence" from external countries as the bordering states still significantly impact their lives.[294]

---

[291] Interview conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019.

[292] Interview conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019 and focus group conducted in Znam'yanka on 11 July 2019, respectively.

[293] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019.

[294] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 3 July 2019.

Specifically, the conflicting narratives, cultures, and politics from Europe and Russia—as a result of Ukraine's borderland position—have prompted a unique and "bit different" social-cultural and political dynamic at the local level within the country as it is communication region (Berezhnaya, 2015).[295] The impact of Europe in the region was clearly evidenced by the residents' comments, particularly as they admitted they believe Ukraine is "[a]lmost Europe" because the "European Union influences [the country] a lot."[296] Although Kirovohrad is not located beside the neighbouring EU countries in the way that Zakarpattia is, the participants in this region still detailed that Ukrainians across the country communicate with Europeans as they "want to learn from their experience," such as by adapting the "music of different countries, and their traditions."[297] The interest in and adoption of diverse cultural practices from other countries—seen through the introduction of new festivals and holidays like Holi Fest and Halloween, and the prevalence of European books, music, and movies within Ukraine—also stems from residents' "pro-European sentiment[s]."[298] It was furthermore specified that Ukraine's architecture shows "European culture," such as the architecture in Kirovohrad's capital city which is colloquially called 'Little Paris' because similar buildings are found in both Kropyvnytskyi and old sections of the French capital, in addition to the new 'European-inspired' cafes and restaurants with English signs established in major centres in recent years, especially since 2013-14.[299] This blending of competing European and Ukrainian values, ideas, and customs at the local level has therefore created a distinct atmosphere within the spaces of the everyday, involving an unique sense of belonging and group solidarity amongst those who experience it together (Andersson, 2014; Diener and Hagen, 2018; Martinez, 1994; Rumford, 2006; Van Schendel, 1993).

Economically, too, Europe appears to have significant impacts at the grassroots in Ukraine as many people, including from this region and those previously discussed, move 'to Europe' (as a placeholder for 'the EU') in search of "a better life," especially since the borders between the EU and Ukraine have 'softened' with the introduction of visa-free travel.[300] Many participants from this region referenced their own friends and family members when explaining that people migrate "mostly to Europe," and that it is "really popular to go to Poland, to…Czech Republic, everywhere."[301] In fact, individuals of all ages in locales across Kirovohrad voiced that they also want to move abroad, as was demonstrated by the young male participant in Znam'yanka who stressed, "I want to live in Europe," or the middle and older adults who admitted they want their adolescent children to "go to Europe to study at [better] universities."[302] Several authors also showed their desire for a closer relationship between Ukraine and the neighbouring EU states by crossing out the borders standing between Ukraine and the EU on their maps (see Figure 7.6). Whilst these actions in no way guarantees the participants' attachments to Europe, it suggests some residents may not perceive a distinction between Ukraine and Europe, or that they believe the territorial separators between Ukraine and the EU should be fully abolished to allow for free movement. Of note here is that all suggestions to erase the territorial borders between Ukraine and the neighbouring EU states

[295] Focus group conducted in Novomyrhorod on 15 July 2019.

[296] Focus groups conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 16 July 2019 and 3 July 2019, respectively. Notably, 'Europe' in this context is not in reference to the continent, even though Ukraine's landmass is located on the European continent.

[297] Focus groups conducted in Mala Vyska on 13 July 2019 and in Novoukrainka on 11 July 2019, respectively.

[298] Focus groups conducted in Novoukrainka on 11 July 2019 and Kropyvnytskyi on 3 July 2019, respectively.

[299] Interview conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 28 June 2019.

[300] Interview conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 4 July 2019. It was cited that the salaries in Europe are significantly higher than in Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia—some jobs are even paid five to ten times higher. This last sentiment is from a focus group conducted in Pervozvanivka on 14 July 2019.

[301] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 1 July 2019. This was the reality prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, so it is recognised that circumstances may have fundamentally changed.

[302] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 3 July 2019.

were found on young adults' maps (see Table 7.5). While implicitly suggesting young people feel a greater attachment to the organisation, participants from other age groups also verbally expressed their desire for Ukraine to be in the EU; an example is an older man in Mala Vyska, who clearly articulated his opinion by stating, "I would like us to be a part of European Union without any borders."[303] Middle-aged participants in Kropyvnytskyi equally voiced their support for Ukraine acquiring membership in the EU by explicating the state is "integrating into Europe…trying to."[304] In this way, and reinforcing what was observed in Zakarpattia, Ukraine's position as a borderland between Europe and Russia, and also of the European community's nuclear core (Balibar, 2009; Delanty and Rumford, 2005; Eder, 2006; Rumford, 2006; Wallerstein, 1974), distinctly shapes ordinary people's socio-economic and political attitudes and behaviours at the local level.

At the same time, and in light of the discussions above and in the previous chapter regarding Russia's aggression towards, and annexation of, Ukraine's territory, it is not unsurprising that the participants in Kirovohrad routinely expressed that Russia impacts their everyday lives. In fact, one individual noted "there is nobody else, who imposes more than Russia."[305] Although Russia's significant influence on Ukraine's territorial sovereignty was previously discussed, participants in Kirovohrad, like those in Chernihiv, further elucidated that the Ukrainian state's contemporary socio-cultural dynamics are directly related to its history under the neighbouring imperial power. In particular, it was elucidated that many nationalities and cultures co-exist within the contemporary state because of the fact that diverse peoples historically migrated to Ukraine under the Russian Empire and USSR both voluntarily and involuntarily for economic and martial purposes. The "mix" of people now living in Ukraine was detailed by several contributors, including one regional 'elite,' who specifically listed the presence of Armenian, Bulgarian, Romanian, German, Polish, Roma, Russian, Georgian, Azerbaijan, Jewish, and Moldavian communities.[306] An older interlocutor in a focus group in Pervozvanivka moreover stated that when Ukraine's latest census was done in 2001, there were "more than one hundred nationalities," while another explained the origins of contemporary Ukraine's diverse atmosphere, insisting "[a]bout two hundred nationalities live here…due to the fact that economical, trading, military ways crossed here, there is a mix of different nationalities."[307] For these reasons, various cultures and religions are now celebrated and practiced independently across Kirovohrad and Ukraine, as well as combined in a way similar to what was observed in Zakarpattia and Chernihiv. In addition to cross-cultural marriages, Christmas and *Ivano Kupalo* were cited by participants from Kirovohrad as specific examples of how people have blended their cultures and also incorporated traditional Ukrainian practices.[308] The region's multicultural environment can similarly be seen through other activities and socio-cultural practices, such as the unification of Russian, Moldovan, and German traditional dances into the repertoire of Ukrainian dancing groups—this is particularly noteworthy given that Kirovohrad is colloquially referred to as the 'Dance Capital of Ukraine.' Together, these examples illustrate that the historical legacies associated with imperial Russia have shaped

[303] Focus group conducted on 13 July 2019.

[304] Focus group conducted on 16 July 2019.

[305] Focus group conducted in Novomyrhorod on 15 July 2019.

[306] Focus group conducted in Bobrynets on 12 July 2019 and interview conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 10 July 2019, respectively.

[307] Focus groups conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 14 July 2019 and 1 July 2019, respectively.

[308] Interview conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 10 July 2019. *Ivano Kupalo* is a Slavic holiday celebrating the summer solstice. Individuals who stated their families were not ethnic Ukrainian still said they celebrate Ivano Kupalo annually, and most residents also admitted to celebrating two Christmases as they follow both the Gregorian and Julian calendars.

the modern-day socio-cultural ethos in Ukraine in uniting those living within the spatial area (Agnew, 2001; Kaiser, 2002; Liu and Hilton, 2005; Lovell, 1998; Nicholson, 2017; Paasi, 1996; Safran, 2005).

Like Europe, Russia's influence on Ukraine's economy was also mentioned, specifically as a chief travel and economic migration destination for residents, at least prior to 2013-2014. In particular, it was explained that "[b]efore the Revolution, people used to go to Russia" and "since 2014, it is for sure less popular…[but] [p]eople still go to Moscow."[309] When detailing where residents now migrate to for economic opportunities, a young female in Mala Vyska reaffirmed that "there are people who go to work to Russia. Not so many people, but there are some who go there and even want to stay there."[310] In addition to the Revolution of Dignity, the annexation of Crimea, and Russia's occupation of Ukraine's eastern regions, mobility challenges were cited as deterrents to migrating to Russia; it was unambiguously elucidated that traveling between Ukraine and Russia was relatively easy, "like the EU (with the visa-free regime)," before the war in eastern Ukraine, but there are no longer direct flights between the two states.[311] Hence, traveling to Russia by car or train now requires by-passing the occupied zones, which makes the journey exceptionally time-consuming. A female participant highlighted these challenges by describing her friend's situation: "I have a friend who works in Russia, in Gasprom, and he goes [to Moscow] by train, and then from Moscow by airplane."[312] It was equally illuminated that residents do not want to go to Russia anymore due to safety concerns because "Russia is an aggressor."[313] Whereas Ukraine may have previously had closer ties with Russia, as was admitted by some of the elderly participants included in this project, others underscored that since 1991, Ukraine has simultaneously experienced "twenty-eight years of independence and influence [from Russia]."[314] Whist the transitioning of governance over Ukraine's territory from the USSR to an independent administration has resulted in significant political, economic, and social changes, the shared history and lack of "narrative plausibility" of the territorial border between Ukraine and Russia (Eder, 2006: 257) subsequently means that the latter continues to play a significant role in the former's socio-economic and political affairs, even as Ukrainian citizens desire for their state to be both politically and economically independent. As these sentiments were expressed by people of all ages, and not only by those who lived in the USSR, the findings again counter the widespread view that socio-political attitudes and identities vary across generations (see Putnam, 2001).

The behaviours and social practices of the residents markedly portray how external influences from both Europe and Russia have shaped the socio-cultural structures in borderland Ukraine, particularly the citizens' linguistic patterns (Andersson, 2014; Martinez, 1994; Schama, 1995; Tilley, 1994; Van Schendel, 1993). Just as English was often used to write locale names on the participants' maps, as was previously discussed, this tongue was also referenced and spoken regularly in the focus groups and interviews despite the fact that participants were encouraged to use Ukrainian or Russian if they felt more comfortable.[315] When asked why so many people speak English, interlocutors across Kirovohrad explained that Europe

[309] Focus groups conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 3 July 2019 and 16 July 2019, respectively. The use of 'revolution' here is in reference to the Revolution of Dignity (or Euromaidan) of 2013-14.

[310] Focus group conducted in Mala Vyska on 13 July 2019.

[311] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 29 June 2019.

[312] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 29 June 2019.

[313] Focus group conducted in Mala Vyska on 13 July 2019. Importantly, this participant specified that 'Russia' is in reference to the state's administration, not Russian people: "[w]hen I am speaking about Russia, I mean its president's policy—Vladimir Putin…I am considering the president to be an aggressor."

[314] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 1 July 2019. It must be noted that Ukraine had been independent for almost twenty-eight years when the focus group was conducted.

[315] When discussing topics beyond their English proficiencies, some participants did switch to Ukrainian.

has a strong influence in Ukraine, particularly in terms of its culture and language.[316] Exemplifying this point further was a middle-aged participant in Kropyvnytskyi who outlined that "families make their children study English since the first grade because they want them to be European, they want them to be able to communicate with Europeans."[317] The desire to learn foreign languages, like English and even Polish, was likewise mentioned by others; in Novomyrhorod, for instance, a participant stated English is now the most popular language taught in schools and, it was explained in Kropyvnytskyi that English classes are mandatory for pupils.[318] Further validating this observation were the sentiments expressed by several female participants who specified that they speak English because they want to present themselves in a way similar to Europeans on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram; one woman accordingly elucidated that there is "a tendency [for residents] to post in English…They do not know if they are correct, but they do post in English."[319] Akin to what was observed in the other regions, these findings reveal an ascribed status subjectively attributed to Europe and all things considered 'European,' which has consequently shaped both individual and group social practices and processes at the local level within Ukraine, including language choices and attitudes (Biggs, 1999; Gibson, 2014; Neocleous, 2003).

At the same time that Europe's influence in Ukraine is depicted through English language use, Russian and Surzhyk were also cited and even spoken by many participants from this region. In addition to the use of Russian by some older participants when marking their maps, as can be seen above in Table 7.3, several interlocutors expounded these two tongues are common in Kirovohrad. When explaining the residents' language choices, for example, a young female in Mala Vyska detailed that the Soviet government "tried to destroy our language many years ago. They tried to make Russian the only language here, so that there was no Ukrainian. It is our history, and unfortunately, it [influences] the way we speak today."[320] Since Russification was less successful in rural than urban communities, it was outlined that those living in the latter speak more Russian than their more rural counterparts who speak more Ukrainian. As one middle-aged participant asserted: "[living] in the city and in a village, it is completely different. People are different. In Kropyvnytskyi, the city, there are more Russian-speaking people, but the villages around the city are Ukrainian-speaking."[321] On this point, it was also joked that the following adage has emerged regarding language differences between locales: "Ukraine ends [when] people in the villages speak Russian."[322] Although Russian is indeed more common in larger centres, it must be recognised that urban dwellers still speak Ukrainian; several even stated they realise they are "supposed to speak proper Ukrainian language," but it is their own "laziness" which prevents them.[323] Many interlocutors also admitted they speak Surzhyk instead of either pure Ukrainian or Russian for this same reason. Though Surzhyk is spoken in other regions as well, such as in Chernihiv, it is remarkable that interlocutors in every focus group across Kirovohrad admitted to speaking this dialect, although definitively more in rural communities. Similar to how Chernihiv's residents described the tongue, those in Kirovohrad detailed Surzhyk has emerged "because different nationalities, such as Ukrainians, Russians, Belarusians, used to live all together, so the

[316] Though not explicitly unpacked, the sentiments expressed by the young adults in various focus groups suggest they view English as an 'European language.'

[317] Focus group conducted on 16 July 2019.

[318] Focus groups conducted on 15 July 2019 and 29 June 2019, respectively.

[319] Focus group conducted in Novomyrhorod on 15 July 2019.

[320] Focus group conducted on 13 July 2019.

[321] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 16 July 2019.

[322] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 16 July 2019.

[323] Focus groups conducted in Pervozvanivka on 14 July 2019 and in Kropyvnytskyi on 16 July 2019, respectively.

languages got mixed, got integrated."[324] But in contrast to Chernihiv, the version of Surzhyk spoken in Kirovohrad has fewer Belarusian words as it is predominantly "a mixture of Russian and Ukrainian," as the "Ukrainian language is the main [language]" and has been blended with "lots of Russian words."[325] In this way, language patterns in Kirovohrad show the transnational borderland milieu that has historically evolved through cross-cultural interactions and relations with both Europe and Russia.

7.2.3 Experiencing Borderland Ukraine as Homeland

In addition to Kirovohrad's local atmosphere reflecting a "mix of the East and West" as a result of Ukraine's geo-ideological borderland position, the influences from the neighbouring geopolitical entities have shaped the 'cognitive templates' of citizens at the grassroots.[326] In fact, and similar to what was explained in both Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, participants in Kirovohrad cited a "special energy" and peculiar 'psycho-type' present in Ukraine due to the competing socio-cultural, linguistic, and national meanings, and the ways historical legacies have been remembered and embodied.[327] As "[t]he centre absorbs everything," these dynamics are most concentrated in Ukraine's central regions, like Kirovohrad, yet portray how Ukrainian citizens as a whole are distinct from those of other countries.[328] An older participant in Bobrynets described the particular 'mentality' in Ukraine by stating:

> It can be noticed even on the gene level. In those regions [on the border], they tend to foreign countries, and these [more centrally located] cannot make up their minds. It is not only about politics, it is something about our nature, genetics. Marriages between different nationalities [has mixed peoples' blood]. Just imagine, that only in the eighteenth century did Serbs, Croats, Moldovans, Romanians, Germans, Jewish and so come [to Ukraine]. So, it used to be a melting pot. A huge melting pot. And today, we witness the consequences. [329]

Beyond the diverse linguistic patterns and cultural practices of the residents, as was previously outlined, the 'consequences' this participant hinted at can be seen through their character and temperament towards others. Similar to what was previously detailed in Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, contributors from Kirovohrad stated that Ukrainian citizens are "really tolerant, very hospitable."[330] Several other people backed this point in stating that Ukrainian citizens "do not like conflicts" and therefore are "very peaceful" and "friendly to everybody."[331] It was furthermore mentioned that they do not "divide people," such as into different exclusive categories like that of being from the 'West' or 'East,' but instead are very "adaptable because [they] have borders with Russia and Europe."[332] As a consequence, the multifaceted historical legacies and diversity in ethnicities, languages, and cultures in Ukraine have neither diminished the citizens' attachments to their territory, nor instigated internal conflict amongst the diverse peoples.

Still, the unique worldviews of Ukrainian citizens were overtly portrayed when the interlocutors vernacularly spoke about the geographical and ontological divorce between Ukraine and the neighbouring geopolitical entities. In particular, they framed Europe as "more progressive" and possessing a higher

[324] Focus group conducted in Pervozvanivka on 14 July 2019.
[325] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 3 July 2019.
[326] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019.
[327] Focus group conducted in Bobrynets on 12 July 2019.
[328] Focus group conducted in Novomyrhorod on 15 July 2019.
[329] Focus group conducted in Bobrynets on 12 July 2019.
[330] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 1 July 2019.
[331] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 16 July 2019.
[332] Focus group and interview conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 16 July 2019 and 7 July 2019, respectively.

"level of life and development" than Ukraine.[333] Moreover, it was stated that Europeans are more "sensible" than Ukraine's citizens, as the latter "cannot clean up the mess" within their own country.[334] The influence of Europe in shaping the thinking and behaviour of Ukrainian citizens can also be seen through the way Kirovohrad's participants detailed their desire "to be more European" and "take after Europe" in both a socio-economic and cultural sense.[335] Such was likewise exhibited through many overt expressions about the fact that contributors "want the same life standards as [Europeans] have in Europe…social support standards, quality of life, education," as well as their explicit frustrations about the fact that Ukraine is "not [yet] part of the EU, unfortunately."[336] Of note here is that some citizens believe Ukraine is indeed already European, such as in Novomyrhorod where it was stated that "[w]e are practically the same, the same culture, European and [ours]," while other individuals in Kropyvnytskyi suggested Ukraine is "almost Europe."[337] In this way, it can be seen that Europe serves as a point of reference for residents in determining who and what is Ukraine in a geographical, ideological, and even imagined sense.

The participants in Kirovohrad also drew on the differences of Russian citizens to further detail the mentality of Ukraine's citizens. While it was purported that Ukrainian citizens "used to share some views [with] Russia," a participant in Novomyrhorod explained that this is no longer the situation as Europe now has a stronger influence at the local level.[338] Demonstrating this reality were the comments by one woman in Kropyvnytskyi, who explained she feels the attitude of Ukraine's citizens is noticeably "different from theirs (Russians)" because she had previously lived in Russia before moving to Kirovohrad.[339] When other participants in the same focus group suggested that this is because Russian citizens tend to drink more alcohol than Ukrainian citizens, the woman commented that it is "not about that. They (Russians) are just different, have a bit different lifestyle."[340] In addition to the contemporary differences between Ukraine and Russia, a middle-aged adult in Kropyvnytskyi stressed that legacies from the Soviet Union are still felt in Ukraine; for example, there is a weak political culture because many voters do not understand what democracy is, and thus they support an authoritarian-style form of government like in Russia. Yet, it was equally explained that Russia's continued antagonism in Ukraine, which stems from historical narratives associated with the USSR, has actually strengthened citizens' desire for Ukraine's independence, distinctiveness, and European integration; this was shown through the ways participants (not only those in Kirovohrad) emphasised the line representing the territorial border between Ukraine and Russia during the cognitive mapping exercises. As borders symbolise the dichotomy between belonging and alienation (Diener and Hagen, 2018), it can thus be see that Europe and Russia very much shape the contemporary dynamics at the grassroots in Ukraine, especially around how citizens understand themselves and their country by providing points of reference through semantic and physical processes of inclusion and exclusion (Diener and Hagen, 2018; Hubbard, 2005; Lovell, 1998; Wilson and Donnan, 1999). In this way, Kirovohrad's residents' association with, and affection for, Ukraine is equivalent to the attachments their counterparts felt to their regions as homelands, albeit on a macro-level.

---

[333] Interviews conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 8 July 2019 and 2 July 2019, respectively.

[334] Focus group conducted in Bobrynets on 12 July 2019.

[335] Interview conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 8 July 2019 and focus group in Novomyrhorod on 15 July 2019, respectively.

[336] Focus groups conducted in Novomyrhorod on 15 July 2019 and in Mala Vyska on 13 July 2019, respectively.

[337] Focus groups conducted on 15 July 2019 and 16 July 2019, respectively.

[338] Focus group conducted on 15 July 2019. Some elderly participants admitted they had previously been members of the Communist party.

[339] Focus group conducted on 16 July 2019.

[340] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 16 July 2019.

Part III

Understanding Nationalism Within Borderlands

Chapter 8:
Experiencing Nationalism in Borderlands

"There is a local joke: there were three sons in a family:
one Hungarian, another one is Czech, and the other one is Ukrainian;
however, this family has never traveled abroad."

Mizhhiria, Zakarpattia (2020)

"Many Ukrainians wrote 'Russian' in their passport during the Russian Empire
and Soviet Union because they were scared to be Ukrainian."

Chernihiv, Chernihiv (2020)

"We dream to identify ourselves as Ukrainian."

Kropyvnytskyi, Kirovohrad (2019)

8.1 Introduction to Part III

Building on the previous three chapters showing the spatial attachments and conceptualisations of homeland held by Ukrainian citizens in Zakarpattia, Chernihiv, and Kirovohrad, Part III is divided into two chapters as the final analytical component of this thesis' study into how nationalism is experienced in borderland areas. By drawing on the empirical findings presented in Part II, Chapter 8 begins by leveraging a comparison across the three regions to explore how (and why) contemporary homelands may be conceptualised differently by citizens of the same state. In demonstrating that the overlapping, interacting, and even contradicting nature of imagined and territorial borders fundamentally shapes ordinary peoples' conceptualisations of homeland and how they embody, enact, and perform nationhood, the chapter thus purports the value of considering other spatial scales in addition to territory, as well as imagined cartographies and even borderlands, for understanding contemporary nationalism. Chapter 8 accordingly also underscores the theoretical and empirical contributions of this project, detailing that in the modern day, it is borderlands in both territorial and non-territorial (or imagined) forms which serve as homelands for ordinary people, and thus determine how nationalism is experienced and practiced. Following from here, Chapter 9 revisits the original research questions and reinforces the value of this bottom-up research in borderlands for better understanding nationalism in both Ukraine and the contemporary state system. In presenting the wider political implications of the findings, the chapter also shows the need to consider space and cartography in future studies of politics and nationalism, especially in a post-pandemic world, as well as details how this research can be pushed further by exploring borderlands in other contexts—in Ukraine and other states, as well as in imagined (or non-territorial) ways. Like this, the discussion within the following two chapters appropriately concludes the thesis by lending further credence to the argument that borderland areas—as 'lived' representational spaces (Lefebvre, 1991)—are valuable for studies of contemporary nationalism.

8.2 Borderlands as Modern Homelands

8.2.1 Borderlands as Homelands

In showing how the everyday experiences within homelands shape the 'cognitive templates' through which people organise their worlds (Lovell, 1998), Part II thus revealed the significance of these places for nationalism within contemporary borderland areas. As prior work in International Relations and Political Science, as well as relevant literature in Ukrainian nationalism, continues to conceptualise homelands at the spatial scale of territory coinciding with the associated borders in the way suggested in traditional geographical theorising, the findings from this bottom-up analysis of three borderland areas accordingly challenge these prior assumptions. Most precisely, they disclose that in the modern day, homelands do not always, nor necessarily, exist at a territorial dimension. When leveraging a comparison of the everyday 'lived' experiences within the three borderland areas discussed in Part II, it is also evident that ordinary citizens living in different areas of the same state may, and even do, imagine their homelands in dissimilar ways. Whilst the prior empirical chapters demonstrated that most Ukrainian citizens indeed conceptualise their homelands within the spatial area that is contemporary Ukraine's territory, the findings presented in Part II more specifically reveal that ordinary people do not *only* envision their homelands at the spatial scale of territory, but also at smaller scales below that of their territory. Since all participants included in this research are citizens of Ukraine, yet not all indicated they perceive the alignment of their homelands with the Ukrainian state's territory and its borders, nor even appeared to realise their homelands in the same way, this project subsequently pushes forward the theorising around borderlands in Political Science and International Relations in shedding light on alternative conceptualisations of homelands in the modern day.

In line with state-based approaches to nationalism, the findings from Chapter 7 evidently show that the contemporary territory of Ukraine and its associated territorial demarcations remain important for many citizens' conceptualisations of homeland, particularly those who are located in the centre of a state. In Kirovohrad, the residents thus disclosed that they feel very attached to the territorial dimension of Ukraine as their homeland because of their central location within the large spatial entity legally defined as Ukraine's territory; this is reinforced by the fact that Kirovohrad is traditionally included in historical narratives defining Ukrainian lands. As a consequence, citizens within the centre of this geo-ideological borderland feel 'rooted' within the spatial area understood as 'Ukrainian'—which is manifested as Ukraine in the modern day—because of its symbolic link to their past (Knight, 1982), and as it provides an 'ancient community of belonging' (Kaiser, 2002). In this way, Ukraine's institutionalisation as a state brings people together in a common and collective story through territorial socialisation, uniting them within a common homeland (Burghardt, 1973; Gottmann, 1973; Herb, 1999). The lived experiences of Kirovohrad's residents outlined in Chapter 7 moreover illustrate that their deep-rooted connections with Ukraine stem from the construction and perpetuation of various legacies and discourses—both historical and contemporary—associated with the state's geo-ideological borderland position. Specifically, the fact that Ukraine is situated vis-à-the neighbouring and competing 'Others'—namely, Russia's geopolitical imposition and the simultaneous cultural and social appeal of Europe—inherently defines the territory for those living within it, as well as shapes the grassroots dynamics. Whilst echoing previous studies by depicting the durability of place attachments in spite of significant influences from neighbouring Europe and Russia, as well as the societal traumas of the Soviet era (see Alesina and Fuchs-Schuendeln, 2007; Peisakhin, 2012; 2015; Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2017; Wittenberg, 2006), the findings from this region furthermore suggest that the conflicting geopolitical forces resulting from Ukraine's borderland status have fundamentally constructed a 'sense of place,' or homeland, in the territory of contemporary Ukraine

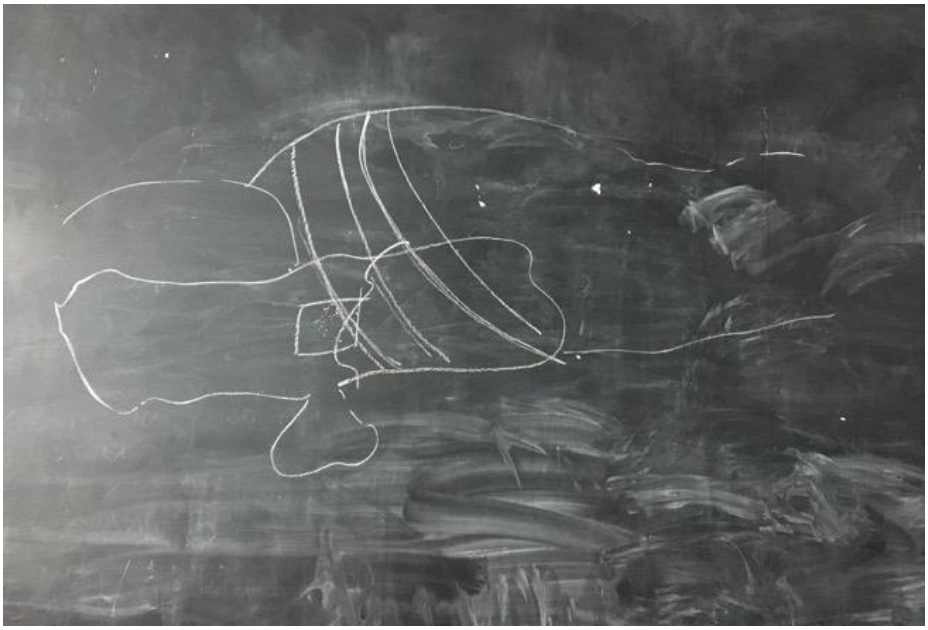
'nested' within the larger geographical space that is Eastern Europe (Gradirovsky, 1999; Relph, 1976). Hence, akin to what is suggested in more traditional geographical theorising (see, for example, Burghardt, 1973; Gottmann, 1973; Häkli, 1999; Knight, 1982), territory still holds significant value for present-day citizens in this geo-ideological borderland in creating a sense of 'collective consciousness' by socialising and welding individual and group experiences together into a common story (Herb, 1999), as well as aiding in citizens' conceptualisations of their homelands.

Since borderlands were only created out of the territorial borders that established the sovereign state system from 1648, it might be expected that all citizens of a state envision their homelands in a similar way, specifically at the spatial scale of territory, as they once all resembled each other in existing together in large sections of space. However, the findings presented in Chapters 5 and 6 evidently contrast those from Chapter 7 in illustrating that individuals living nearest to contemporary territorial borders may actually feel a greater sense of attachment to smaller spatial areas defined and created by the division of space into territories via cartographic processes than to a larger spatial area, like the territory of their state. Even though these smaller places are regularly excluded from the existing literature, the findings presented in Chapters 5 and 6 show that the spatial scale of region in particular has maintained substantial importance for the construction of homelands in Ukraine's territorial peripheries. Whereas the residents of Kirovohrad detailed that Ukraine as a territorial entity is their homeland, those in Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, conversely, and simultaneously, showed that they hold stronger bonds to the smaller and more intimate spatial scales of their regions. This phenomena can be explained by the fact that cartographic processes not only helped to delineate the extremities of sovereign territories, but, in doing so, established "relationships between local communities and between states," which are still intact today (Wilson and Donnan, 1998: 5). As was discussed in Part II, these relationships created through the (re)drawing of territorial borders are felt most prominently in borderlands, meaning that these areas are not only dissimilar from more central sites within the same state, but that the grassroots dynamics within them are exceedingly unique to the particular places. The idiosyncrasies within borderlands have accordingly shaped the borderlanders' everyday experiences and practices and, in doing so, also instigated feelings of 'separateness' from their state's larger territory and their fellow citizenry (see also Branch, 2010; 2011; Donnan and Wilson, 1999; Sahlins, 1998). In this way, modern understandings of homeland within these areas still fundamentally rely on the existence of the territorial state, but centre on only a small section of space within the territorial state rather than on the territory as a whole.

The empirical findings from Part II also add to existing theorising in showing that the conceptualisations of homeland and grassroots dynamics in borderland areas remain especially complex in instances wherein territorial borders were drawn more than once throughout history. In the case of Ukraine, for example, the multifaceted and continuous (and arguably, continuing) struggle for Ukrainian lands, which left the spatial area of contemporary Ukraine in flux and divided between several expansionist administrations from the Kyivan Rus' until 1991—and continues to be contested thirty years later—implicated ordinary individuals' state affiliations and territorial attachments by routinely re-assigning smaller geographical areas, and thus people, to different territorial jurisdictions (see Figure 8.1). Yet, turbulent cartographic changes do not, and have not, necessarily weakened the bonds that borderlanders feel to particular geographical areas. In fact, Chapters 5 and 6 showed that despite the drastic amendments to Eastern Europe's cartography, the people living in Ukraine's borderlands have maintained deep-rooted connections with the smaller sections of space where they were and continue to be located together (Agnew, 2011). This is because the lands constituting contemporary Zakarpattia and Chernihiv remained as

relatively unified spatial entities with almost consistent boundary lines when the territorial borders of Ukraine and the neighbouring political administrations were re-drawn; in Zakarpattia's situation, the region actually moved as a spatial unit between various administrations in a form almost identical to its contemporary version until it joined the Ukrainian SSR in 1945, whereas the geographical area that is now Chernihiv was minimally impacted throughout history aside from the loss of Starodubshchyna following the Ukraine-Soviet War (see Figure 3.1). Therefore, even though these regions have only been institutionalised as two of Ukraine's twenty-four administrative since WWII—their formalisation as distinct spatial entities is further demonstrated by their own defined boundary lines, symbols, and flags—they have successively been part of the 'socio-spatial consciousness' of the people living within them for centuries prior to joining the Ukrainian SSR and later independent Ukraine (Paasi, 1996). While aligning with previous studies by highlighting the durability of place attachments in spite of societal traumas and disruptions associated with communism, including internal population movements (see Alesina and Fuchs-Schuendeln, 2007; Peisakhin, 2012; 2015; Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2017; Wittenberg, 2006), this analysis thence in many ways suggests that the Soviet era turmoil actually strengthened regional attachments with the post-Soviet space, or at least Ukraine, as regions became important places that people could call home and feel a sense of belonging whilst their larger territories and state affiliations were in flux.

Figure 8.1. Locating homeland.



Map drawn by middle-aged participant in a focus group in Kropyvnytskyi on 1 July 2019.

Importantly, Kirovohrad's inhabitants have also indubitably been, and continue to be, subject to the historical changing, negotiating, and (re)defining of Ukraine's territory, in addition to the ongoing and evolving relationship between the 'elephant and the bear' (Emerson, 2001). Nonetheless, the distinction between Kirovohrad's occupants' visualisations of homeland and those of Zakarpattia and Chernihiv lies in

the fact that the former are located in the centre of a geo-ideological borderland, while the latter are situated in territorial borderlands. Due to their physical distance away from the state's borders, and hence also the neighbouring geopolitical entities, the centremost dwellers have indeed been impacted by cartographic amendments—even simply because they live within the state of Ukraine—but less directly than those in the territorial peripheries; this reality is depicted in Figure 8.1, which was drawn to show how the Ukrainian homeland has persisted despite the historical changes to contemporary Ukraine's territory. Moreover, the physical space where Kirovohrad is located, as well as the regions directly around it, have remained much more constant when compared to the other two regions due to its centrality within traditional Ukrainian lands (see Figure 3.1 in Chapter 3). Though Chernihiv has also been included within the lands historically understood as belonging to ethnic Ukrainians since the Kyivan Rus,' the fact that this region is located more peripherally within Ukraine's territory than Kirovohrad means it has more directly experienced the disruptions associated with the re-drawing of territorial borders. This hence expounds why the participants from Chernihiv still acknowledge their attachments with, and physical location in, Ukraine's territory—sentiments which were not expressed in Zakarpattia—whilst also feel attached to the smaller spatial area that is their region. As Zakarpattia has been institutionalised as part of Ukraine (and also the Ukrainian SSR) for markedly less time than either Chernihiv or Kirovohrad, this reality additionally clarifies why the inhabitants from this region portrayed weaker territorial attachments to Ukraine, yet also stronger regional attachments, than their counterparts. Although a weak connection to one's state does not inherently suggest a strong regional attachment, Zakarpattia's residents' weak attachments to their state and the stronger ethnosymbolic ties to their locales and region may be understood by the fact that several generations of people did not live in the Ukrainian SSR or Ukrainian lands in the way family members of the participants in other regions did, including both Chernihiv and Kirovohrad.

Particularly noteworthy here, then, is that the historical influence of neighbouring states and cartographic processes can partially explain the varied conceptualisations of homeland within borderland areas. Most specifically, the unique socio-cultural dynamics and *modus vivendi* atmospheres that have been created at the grassroots level as a result of cross-border interactions (Martinez, 1994) have implicated the ways Ukrainian citizens in different parts of the country ontologically perceive themselves within space and territory, as well as the meanings they construct around certain places. The findings moreover exhibit that processes of globalisation, and especially increased border porosity and the granting of citizenship to people not located in-state, have even further complicated spatial perceptions in both challenging the underlying assumptions of territorial sovereignty and re-spatialising politics (see Beck, 2006; Castells, 2000; Mekdjian, 2015; Parker, 2009; Rumford, 2006; Sassen, 1996; 2015; Strauss, 2015). In particular, the increased movements of goods, services, and people across territorial borders have shaped citizens' relationships with Ukraine and its territorial borders, and their understandings of themselves within space, especially within the territorial borderland regions like Zakarpattia and Chernihiv. Although not located directly beside territorial borders, the individuals living in geo-ideological borderlands have likewise felt influences from neighbouring geopolitical entities, particularly the EU and Russia, as well as processes of globalisation more generally as Ukraine's territorial borders have become more obsolete and impermanent, especially those separating Ukraine from the EU (see Amilhat-Szary and Giraut, 2015; Graziano, 2018).

Yet, evident through the preceding three chapters is that the geographical position of the territorial modern-day form of a state implicates citizens in different ways. In the centre, it appears that adjacent countries reinforce citizens' attachments to their state due to the competing influences from all directions; their attachments to their state are therefore strengthened through their understandings of themselves and

their territory vis-à-vis the outsiders, 'Others,' or those foreign. For instance, in Kirovohrad, the historical clashing orientations from the East and West, and thus an internal ongoing desire to protect Ukrainian lands, have become normalised within grassroots rhetoric and accordingly shapes the local dynamics—this 'in-between' geo-ideological status is even inherently imbued in the state's name. Territorial borderlands, conversely, have only been created through the (repeated) technical cartographic processes that materially constructed states by carving out and defining their precise territory within a largely abstract spatial area. Hence, spatial scales below territory remain much more important to those living in these areas, meaning that, naturally, attachment to the state is circumscribed in favour of local attachments and relations. In many ways, then, the earlier chapters suggest that a stronger preoccupation with and loyalty to one's home state (Newman, 2003; Tuathail, 1996) can be found in Kirovohrad because of the competing influences and even potential threat from neighbouring states, especially Russia, whereas interactions and exchanges with neighbouring states have been fundamental for strengthening local and regional ties in Zakarpattia and Chernihiv. In line with traditional geographical theorising, territory thence remains important for homelands and collective belonging for the centremost residents because the 'right to exclude others' is fundamental for a state's sovereignty (Gottmann, 1973; Sack, 1986), whilst in the territorial borderlands of a state—which only exist because of the establishment of that state as a sovereign entity—it is a way for residents to identify themselves within space (or representations of space) at a given point in time. When taken together, the findings consequently show that the territorial evolution of Ukraine, like any state, significantly implicates the ways contemporary citizens experience their homelands.

8.2.2 Modern Homelands

Most evident through these various depictions of homeland, then, is that in the modern day, more than one understanding of homeland exists and remains important at the grassroots level for citizens of the same state. While individuals in the territorial peripheries conceptualise their regions as their homelands, and those more centrally of the same state may simultaneously cognise the entire territory of their state as their homeland, it must be noted that these understandings, although dissimilar, are still both connected to the existence and contemporary form of the state and thus the modern state system. In this way, citizens' constructions of homeland inherently reveal their experiences with, and perceptions of, their state's territory as formalised through cartographic processes. Such is explicitly demonstrated by the descriptions and imagery of Ukraine's geography used by citizens in all three regions to characterise their homelands at both regional and territorial dimensions. In line with human geography theorising, these illustrations of the natural landscapes of homelands disclose the consciousness of these places and the organic solidarity rooted within them (Herb, 1999; Kaiser, 2002; Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977; Weinreich et al., 2003). Since homelands are constructed at the scale of region in Zakarpattia and Chernihiv and territory in Kirovohrad, it is not particularly surprising that the participants (re)produced discursive landscapes and territorial illustrations at these same spatial scales when discussing their homelands: Zakarpattia's residents predominantly described their region's forests and mountains, Chernihiv's emphasised the forests and rivers in their region, and Kirovohrad's detailed the diverse natural environments found across the territory of Ukraine. What remains especially noteworthy, though, is that the discursive landscapes outlined by citizens when speaking about their homelands—regardless of at which spatial scale they are located—are all still part of Ukraine's territory as they fall within the state's contemporary territorial borders. In detailing the discourses and politics of landscapes that define their particular homelands (Häkli, 1999; Lovell, 1998), the participants thus intrinsically displayed their perceptions and (re)interpretations of, but also their innate

attachments to, modern-day Ukraine's territory. Although the importance and historical continuation of small sections of land for the construction and perpetuation of homelands for groups of people is discussed extensively in the existing literature, the reality that the different conceptualisations of homeland held by Ukrainian citizens fit within the larger territory of Ukraine, although still conceptualised at different scales, shows that the significance of territory for homelands cannot entirely be ignored in the modern day, if only because we live in a "cartographic reality of space" (Strandsbjerg, 2010: 4). In addition to housing the discursive landscapes of diverse homelands (Häkli, 1999), territory hence physically binds people together (Herb, 1999), enhances a sense of identity with both the land and those living on it (Knight, 1982), and provides the basis for shared politico-legal belonging through citizenship (Schnapper, 1998).

Beyond this, the findings also underscore the influence of intergenerational legacies associated with historical understandings of homeland in moulding modern conceptualisations. Whilst some scholars suggest younger and older generations are noticeably dissimilar when it comes to political and religious attitudes, attachments, and identities (see, for example, Conover 1991; Niemi and Hepburn 1995; Putnam, 2001; Sapiro 2004), this research adds to the larger theoretical literature on persistence theories in revealing that imaginative cartographies and ethnosymbolic attachments can also hold across generations in a way similar to political and religious identities (Jennings et al., 2009; Rico and Jennings, 2012), and racial attitudes (Bengston et al., 2009). In both the cases of Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, for example, this can evidently be seen through the perpetuation of legacies associated with the different political administrations which once governed the land now constituting these two regions, and the idea that Kirovohrad was part of traditional Ukrainian lands is similarly embedded in contemporary citizens' understandings of homeland. While these long-standing legacies may appear counterintuitive in light of Ukraine's profound territorial disruptions, especially since the beginning of WWI and the collapse of the Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires, they very much resemble previous work in showing that certain attitudes and behaviours can (and do) persist long after the disappearance of the formal institutions which prompted them, even in spite of adverse environments like imperial treatments, the horrors associated with communism, or the continuous re-assignment of land to different administrations (see Alesina and Fuchs-Schuendeln, 2007; Peisakhin, 2012; 2015; Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2017; Wittenberg, 2006). The empirical observations also align with Peisakhin's (2012; 2015) work in suggesting that state authorities' attempts at eradicating historical identities and attachments through institutional and cultural efforts in Ukraine, in some cases, may have actually strengthened their salience, thus equally shaping attitudes and behaviours in the post-colonial setting of Ukraine (see also Lankina and Getachew, 2011; Lee and Schultz, 2012). In this way, and even though the experiences within each region are unique given their particular locations, histories, economies, and neighbouring states, which additionally implicate the residents' "understandings of their own contexts" (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012: 52; see also Bunzl, 2008; Wedeen, 2010), the legacies of the cartographic processes patently persist to the modern day. In fact, these historical memories and narratives appear to be so strong that they not only continue to impact understandings of homeland, but also how contemporary citizens interact with their state and its territory, even thirty years after Ukraine's independence.

Also important to note is that Part II suggested some, albeit quite minor, distinctions between the three age groups' conceptualisations of homelands. These insights also align with prior work on persistence theories in suggesting that while offspring may show similar political attitudes and behaviours as their parents, changing patterns of nationhood still exist across generations (see Miller-Idriss, 2009), as younger and older generations are almost never identical due to evolving material conditions over time (Niemi and Hepburn 1995). Although the ways participants described their spatial attachments and understandings of

homeland in all regions were not drastically dissimilar across age groups—thus reinforcing the salience of intergenerational legacies even if weak—it must be noted that the youngest residents across all regions regularly depicted a slightly stronger recognition of and attachment to their state, at the same time as holding a strong cosmopolitan identity as a global citizen or "member of this world."[341] This was also inherently displayed through their frequent and regular use of foreign languages like English during the conversations and cognitive mapping exercises, as well as their consistently precise awareness of their locations within their state, Eastern Europe, and the world, as is demonstrated through the first and second maps drawn by the young adults in all chapters in Part II. More explicitly, though, the young peoples' understandings of themselves beyond their state appears to be implicated by their awareness of the world, as was recurrently shown in all three regions. For instance, when speaking about her peers, one young adult in Zakarpattia explicitly detailed: "[we] want to travel,...[we] want to see the world and...have money and...have good job."[342] Although less often than the younger adults, some middle-aged and older participants also showed a similar global mindset, such as by considering the demise of state borders for a 'borderless world' (Diener and Hagen, 2018). Illustrating this is the older man who stated: "I would like us to be a part of the EU, without any borders."[343] Although cosmopolitan attitudes across age groups are not the main topic of this thesis, nor are measuring the effects of globalisation or other global events and external forces on contemporary understandings of homeland, the findings nonetheless reinforce the malleability and complexity of political attitudes, behaviours, and attachments (Pirie, 1996; Zaller, 1992) in the quickly changing and evolving global order.

Additionally, it must be acknowledged that spatial attachments and conceptualisations of homeland are implicated by individuals' socialisation and education experiences. In the post-Soviet context, the amount of time people spent living in both/either FSU republics and independent states is also especially important. As the experiences of contemporary Ukrainian citizens vary, as some were socialised and educated predominantly during the Soviet era (the older adults), others in the years near the end of or immediately following Ukraine's independence (the middle-aged adults), and others entirely in independent Ukraine (the younger aged adults), their perceptions of and experiences with space, place, and territory have indeed shaped their spatial attachments. Such is reinforced by the internal variation, rather than homogeneity, regarding the borderlanders' relation to, and strength of attachment with, their homelands, as was demonstrated by the slightly dissimilar sentiments expressed by occupants of different ages. Technological advancements and increased international mobility and communication with heightened globalisation also appear to be significant for everyday experiences at the grassroots. Whereas older residents have had fewer opportunities for travel and migration outside of the FSU, as "they were not encouraged to go abroad in the USSR," in the post-Soviet world where the young adults grew up, "[they] can travel like every day...it is high mobility."[344] As such, the passport has gained symbolic value over time as a means to both travel abroad and define peoples' politico-legal associations with a larger collective—or civic identity—especially for Ukraine's youngest citizens, while older individuals have held onto their primordial attachments associated with their smaller locales and regions "because they have never seen any other place," especially those in very rural settings.[345] Still, local places appear to have retained their ethnosymbolic meanings across generations and ages in borderlands because of the fact that they remained

[341] Focus group conducted in Chernihiv on 23 February 2020.
[342] Focus group conducted in Storozhnytsya on 19 June 2019.
[343] Focus group conducted in Mala Vyska on 13 July 2019.
[344] Focus groups conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019 and in Mala Heitsi on 16 July 2019, respectively.
[345] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019.

constant during historical administration changes and territorial amendments—this is especially true for the older generations whom directly experienced such disruptions and have not had the same opportunities to travel abroad as younger citizens, meaning they do not really know "if their region is different from other regions."[346] Still, younger generations appear to hold similar place attachments and conceptualisations of homeland due to the perpetuation of particular legacies and narratives about the land even after the territorial borders have been removed or redrawn (Peisakhin, 2015). Although homogenous understandings of nationhood may not necessarily be found within these homelands, nor even a uniform *ethnie*, especially in light of globalisation, ubiquitous ethnosymbolic narratives nonetheless exist and provide a sense of authenticity for the people living in borderland areas (Smith, 1999; 2009).

As territorial continuity or an essential reality cannot be assumed within any state, this project's findings into Ukraine's borderland situation appropriately show both the value of regions as objects of unique cultural practices and discourses (Ther, 2013), especially in the case of Zakarpattia and Chernihiv, and of borderlands more generally. While Ukraine's territory is neither static nor definitive—as is reinforced by drastic historical cartographic amendments, the ongoing conflict in Donbas, and suggestions by participants of this research that underlying separatist sentiments exist in Zakarpattia—the unique areas that have emerged through the division of space into territories with the establishment of territorial borders, whether at the regional or territorial levels, remain critical for modern conceptions of homelands. Whilst cognitive-emotive attachments to homelands are not codified in the same way as citizenship through hierarchically defined rights and passports as legal documentation connecting people to states (Breuilly, 1996; Diener and Hagen, 2018; Häkli, 2015; Hobsbawm, 1992; Lovell, 1998; Muller, 2008; Smith, 1998; Torpey, 2000; Wilcox, 2004), the findings accordingly display that a sense of group solidarity is nevertheless still naturalised, (re)produced, and embedded within the consciousness of the individuals living together in borderland areas (Altman and Low, 1992; Campbell, 2018; Canter, 1997; Groat, 1995; Gustafson, 2001a; 2001b; Low, 1992). Hence, in light of both the de- and re-bordering of territories following significant global geopolitical events and dynamic processes of globalisation, which have fundamentally challenged previously held notions of territorial sovereignty, this project shows that borderlands are indeed 'modern homelands' (Seegel, 2012). As contemporary Ukraine is both a borderland country and "a country of borders" (Rudnytskyi, 1994: 115-16), this reality consequently means that the state is likewise a country of borderlands and, even more precisely, a country of modern homelands. The significance of recognising alternative conceptualisations of homeland for understanding contemporary nationalism can therefore be seen.

8.3 Borderland Nationalism

8.3.1 Nationalism in Borderlands

Whilst the theorising on borderlands is limited in the disciplines of Political Science and International Relations, this project's exploration of the 'lived experience of place' (Relph, 1976) in three borderlands intrinsically pushes forward the existing literature in showing the value of studying these areas for better understanding nationalism within the contemporary state system. As the spatial dimension of nationalism is associated with the ways homelands are conceptualised and subsequently interact with the territorial state system, it can be seen that the constructed and impermanent nature of states through the drawing of

[346] Focus group conducted in Lyubech on 15 February 2020.

neither straightforward, established, nor unmediated territorial divides profoundly shapes practices and experiences of nationhood. Most precisely, the project points to the fact that nationalism is experienced in different ways by people of the same state due to their varied understandings of homelands. Whereas civic understandings of nationalism presume a territorial link between the nation, sovereignty, and the state (Goode and Stroup, 2015), the discussion reveals that ordinary people in territorial borderlands may not feel, and even face challenges to upholding, a strong sense of civic nationalism, due to their experiences with territorial borders, including both historical cartographical amendments and the changing of state affiliation (and also citizenship), in addition to ongoing and even expediated relationships with neighbouring states as a result of globalisation. Although unforeseen and not necessarily recognised, ethnic understandings of the nation appear more significant for individuals at the grassroots within territorial borderland areas as their ethnosymbolic ties to smaller spatial scales remain much more significant for their conceptualisations of homeland. In geo-ideological borderlands, conversely, civic understandings of nationalism tied to the state and its institutions prove more important than ethnic sentiments since homeland is abstracted at the spatial scale of territory, as the centre of large spatial landscapes feel cartographical processes less directly. When taken together, it can thus be seen that the diverse ways citizens understand, encounter, and interact with the 'reality' of territorial borders in their everyday lives (Harley, 1989), as a result of their location within a territory, not only shapes their lived experiences of nationhood, but also whether their practices and expressions of nationhood align with more civic or ethnic understandings of nationalism. Even though dominant and constructivist theorising primarily centres on civic nationalism, as well as other social relations that are defined by territorial jurisdictions, nationalism—like national identities—therefore cannot be 'essentialised' or assumed rigid within a state as ethnic and civic understandings exist alongside each other (Goode and Stroup, 2015). Hence, nationalism involves incredibly dynamic practices and experiences combining both civic and ethnic elements that may be gauged as more or less prominent at different times and in different situations (Barrington, 2021; Kulyk, 2018; Marcos-Marné, 2015; Shulman, 2004), as well as in different places.

In this way, the findings lend credence to the argument that territoriality and borderity shape ordinary peoples' worldviews, and practices and experiences of nationhood, in the modern day much more significantly than what is suggested by dominant state-centric approaches to nationalism. Specifically, the ways socio-political processes and phenomena like nationalism are (re)produced, maintained, and performed both consciously and unconsciously through everyday practices, process, and behaviours in borderland areas challenges the assumption that contemporary nationalism is the result of state-centered nation-building or political measures proposed by an administration to convince citizens they belong to the same national community (see also Parker and Adler-Nissen, 2012; Polese et al., 2020; Vucetic and Hopf, 2020). While it must be noted that national narratives and discourses tied to the state may be (and have proven) important in some contexts at certain periods of time, such as immediately following the expansion and dissolution of states and the re-appropriation of land associated with the collapse of empires and the drawing of new territories, the ways individuals in borderland areas conceptualise and engage with their homelands, and the other people also living there, remain much more significant over longer periods of time. This is because the objective reality of the territorial state system can be denied (Migdal, 2004; Wilson and Donnan, 1999), and indubitably has been repeatedly throughout history, as representations of space deconstructed and territory appropriated. In contrast, homelands have remained as the "ultimate object of competition for loyalty" (Shain, 2005: 4), especially for people in borderland areas, as symbolic places imbued with primordial ties and attachments through common descent, religion, customs, and

political memories (Weinreich et al., 2003; Agnew, 2001; Paasi, 1996; Smith, 1996; 1998; 2009). Hence, borderlanders' conceptualisations and orientations of their homelands have remained particularly important for the constitution of national communities as a way to define individuals' and groups' ethno-communal consciousness and solidarity despite historical cartographical amendments (Brubaker, 2005; Safran, 2005). Rather than state-centric and top-down narratives and discourses, then, it is the different ways states' citizenries interact with, and make sense of, their states' territories and homelands that can be seen as fundamentally 'accountable' for nationalism in the contemporary day (Polese et al., 2020).

Beyond nationalism, the findings from this thesis also show that historical understandings of homeland implicate how citizens in different areas of the same territory interact with their state and citizenship in the contemporary day. While territorial amendments may not have drastically affected ordinary peoples' attachments to their national groups and homelands, especially in borderland areas, they have still, in many cases, significantly implicated their relations to their fellow citizenry and loyalty to their state, leaving citizenship less straightforward and increasingly complex. Most evident is that some participants included in this study went so far as to state that "in spite of being citizens of Ukrainian," they "do not want to talk or show [their] Ukrainian identity," nor "even [identify] with the country."[347] One individual moreover asserted that they feel "completely separate" from Ukraine and only part of the state by way of territory—this view was openly shared by people from different age groups, especially in the territorial borderlands, as was likewise demonstrated in many of the maps presented in Part II.[348] Although citizens in the centre of Ukraine, perhaps unsurprisingly, more overtly emphasised the politico-legal unification of all people living within the state's territory on the basis of citizenship as a shared and institutionalised marker of identity (see Häkli, 2015; Torpey, 2000), it was still stressed in all three regions that contemporary Ukraine "has a territory but is missing a [strong] nation," so that most citizens are only linked to their state and its territory by holding Ukrainian citizenship and a passport, albeit still quite loosely.[349] Thusly, territorial borders innately transform understandings of citizenship (De Blij, 2008; Schnapper, 1998; Wilcox, 2004), as well as shift the loyalties and emotional attachments of the people who most directly experience them in such a way that neither a uniform understanding of citizenship is necessarily shared by citizens across a territory (Bös and Zimmer, 2006; Brednikova and Voronkov, 1999; Zhurzhenko, 2010), nor a coherent conceptualisation of homeland or sense of nationhood.

Whereas citizenship did not form part of the theory developed in the chapters preceding Part II, these inductive insights into the role of citizenship, whilst unexpected, still deserve mentioning as they add to the project's larger theoretical and empirical discussions around conceptualisations of borderlands as modern homelands. In particular, and in showing that historical changes to territorial borderlanders' citizenships as a consequence of dissolving states and the construction of new polities has resulted in relatively weak attachments to their contemporary state and its institutions, including their citizenships, the findings have significant relevance for policy and international relations, especially around the potential re-drawing of territorial borders. Within the Ukrainian context, the fact that the state has been independent for thirty years, yet citizens continue to feel a sense of social 'separateness' or disconnectedness from the larger socio-political realities of their own states, demonstrates that Ukrainian governments have not yet successfully integrated and appealed to all citizens equally (see Agnew and Corbridge, 1995). While neither

[347] Focus group conduced in Shyshlivtsi on 18 June 2019, interview conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 4 July 2019, and focus group in Kropyvnytskyi on 1 July 2020, respectively.

[348] Interview conducted in Uzhhorod on 18 September 2018.

[349] Interview conducted in Uzhhorod on 18 September 2018.

Zakarpattia nor Chernihiv currently experience instability at the local level, the ongoing conflict in Donbas suggests it is indeed possible in Ukraine's borderland regions, especially given Russia's ongoing attempt to bring Ukraine into a partnership with Russia (see President of Russia, 2021). Although Chernihiv is more at risk in being located directly beside Russia, Hungary's influence likewise continues to be felt in Zakarpattia, although through more soft power actions like the promotion of Hungarian cultural values and the granting of citizenship to Ukrainian citizens of Hungarian ancestry. Still, as shared ethnic and cultural ties between Ukraine's citizens and those of neighbouring states (especially Hungary, Slovakia, Belarus, and Russia) were mentioned by participants included in this research (although only by a small number), and the inhabitants of Zakarpattia—and even somewhat Chernihiv—showed stronger attachments to their region than Ukraine, it does not appear that the re-drawing of Ukraine's borderlines and/or the re-assignment of peripheral lands to different political administrations (again) would prove particularly problematic for some citizens. Whilst a civic nation is indeed growing across Ukraine (see Barrington, 2021; Cheskin and Kachuyevski, 2019; Kulyk, 2016; 2018; Riabchuk, 2015), this thesis nonetheless underscores that the possibility still exists for territorial disputes, separatism, and civic conflict in borderland areas. This reality is true for Ukraine specifically, but also for other states wherein inhabitants feel circumvented from the state's institutions and their fellow citizenry.

8.3.2 Borderlands for Nationalism

Importantly, a discussion about borderlands as homelands would be incomplete without a reference to borders themselves, as intrinsic to borderlands is a reliance on the existence of borders. Perhaps unsurprisingly, then, the thesis has shown that territorial borders significantly shape life in the areas nearest them. Yet, it must be recognised that the presence of borders affects more than the everyday lives of people in the borderlands; the division of both people and space into the sovereign state system through these linear divides has been fundamental for contemporary understandings, practices, and even the academic study of politics and international relations. As the role of modern-day borders is to accentuate states' territories, they thus inherently shape citizens' attachments to these territories and the associated state institutions by defining who and what is precluded from membership, as is tangibly reinforced both politico-legally through 'passportization' and the attribution of certain rights to citizens like voting. In both literally and figuratively splitting people and space into the territorial form of the modern state system (see Barth, 1969; Cohen, 1985; 1986; Lamont and Molnár, 2002), whilst simultaneously creating and encouraging new dynamics both within states' territories and beyond them, contemporary borders therefore still serve as "meaning-making and meaning-carrying entities" (Donnan and Wilson, 1999: 4; also Wilson and Donnan, 1998). Moreover, they remain foundational for the structure of the modern state system and understandings of both domestic and global politics.

But while their importance cannot be ignored, borders need not only be conceptualised in a territorial sense. Whereas they indeed tangibly demarcate "relations between space" and "spatialize social phenomena in an almost exclusively territorial form" (Löw and Weidenhaus, 2017: 566), borders are simply divisions used to distinguish people in some way and, therefore, also exist in non-territorial forms, such as through imagined, psychological, and/or socially constructed ideas about difference. Although the 'mental maps' (Migdal, 2004) or 'geographical imaginaries' (Gregory, 1994) through which people approach the world have been acknowledged in much of the existing literature on nationalism since the late twentieth century (see also Anderson, 2006; Brubaker et al., 2006; Korostelina, 2011), this project nonetheless pushes forward the theorising in underscoring the need to consistently consider both imagined and territorial

borders when approaching nationalism. The importance of scrutinising these ideological constructions for understanding nationalism in the modern day is empirically demonstrated, for example, in the above discussion's examination of the different ways that citizens of the same state envision their homelands, as well as through the various maps presented in Part II which exhibit Ukrainian citizens' views around their state's present-day territory. Although not often acknowledged, the findings from this thesis therefore show the 'spatialisation' of nationhood, wherein imagined borders coincide with the territorial state system, through which individuals situate themselves ontologically (and therefore both with and vis-à-vis other people) and within space (as both an abstract concept and as the modern territorial state system). Although several scholars have previously purported the need to explore how nationhood is spatially experienced and expressed in the lives of ordinary people (see, for example, Condor, 2010; Skey, 2011), this thesis accordingly adds its own dimension to these conversations in asserting the value of recognising both the ways that national practices are shaped, embodied, and lived at different spatial scales, and how space in and of itself is perceived and imbued with national meanings by the people for whom it holds importance. Stated differently: the project underscores the need to not only consider spatial practices and imaginative cartographies in studies of nationalism, but also the ways that these imaginaries are spatialised, particularly how they fit within, and thus interact with, the territorial state system.

Hence, even though imagined borders shape the everyday experiences of all citizens within a state—simply because they involve the ideas, meanings, and practices used to identify both those who belong and are excluded from a collective—how they are spatialised and co-exist with territorial borders are, conceivably, principal to understanding nationalism in the modern day. This is particularly important, albeit complex, in borderland areas, as this project has demonstrated, as the perceptions and ontological understandings of the world held by the individuals living there are already complicated by their physical 'in-between' or 'middle' locations wherein they are simultaneously situated within a particular state's territory and directly beside another. Still, it must be recognised that this 'centre' position does not only exist in a physical dimension, such as in the case of the territorial and geo-ideological borderlands examined in this thesis, as borderlands—like borders—can also be imagined. Although much explicit theorising has not been seen, if at all, the abstract sites where imagined borders meet and interact, and thus where 'in-between' dynamics are ontologically perceived and felt, can accordingly be understood as 'imagined borderlands.' As imaginative cartographies exist independent of the state system's territorial cartography, and thus also the (re)drawing of territorial borders seen over time, imagined borderlands can (and do) emerge wherein the imagined borders come together—regardless of where this occurs in space. This phenomenon can evidently be seen in the context of nations and national collectives; as nations are differential and discontinuous in not occupying a 'single space' (Maxwell, 2020; Milo, 1992), as is demonstrated by the Jewish population's global reach, imagined borderlands accordingly manifest as the 'grey' areas or existential situations where individuals with an association with one collective interact closely with another—Jewish populations within the particular context of Israel, or any other country, would thus be an extension of the above example. In such situations, as with territorial borderland areas, an unique *modus vivendi* atmosphere develops through the incorporation of competing and contradictory national attachments and identities tied to the interactions between diverse peoples (Martinez, 1994), creating an ontological 'borderland milieu.' As imagined borders are not limited to national collectives, it must be noted that imagined borderlands can also be seen in other contexts wherein collectives closely engage; other demonstrations in the contemporary day therefore include diaspora populations, hybrid cultures, and other migrants who hold onto one identity and/or association with a collective (such as a national, cultural,

or religious group) while are simultaneously embedded in another. In shedding light on the reality that borderlands, like borders and cartographies, can be envisioned, this project hence confutes the potential tautology, or at least the seemingly significant challenge, in studying borderlands without territory. Whilst not considered more thoroughly here, and thus an area for further research, the reality of imagined borderlands also helps us better understand local dynamics and interactions between national collectives within states, thus explaining why homelands can (and evidently do) overlap, contradict, and/or constitute only small parts of states' territories in the modern day.

This project's examination of borderland areas also implicitly exemplifies the need to consider imagined borderlands in studies of contemporary nationalism by showing that contemporary borders no longer (if they ever did) fulfill their assumed roles of simply and straightforwardly separating space into territories. The significant blurring of the dividing lines between people and states (in both a literal and metaphorical sense) through processes of de-bordering and re-bordering since the Peace of Westphalia and up to the present day, in addition to globalisation, have consequently challenged the idea of the fixed and sovereign territorial state, as well as complicated previously held notions of sovereignty and territoriality. Similar disruptions will also likely be ongoing for much of the foreseeable future, as one individual included in this research explicitly outlined:

> The world is developing and our planet is actually a living organism and well, it is difficult to predict...in the years past, who could imagine that Roman Empire would collapse? Or that such a powerful country as Germany would lose its territories? Even the USA, which is a democratic country, but, well, California has not always been a part of the USA?...Sometimes it happens naturally and sometimes it happens because of some military battles. Borders will always change while there are big countries, empires.[350]

While this reality is not necessarily unforeseen, what remains particularly striking is how territory continues to be approached as the static form seen in representations of space by both practitioners and scholars of politics. Whereas states' territories may be assumed to be fixed and homogenous spatial entities defined by borders, and thus the most salient scales for socio-political analyses, this project, instead, empirically demonstrates that territorial borders, and the disruptions caused by them, have fundamentally implicated life at the local level; as one participant from Chernihiv poignantly stressed, cartographical amendments have made "identity very complex" for ordinary people.[351] In this way, the findings very much reinforce older geographical theorising in showing that territory and the associated borders still hold value as a way to socialise and weld individual and group experiences together into a common story (Herb, 1999).

However, when considering representational spaces below the scale of territory, the project not only reveals that the territorial state system has evolved over time, especially in the last thirty years, but that the ways people interact with others has also developed as a result of globalisation and the cosmopolitanisation of societies through technological advancements, increased mobilisation and migration, and the re-spatialisation of politics. In this way, and while territorial borders and territory itself remain important for politics and social relations and practices, including those national in nature, the imagined borders that exist between people remain especially significant, and even more so than ever before, as individuals now move much more freely within and across territorial borderlines. The interactions between people therefore fundamentally rely on the existence of imagined borders, and

[350] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 25 February 2020.
[351] Interview conducted in Chernihiv on 13 February 2020.

innately also imagined borderlands, in an attempt to ontologically reconcile their sense of self within space. The experience of imagined borderlands in the contemporary day can fittingly be understood from the following quote by a young participant who described the existential challenges of living in territorial borderlands:

> [I]t is really difficult, because when you are on the border, you have a clear strong influence from that country you're bordering with. And more or less, your culture is greatly influenced by that culture, by that different country. And when you're in the middle, everybody is trying to refer to you, like, everybody is influencing you. And you choose which side you are going to choose. You choose what you want to follow, which language you want to speak, which traditions you're going to follow, which type of clothes want...Cause East and West Ukraine are very different even in, like, our traditional clothes, ornaments, and stuff is very different. So in the centre, you choose. In my opinion, in my opinion. It is more, it is more difficult, but in my opinion, you have a choice.[352]

As can be seen here, the ways that nationalism, like other social phenomenon, is experienced, talked about, and given meaning by ordinary people in the twenty-first century is very much complicated by how they experience and 'live' the local places and territorial states wherein they reside (Brenner and Elden, 2009; Lefebvre, 1991) through the continuous and simultaneous (re)negotiation of citizenships and nationalisms (Wilson and Donnan, 1998). Still, the ways that borders, and thus also borderlands, are conceptualised (both territorially and imaginatively) by ordinary people through their ontological understandings of difference remain equally important, if only, because they provide people with the 'choice' as to how they understand and experience nationhood.

[352] Focus group conducted in Kropyvnytskyi on 2 July 2019.

Chapter 9:
Concluding Thoughts

"The land on which we live has always shaped us."

Tim Marshall (2015: ix)

"Borders are scars on the face of the planet."

Gogol Bordello (2013)

"Don't ask where I'm from, ask where I'm a local."

Taiye Selasi (2014)

9.1 Closing Remarks

Drawing on this project's abductive logic of inquiry and interpretivist approach, the most appropriate way to conclude is with a reminder of the hermeneutic, sense-making research circle. As with all spheres, the hermeneutic circle presupposes that there is no fixed starting point in the process of sense-making, as it begins wherever the researcher is located metaphorically, physically, and temporally (Dilthey, 1976; Gadamer, 1976; Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012). There is thence neither a 'conclusion,' nor a permanent stopping point within this sense-making circle, or spiral (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012), as the inquiry "moves forward in time in a continual process toward deeper and richer understanding" (Bentz and Shapiro, 1998: 170). This thesis' iterative-recursive approach thus uncovers invaluable insight into the ways socio-political phenomena like nationalism are "reproduced in everyday contexts" (Jones and Merriman, 2009: 165) in the distinct places below the spatial scale of the state where people dwell together (Charron and Diener, 2015). As processes of de- and re-bordering, and transformations linked to globalisation have (and indeed continue to) metaphorically, physically, and temporally shape borderland areas since the establishment of the Westphalian system, the preceding eight chapters revealed how ordinary citizens ontologically understand and experience borders (both territorial and imagined) in an attempt to make sense of their homelands. Since the findings from this thesis are very much linked to the positions and subjectivities of the researcher and those included in this project (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012), in addition to the time and place wherein the research was conducted—particularly before the start of the COVID-19 pandemic—the conclusions are concurrently also the beginnings for further explorations into the "everyday expressions, experiences and negotiations" (Knott, 2015a: 3) of life in representational spaces (Lefebvre, 1991). As such, this project is a small, albeit critical, attempt to innately make sense of nationalism within borderland areas.

In this chapter, I therefore offer an interpretation of the significance of this research in light of the increased emphasis on nationalism in the modern day, including most recently with the COVID-19 pandemic and Putin's claims to Ukraine. This chapter also identifies the value and implications of the

research for pushing forward Political Science and International Relations literature theoretically, empirically, and methodologically, particularly by positing the need for studies of nationalism to move beyond the territorial scale of the state depicted in representations of space to include representational spaces like borderland areas. While the specific findings offer important insight into nationalism, politics, and identity within contemporary Ukraine, they also extend beyond this particular borderland situation to help us better understand cartography, state construction, and nationalism more generally in the twenty-first century. The penultimate section of this chapter moreover provides avenues for future research, including questions about what discussions around nationalism and borders may look like in a post-pandemic world. Perhaps the most significant takeaway of this project, and as is intrinsically highlighted in this chapter, is that there is no simple answer to the question, 'where are you from?'

9.2 Main Contributions

In exploring how nationhood is spatially experienced and expressed in the everyday lives of ordinary people in the Ukrainian regions of Zakarpattia, Chernihiv, and Kirovohrad, the thesis demonstrates the importance of including borderland areas in Political Science and International Relations theorising. Whereas the general tendency in these disciplines continues to be the privileging of the territorial state as the dominant way to frame, interrogate, and explain politics and socio-political phenomena, this project's bottom-up examination of both territorial and geo-ideological borderlands reveals how multi-faceted and contradictory nationalisms, citizenships, social ties, and patriotic influences merge and overlap as a consequence of overlying territorial and imagined cartographies. Indeed, the findings also stress that the dynamics and everyday social practices within borderland areas have been increasingly complicated by globalisation and greater border porosity with augmented cross-border interactions and mobility, as was clearly depicted in the territorial borderland regions of Zakarpattia and Chernihiv. Although the concept of the modern state—as a sovereign territorial entity whose authority is defined by territorial borders (Sack, 1986)—continues to inform the ways politics is approached within the academy, as well as at top state and institutional levels, the findings from this bottom-up study of borderlands illustrate the weakness of the state in the lives of people in these areas. Whereas domestic governments may attempt to control everything and everyone within their territories equally (see Agnew and Corbridge, 1995), the participants in this research located in the territorial borderlands, conversely, exemplified a sense of socio-cultural and political separateness from the larger Ukrainian state. In contrasting existing literature that suggests borderlands reveal a "concrete, local, and powerful experience of the state" (Lamont and Molnár, 2002: 183), this study shows that those who have managed to maintain national, social, or economic attachments irrespective of where the territorial borderlines have been (re)established feel minimally attached to the state in which they live, whereas those who do not engage in similar cross-border interactions and exchange feel a greater sense of attachment to their state—this was exemplified by more cross-border interactions in Zakarpattia than Chernihiv and Kirovohrad, and thus weaker attachments to Ukraine in the former than the latter two, although still weaker in Chernihiv than Kirovohrad. Though not especially counterintuitive, nor explored further in the project, this discovery nonetheless contributes to the existing literature in illustrating that the degree to which borderlanders interact with neighbouring states indubitably impacts their strength of attachment to their own state, as well as to those neighbouring.[353] In empirically

[353] While not explored further here, measuring borderlanders' attachments to their state and those neighbouring could be an area for further research.

challenging the traditional assumption that the state and its central institutions must be the starting point for diplomatic interactions, the thesis furthermore highlights the value of borderlands as critical sites where politics and international relations in the twenty-first century can and should be studied.

Moreover, this analysis of borderlands underscores the value of these areas for understanding contemporary nationalism. As identities tied to the state—those related to civic understandings of nationalism—have garnered significant consideration in the existing theorising, this analysis of 'everyday nationalism' instead uncovered how civic and ethnic understandings of nationalism are experienced in borderlands by ordinary people in "their everyday lives" (Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008: 537). In highlighting the role of human agency and experience in the (re)negotiation and definition of their understandings and practices of nationhood, the thesis thus inherently underscores the fundamental problem with simplistic top-down, or even constructed, approaches to nationalism; namely, that citizenship in the twenty-first century does not equate to a monolithic sense of national attachment and belonging, nor can citizens' nationalities be deduced from an analysis of a single state.[354] Since all participants in this study were citizens of the Ukrainian state, albeit still depicted varied civic and ethnic understandings and experiences of nationhood, the project accordingly reinforces the reality that civic and ethnic understandings of the nation dynamically exist alongside each other (Goode and Stroup, 2015) and, therefore, nationality cannot be essentialised (Marcos-Marné, 2015) as citizens of the same state may identify with nations different than those suggested by their citizenship as a consequence of their location within a state. In showing that nationalism as a practice and experience involves both civic and ethnic elements (Barrington, 2021; Goode and Stroup, 2015; Shulman, 2004), the findings also underscore the value of ethnosymbolic ties in helping to explain why ethnic conceptions of nationalism are more prominent in some areas, such as in borderland regions like Zakarpattia, yet limited in other areas where civic conceptualisations are more dominant like Kirovohrad. As practices of nationhood within the territorial peripheries regions also showed at times to be subversive, anomalous, and even inconsistent with Ukraine's projected image of itself and its wider national project, especially in the case of Zakarpattia, the local experiences henceforth prove erroneous the assumption that the state one lives in, or that is stamped to the front of their passport, determines particular attachments. In underscoring the different and complex ways that citizens of the same state ontologically understand, experience, and interact with their state, its territory, and the associated territorial borders, the preceding chapters also highlight the value of investigating borderland areas in studies of nationhood and citizenship, rather than only central regions and capital cities. Beyond nationalism, though, it must be noted that these insights are also paramount for understanding larger trends around global migration and mobility, voting behaviour, inter-state conflict and territorial disputes, and, subsequently, also conflict prevention and reduction initiatives, including for the current conflict in Ukraine's eastern territories. Implicitly, then, the project's larger contribution is also that it calls Political Science and International Relations to move (both metaphorically and spatially) beyond state-centric analyses and official discourses and rhetoric to realise the role of borders—both territorial and imagined—for shaping socio-political phenomena, like nationalism, within states' territories.

By considering the 'lived experience of nationalism' (Knott, 2015a) in borderland areas, the findings also empirically push forward scholarship within these disciplines in showing the importance of spatial analyses for studies of politics. Whereas more civic understandings of nationalism may indeed be constructed by, or connected to, the state and its institutions, the hegemonic thinking frequently falls into

[354] The question of whether citizenship ever denoted a monolithic national identity remains strongly contested, although this larger discussion is beyond the scope of this project.

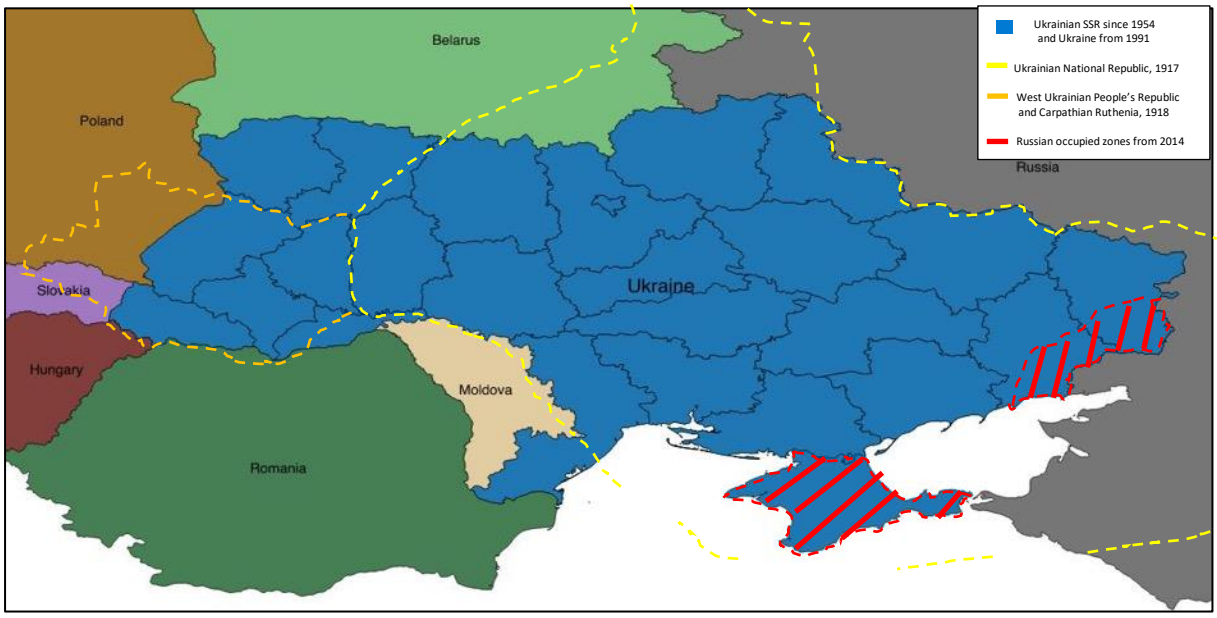
the 'territorial trap' by assuming the state exists as a bounded, fixed, and territorial sovereign space containing society in the way depicted in representations of space like maps (Agnew, 1994). In using CBS as an analytical framework to explore how territorial borders are experienced by the people nearest them (Rumford, 2012), the thesis accordingly *deconstructs* these representations and shows the value of including "directly lived" representational spaces (Lefebvre, 1991: 38) in studies of contemporary politics and nationalism. The significance of these typically ignored local realities were poignantly illustrated through the changes to Ukraine's territory suggested by participants during the cognitive mapping exercises, as well as through their comments during the focus groups and interviews suggesting the need to open (or even completely abolish) the territorial borders standing between Ukraine and the neighbouring EU states; to reinforce the territorial borderline between Ukraine and Russia established in 1991; and to reinstate Crimea as part of Ukraine's territory. Whilst the findings from the cognitive mapping exercises presented in Part II very much demonstrate that maps help us conceive of ourselves within an 'ordered' world subdivided into territorial states (Lefebvre, 1991), the observations simultaneously ascertain that they offer only a particular illustration wherein space is divided into static and exclusive containers independent of the practices carried out within them. By inherently inferring that states are objective, can be expressed in mathematical terms, and enjoy an existence independent of the cartographer that can be verified (Harley, 1989), these representations are neither natural, unbiased, nor uncontroversial; the suggestively definitive and linear images are merely a normative discourse of the generic and idealised state rather than an essential or given reality (Agnew, 1994; Dorling, 1998; Harley, 1989; Harley and Laxton, 2001; Wood, 1992). The thesis therefore aligns with prior geopolitical literature in underscoring that representations of space are "imbued with power" to 'write' or 'draw' the world in a certain way (Del Casino and Hanna, 2006: 34)—particularly by imposing a technocratic and functionalist ideology through an assumed 'accurate' image of the world—and are consequently prerequisites for only particular understandings of sovereignty and types of political claims (Branch, 2011; Scott, 1998). The findings, and especially those in Part II, furthermore exhibit that approaching the contemporary global order from the perspective of totalising and minimising static sovereign entities ignores less dominant discourses (De Certeau, 1984), like those from the borderlands, thus failing to adequately capture the dynamic spatial reality and political phenomena of the globalising world. By including both the people and places often 'missing' from the study of nationalism (Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008), this project principally highlights the significance of representational spaces for studies of politics and nationalism as a way to move beyond the 'territorial trap' (Agnew, 1994).

In exploring representational spaces, the previous eight chapters also revealed the different aspects and intersections of space and its meanings. Whereas the significance of ethnosymbolic ties with specific places for nationalism has regularly been minimalised in favour of the state in the dominant approaches, the project acutely reveals that these attachments indeed remain critical and, in some cases, are even more important than the state for citizens in the modern day. By exploring how nationalism is perceived and experienced at the grassroots in Zakarpattia, Chernihiv, and Kirovohrad, the findings specifically show the intergenerational perpetuation of historical legacies around certain spatial areas as homelands. While in Kirovohrad, homeland was seen at the spatial dimension of territory, thus depicting a more civic understanding of nationhood, it was simultaneously perceived at the more intimate spatial scale of region in Zakarpattia and Chernihiv. In this way, the thesis' observations from both urban and rural locales show that homeland is not only constructed at the scale of territory, region, or place, but can be understood as all three by citizens of the same state, depending on where they are located. The perpetuation of symbolic attachments to a homeland located at a spatial scale below the territorial state thus contrasts conventional

intergenerational persistence theories (see, for example, Conover 1991; Niemi and Hepburn 1995; Putnam, 2001; Sapiro 2004), and might even seem unfounded in light of increased cross-border mobility and other processes associated with globalisation, especially in borderland areas; however, it nevertheless suggests that as contemporary transformations have undermined notions of territorial sovereignty, other spatial scales have actually retained (or even increased) their relevance for practices of nationhood. The findings therefore imply that the historical and geographical meanings and landscapes associated with smaller spatial scales (Smith, 1996; 1998; 2009) help residents in all three regions restore an existential sense of certainty and solidity (Goode et al., 2020), and ontologically navigate themselves vis-à-vis others in their state and the world in light of the dynamically evolving global climate by attributing significant meanings to places of historical symbolic significance. Although it may be suggested that globalisation has equally resulted in enlarged levels of migration, and subsequently that ethnosymbolic ties are perhaps not actually as relevant as what was exhibited by the participants included in this study (as they are the citizens who have remained in Ukraine), it must be recognised that the majority of people globally still live in 'closed worlds' like they did in the late twentieth century (Hirst and Thompson, 1996); the UN (2021) reports that in 2020, less than four percent of the world's population, approximately 281 million people, lived outside of the country of their birth. Although this number has steadily grown in recent years, and even doubled since 2000, the increase is closely related to the forced displacement of people across territorial borderlines as a result of humanitarian crises, rather than individual choice (UN, 2021). As such, this thesis is significant for explaining the situation within most countries, not only Ukraine, and contributes to ongoing discussions around nationalism in showing the value of ethnosymbolic ties in the modern day.

In this way, the thesis also methodologically demonstrates the value of ethnographic and interpretivist studies for politics. Whereas nationalism, and especially nationalism in Ukraine, is often studied through quantitative methods like cross-country surveys, the thesis differentiates itself from other literature in reinforcing the value of qualitative approaches. As was demonstrated in Part II, conducting spatial analyses through the use of participatory cognitive mapping to examine participants' spatial knowledge and attachments at various scales was particularly useful for uncovering their conceptualisations of space, place, and territory. When coupled with the interviews and focus groups, the maps provided a fuller picture (in both a literal and metaphorical sense) than what would be available through the use of one or fewer methods or more positivist methods, like survey research, to study how and why individuals in borderland areas experience nationalism. Though interviews, focus groups, and participant observations are commonly employed in nationalism studies, this project's use of participatory mapping adds to the 'toolbox' of applicable methods to study everyday nationalism. Similarly, the project's use of online methods shows the value of alternative approaches to studying everyday nationalism in the contemporary day. Although employing digital technologies like telecommunication and videoconferencing software for qualitative research indeed has larger implications for interactions with our participants (Hester and Housley, 2002), and the ways we conceptualise the 'field' more generally (Howlett, 2021), they nonetheless proved valuable in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and likely will continue to do so if physical distancing and mask-wearing continues to be emphasised in a post-pandemic world.

Figure 9.1. Territorial evolution of Ukraine from WWI.[355]



Map created by author. Shape files retrieved from DIVA-GIS.

Figure 9.2. Imaginative cartographies within representations of space.

Overlaid maps drawn by young adults in Velyka Dobron' on 16 June 2019, Chernihiv on 23 February 2020, and Mala Vyska on 13 July 2019.

[355] Borderlines and demarcations of conflict zones are approximate.

Finally, the significance of this research is that it sheds further light on nationalism in Ukraine. Although the project's conceptualisation of Ukraine as a borderland between the 'East' and 'West'—both internally and as the geographical space between Russia and Europe—indeed aligns with historical discourses and much existing literature, the simultaneous characterisation of the country as a geo-ideological borderland, a borderland of Russia, and a borderland of Europe deepens our understanding of the domestic situation. Specifically, this tri-part categorisation moves beyond the traditional longitudinal approach to nationalism in Ukraine to better realise the ways the state's territorial evolution and modern existence, including influences from the neighbouring states and geopolitical entities, implicate contemporary practices and understandings of nationhood. In this way, the project's spatial conceptualisation of Ukraine reinforces the need to move away from the internal East-West divide (both metaphorically and spatially) for understanding nationhood and identity in post-Soviet Ukraine, as has also been suggested in much of the emerging literature since the Euromaidan (see Barrington, 2021; Bureiko and Moga, 2019; Cheskin and Kachuyevski, 2019; Kulyk, 2016; 2018; Pop-Eleches and Robertson, 2018). This bottom-up study of representational spaces also offers an alternative to the dichotomy considered in dominant theorising on Ukrainian nationalism and politics, particularly as it differentiates itself from survey-based research to explore the subtle nuances and subjective interpretations, experiences, and meanings (Kratochwil, 2008), which govern discursive practices, social relations, and socio-political phenomena in Ukraine. In considering the dynamics within Zakarpattia, Chernihiv, and Kirovohrad, the project also pushed forward the existing literature by including regions not typically considered—neither in tandem nor at all—in traditional approaches to Ukrainian politics. Still, the analysis of these three regions showed the complex ways that legacies of Ukraine's historical geopolitical struggles with various political and religious administrations—as a consequence of its status as a borderland—have been embedded in the local level and, subsequently, shaped (and continue to shape) how contemporary citizens understand themselves within and in relation to their state's territory, Eastern Europe, and the rest of the world. Most specifically, it shows the way that ethnosymbolic ties to land as homelands have persisted to the modern day despite the historical territorial disruptions to Ukraine's territory.

In fact, and as was demonstrated in Part II of this thesis, the preservation of historical legacies about homelands can be found in all three regions. Notably, these conceptualisations vary, as Zakarpattia's residents showed that their homeland need not necessarily be attached to the territory of Ukraine, while those in Chernihiv emphasised the significance of their homeland *for* Ukraine—suggesting it could even be extended slightly beyond contemporary Ukraine's territory to include Starodubshchyna. Citizens living in Kirovohrad, conversely, stressed historical Ukrainian lands aligning closely with the state's territory and also the return of both Kuban and Crimea (the latter was similarly discussed in Chernihiv). These varying understandings of homeland are displayed in the maps in Figures 9.1 and 9.2—the first is a representation of Ukraine's territorial evolution since WWI to the modern day and the second is an overlaid image of three of the young adults' maps presented in Part II (one from each region). When approached together, the clash between imaginative cartographies and territorial cartographies can explicitly be seen; however, what is most striking is that the imagined borders drawn by participants onto their maps in Figure 9.2 align almost perfectly with the visualisation of Ukraine's territorial evolution presented in Figure 9.1. As the latter figure only includes maps drawn by Ukraine's youngest citizens, this image underscores that intergenerational spatial attachments and national narratives about homeland, and the local implications of (repeatedly) dividing space into territories through cartographic lines, have persevered to the modern day. Although modern territorial borders now determine where Ukraine begins and ends, the imaginative

cartographies of borderlanders presented in Figure 9.2 nonetheless show that these alternative attachments and conceptualisations remain relevant for contemporary Ukrainian citizens' lived realities and everyday experiences. This analysis of nationalism in the borderlands of a borderland thence provides important insight for studies of nationalism in Ukraine, as well as politics and international relations more largely; namely, that as long as territorial borderlines arbitrarily and artificially divide people and space, experiences and practices of nationhood cannot only be studied from the centre of states' territories looking outwards, but must also be considered from the territorial peripheries looking in.

9.3 Avenues for Further Research

While this thesis offers a glimpse into how borders, territory, and local places were experienced at a particular point in time—and a time before perhaps the most significant global disruption in the last century—much of this puzzle remains unexplored. The most obvious avenue for further research is therefore to continue the in-person field research disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in Zakarpattia and rural locales in northern Chernihiv. While these areas were considered in the thesis' original research plans, the cancellation of my in-person fieldwork following March 2020 significantly impacted my data collection, especially during the first few months of the pandemic, as well as prevented me from immersing myself within the local communities in Zakarpattia to observe nuanced, unplanned, or 'accidental' happenings (Fujii, 2015) as was previously possible in Chernihiv and Kirovohrad. Despite the research I conducted online, the number of participants from Zakarpattia was nonetheless limited, and rural residents and individuals of older age groups in particular remain underrepresented in this study. As opportunities for convenience and snowball exposure were also curtailed in this region because much of the data were collected online, the population from Zakarpattia was neither as diverse nor random as it might have been had I conducted the interviews and focus group(s) in the field, especially when compared to the in-person fieldwork in Chernihiv and Kirovohrad. Due to these limitations, further investigations could consequently consider the local experiences and places underexplored in this thesis, including visiting the locales and meeting the people in Zakarpattia with whom I only engaged in a physically-distanced and digital way. Since, at the time of writing, significant global inequalities exist surrounding access to vaccines—and thus the ethics of conducting in-person fieldwork in countries where only a small percentage of the population has been vaccinated need to be majorly considered—additional online research could be conducted in all three regions under study. Further research, whether in-person or online, could also consider collaborating with local organisations and academics based in Ukraine.

As the COVID-19 pandemic has brought significant changes to global politics, especially around the ways borders and nationalism are perceived and articulated, the findings of this thesis additionally serve as a foundation for further explorations. One potential route is to replicate the study, or parts of it, in the same regions to explore how the understandings of space, place, and territory held by people living in borderland areas have been implicated by the sudden closure of territorial borders globally, including the ways citizens have attempted to re-establish routine and normality in their everyday lives since March 2020 as their social-cultural and political structures, practices, and routines were disrupted (Goode et al., 2020). A comparative historical analysis would thus allow for an investigation into the spatial attachments and conceptualisations of homeland held by borderlanders in different contexts (i.e. when cross-border mobility and exchange is possible and when it is not) to explore how cartography ontologically implicates 'mental maps' and understandings of homeland (Brubaker et al., 2006; Migdal, 2004), as well as the role of territorial borders in shaping social, economic, and political practices within borderlands more generally.

Since cross-border interactions were part of the everyday activities of borderland residents prior to the pandemic, as was exemplified in Part II, examining the socio-economic and political implications of, and other societal disruptions caused by, border closures at the grassroots level in these areas is also particularly important—whether in Ukraine or elsewhere. Aside from the pandemic, further studies could also consider how the reinforcement of territorial borders through top-down efforts, such as militarisation or the construction of walls, implicates borderlanders' everyday lives. Additional analyses could explore the ways (limited) cross-border interaction impacts how borderlanders perceive themselves vis-à-vis others in their own state, the states neighbouring, and the rest of the world. Relatedly, other projects might consider the larger impacts of the pandemic on nationalism within borderland communities, both in terms of how nationhood is understood and expressed in light of sudden territorial border closures and halt in inter-state travel, and the increased nationalist response by state governments since the beginning of the pandemic, as can particularly be seen through 'vaccine nationalism.' By building on the work by other scholars of everyday nationalism during the COVID-19 pandemic, additional research could thus also explore how nationhood has been manifested in the everyday lives of borderland populations as they seek "to affix national meanings to social structures that are in flux" (Goode et al., 2020: 3). While these findings are critical for realising nationalist responses to global health (Antonsich, 2020; Bieber, 2020; Goode et al., 2020) and climate crises (Conversi, 2020), they would prove insightful for recognising borderlands in light of other catastrophes now also plaguing the world, such as ongoing territorial disputes, civil conflicts, and humanitarian crises causing the forced migration of refugees and asylum seekers.

Beyond the implications of the pandemic, though, other avenues can also be pursued in order to push this research forward. Within the particular case of Ukraine, peripheral areas not included in this study could be explored using a similar bottom-up methodology. The country's easternmost regions of Donetsk and Luhansk would be of specific value for investigating how nationalism is experienced by ordinary people in borderlands given the significance of the borderline between Ukraine and Russia (Fournier, 2018), especially since 2014 and Russia's hybrid intervention, the occupation of more than seven percent of Ukraine's territory, and the internal displacement of almost 1.5 million people from Donbas and Crimea since the beginning of the conflict (MTOT, 2021). While these areas were not approved for this doctoral project due to concerns around my safety and security during fieldwork, the ceasefire from 27 July 2020 in Donbas suggests local dynamics may be more secure than when this research commenced in 2017. Although Russia's declination of multiple offers to renew the tenuous ceasefire and buildup of troops along the borderline in April 2021 suggests that underlying tensions do persist, a bottom-up study of everyday nationalism within these occupied zones, if possible, would be particularly fruitful for understanding the role of cartography and territory in post-Soviet civil society. Such studies would also add to the ongoing work on nationalism and state-making in Donbas in light of the ongoing war (see Sasse and Lackner, 2018; 2019). Scrutinising other peripheral regions not included in this study would moreover bring further value to the existing, albeit limited, geopolitical and spatial analyses around Ukraine's borders; Odesa, Chernivtsi, and Volyn in particular would offer valuable insights as they all neighbour more than one state and allow for an examination of borderlands located beside states different than those most frequently discussed in the literature on Ukrainian nationalism and politics (i.e. Poland and Russia). Moreover, and as citizenship arose as an interesting inductive, albeit unexpected, finding in this study, further work could explore the role and understandings of citizenship within the context of borderland areas, whether in Ukraine or elsewhere, as well as the ways perspectives on citizenship (and citizenship acquisition) may have changed in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Future projects could additionally

consider combining findings from bottom-up studies of nationalism in Ukraine, like this one, with top-down analyses, such as by triangulating with quantitative surveys or GIS research like the 'MAPA: Digital Atlas of Ukraine' programme.

The empirical insights from this thesis also spark further conversations regarding the role of space and cartography in studies of politics and nationalism. By bringing voices from borderland areas into this analysis to uncover how territory and borders are experienced and constituted by the people who engage with them most directly in their everyday lives, the thesis, like CBS more generally, reminds that there are an infinite number of ways to draw and conceptualise any particular thing or place. As maps offer a particular spatial panopticon through which to promote, legitimise, and codify the worldviews, biases, and assumptions of the author, which typically also reflect the dominant discourses present in society at the time the map was drawn (Dorling, 1998; Harley, 1989), further projects could therefore consider challenging the hegemonic representations of space which portray states as bounded, continuous, and territorial entities. Methodologically, this could be done through the use of methods often utilised in the field of Geography, such as participatory or counter-mapping, as was done in this project, or other write-draw approaches to show non-territorial spatial attachments in political analyses. Additional research could likewise challenge the dominant theorising around borders and advance 'alternative border imaginaries' (Parker and Vaughan-Williams, 2012) by empirically examining the incessantly evolving function of borders and the spaces they demarcate (whether territorial or imagined) in light of globalisation and, more recently, the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the colloquial discourses and political rhetoric around the role of borders with respect to these global developments. Similarly, future studies may build on the work of early twenty-first century scholars (see, for example, Amoore et al., 2008; Hannah, 2000) to further scrutinise contemporary mapping practices as a form of surveillance and observation technology by central bodies for their own securitising purposes, often in a mutually reinforcing way. Albeit the ongoing need for further studies of nationalism within borderland areas, though, it can nonetheless still be discerned from this project that practices of nationhood are indeed complicated by place, space, and territory.

9.4 Reflections and Final Deliberations

The research for this thesis began in late 2017, at a time when discussions around borders and nationalism were increasing as several state governments sought to reinforce their territorial sovereignty and reaffirm a common understanding of nationalism, particularly following the election of Donald Trump in the US and the UK's vote to 'Brexit' from the EU. While it was unbeknownst then that these discussions would be amplified within political discourses and colloquial conversations alike almost two and a half years later, the COVID-19 pandemic has only further highlighted the role of borders, territory, and nationalism in global politics. Though states are now operating within a different global context than when their territories were first demarcated—as globalisation has fundamentally challenged the underlying premises of the sovereign state system upon which domestic and global politics have been organised since the Peace of Westphalia (both metaphorically and spatially), as well as studied in the academy—the pandemic has (very suddenly) reaffirmed the distinctions and distinctiveness of states in showing the continued significance of territorial borders as "linked with the idea of sovereignty" (Paasi, 1998: 71). Given that these linear politico-legal separations were perhaps the least pronounced they have historically ever been up until the beginning of March 2020, the swift closure and ongoing policing of them since then has fundamentally reinforced the image of space as divided into the Westphalian state system.

As this doctoral thesis was written amidst these dynamic global changes, it has accordingly evolved and developed with them. The first two years of the research took place in a world with increasingly open borders, wherein traveling to Ukraine for fieldwork took approximately three hours and entry into the country required nothing more than a passport. The last sixteen months, conversely, predominantly allowed for only virtual travel through the use of telecommunication software, such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams, with entry granted via a specific computer-generated link. While this project—like most aspects of our lives—was adapted in light of these unexpected global developments (Agar, 2010; Fujii, 2015), particularly by moving from in-person to online fieldwork, it must be noted that the adjustments required to continue along the hermeneutic circle of sense-making were not always straightforward, nor without significant deliberation and reflection. Though the limitations of this study were outlined in Chapter 4, the practice of conducting this research, writing this thesis, and creating knowledge more generally during the COVID-19 pandemic was reflected on regularly during the last year and a half, especially my positionality and identity as a researcher. While often in an attempt to avoid 'retiring from the world' and overlooking the reality that all social practices are embedded in hierarchies of both knowledge and authority (Bourdieu, 1990; 2007), my frequent contemplations regarding the power relations between my participants and myself were also motivated by the pandemic's increased emphasis on other global inequalities, most obviously demonstrated by access to health care and vaccines, but also socio-economically in terms of access to goods and services. Most notable is the reality that the individuals who shaped my empirical data, fieldwork experiences and, in effect, this thesis—those in the borderlands of Ukraine—fundamentally relied on the pre-pandemic global order for their everyday lives, wherein cross-border mobility, interaction, and exchange was easily navigated. As such, they, like other borderlanders around the world, are among those who have felt the most direct socio-economic impacts of the pandemic. The final year of this study therefore proved exceedingly challenging both ethically and emotionally. Aside from the logistical and personal difficulties associated with writing a doctoral thesis in a pandemic, conducting research in this 'new normal' deeply accentuated my metaphorical, physical, and temporal locations in relation to my participants and their lived realities (Dilthey, 1976; Gadamer, 1976; Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012), thus prompting questions about ethics and even morality both in and beyond the field, especially as a context that has experienced significant social disruptions (for more, see Knott, 2019).[356] Although, at the time of writing, borders globally have begun to slowly re-open and cross-border mobility is increasing, the time and place wherein the research was conducted has nonetheless since dissolved, like the pre-pandemic 'normal' itself, as we now find ourselves traversing towards a post-pandemic future, whatever form this may take. In light of this reality, completing the project also fundamentally proved trying as a constant reminder of a world that once was, yet, will never be again.

But as any research offers only a glance into the unique time and place wherein it took place, the 'densely textured facts' (Bunzl, 2008; Geertz, 1973) from this project are still of immense value. Particularly, they shed light on the significant challenges of studying borders in the contemporary day due to their changing interpretations and evolving roles for geopolitical landscapes as expressions of inter-state ideologies. The participants included in this research likewise demonstrated that borders hold different meanings for all who engage with them. For instance, an interlocutor from Kirovohrad detailed that, to him, "a border is a sacred line. Nobody can say the border line can be changed or something, it is a sacred

[356] This was especially felt because I was conducting research remotely from a country that became one of the fastest in the world to vaccinate its population.

line…The borderline means everything."[357] Conversely, a man in Chernihiv suggested borders not only delineate a country, but they also serve as a "frontier between mentalit[ies]," whereas a woman in Zakarpattia envisioned a borderless world: "[m]aybe it would be better without the borders…Maybe we could try living without the borders."[358] Most striking here is that the above conceptualisations of borders also reflect the most commonly expressed sentiments in each of these regions regarding Ukraine's contemporary territory: Kirovohrad's residents advocated for a return to Ukraine's 1991 territorial form, Chernihiv's indicated the need to reinforce the borderline standing between Ukraine and Russia, and Zakarpattia's routinely suggested the abolishment of a territorial separation between Ukraine and Europe.[359] Hence, the importance of cartographic borders in the contemporary state system is indeed that they consolidate the sovereign state and its institutions, and spatialise socio-political phenomena in an almost 'exclusively territorial form' (Löw and Weidenhaus, 2017), yet, they also innately shape political attitudes, behaviours, and even the identities of the individuals living within each state (Peisakhin, 2012; 2015). As was also shown through this thesis: borders aid in processes of 'place-making' within states (Massey, 1995) and the construction of borderlands as modern homelands (Seegel, 2012). Even despite the COVID-19 pandemic's significant disruption, then, this critical, cartographical, and (de)constructional analysis of Ukraine sheds significant light on the dynamic and complex role of borders within contemporary global politics. Intrinsically, the project also shows the underlying premise that motivated the project from the very beginning: that borderlands are the most relevant areas for exploring nationalism in the globalising world as the areas that have experienced the greatest impacts by the (d)establishment of territorial states.

Returning to the original research question posed at the beginning of this thesis, then, it must again be asked: how do individuals living in borderland areas experience nationalism and national belonging? In considering everyday life as the "domain of enquiry" (Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008: 557), this thesis has evidently answered that in the contemporary day, the ontological understandings and experiences of nationhood of individuals in borderland areas are shaped by their states' territory (including the demarcating territorial parameters), the physical geography of local places wherein they live (which involves ethnosymbolic ties), and the imaginative cartographies that distinguish themselves in space and from those 'foreign' or 'outside.' Central to this understanding is accordingly the interaction between territorial and imaginative cartographies, even though the former is habitually accentuated over the latter by both the academy and individuals in macro-level positions of power when discussing politics and nationalism. Still, the value of also considering the imaginative geographies associated with the nation from the perspective of those who directly experience them can be seen. As Umut Özkirimli stressed, "[t]he fact that something is constructed or imagined does not make it less real in the eyes of those who believe in it…The fact that our feelings are the products of some complicated cognitive processes does not make them less real" (2003: 348). Following from here, I thence encourage you to re-envision the cartographic world as we know it. If we placed less emphasis on the territorial state and more on the other places where "real life occurs" (Selasi, 2014), such as where we were born, where we were raised, or where we live now, how would *you* define yourself? Where would you be *from*?

[357] Focus group conducted on 19 July 2019.
[358] Interviews conducted in Chernihiv on 21 February 2021 and online on 21 May 2020.
[359] It must be noted that outliers exist, however, these remain the most common views.

Appendices and Bibliography

Appendix A. Topic Guide for Interviews and Focus Groups

Warm-up Activity: Cognitive Mapping Exercise (Focus Group Only)

Instructions:

Please mark on the map where you are from. Feel free to draw or erase borders as you see fit.
Once you have marked on the map, explain below where you are located and why you have marked yourself there.

Follow-up Questions:

- Where are you located? Where is your home?
- Where is your oblast? Where are the borders around your oblast?
- Where is Kyiv located? Where are the borders around Ukraine?
- Would you make any changes to this map? If so, what changes would you make and why?

Basic Introduction Questions

1. Where are you from?
2. Tell me a story about your everyday life.
3. Tell me about your home.
4. Where is your city/village located? Your region? Your country?

Self-Identity

1. How do you identify?
2. Do you identify with your city, oblast, or country more? Why?
3. Does your identification ever change? If so, when and why?
4. Is your oblast different from the rest of Ukraine? How? Why? In what ways is it the same?

Ukrainian Identity

1. What is 'Ukrainian' identity?
2. What is 'Ukrainian'?
3. What makes someone 'Ukrainian'?
4. What makes someone not 'Ukrainian'?
5. Is 'Ukrainian' different from a _____ (insert countries that border Ukraine here)? How? In what ways?
6. Is your oblast identity the same as 'Ukrainian' identity? How? Why or why not?

Borders

1. What does your close proximity (or significant distance) to other countries mean for you?
2. What does your close proximity (or significant distance) to other countries mean for your oblast and the people living there?
3. Do you feel other countries influence the identities (national or otherwise) of the people in your oblast? In what ways? Why? Which countries have the greatest/least influence?
4. Does the culture/ethnicity/language of your oblast resemble those of any other countries? Why do you think this is?
5. (How) do Ukraine's borders affect your daily life? (How) do they affect your oblast? (How) do they affect your country more broadly?
6. Do you believe the borders around Ukraine and your oblast were drawn where they are 'supposed' to be? Why/why not? How might you change them?

Appendix B. Participants from Zakarpattia

Appendix B.1. Focus Group Information for Zakarpattia

Location	Number of Participants	Date of Focus Group	Ages of Participants
1. Mali Heivtsi	6	16 June 2019	All 30-49 years
2. Velyka Dobron'	6	17 June 2019	2 x 18-29 years; 3 x 30-49 years; 1 x 50+ years
3. Uzhhorod	11	18 June 2019	All 18-29 years
4. Shyshlivtsi	5	18 June 2019	1 x 18-29 years; 3 x 30-49 years; 1 x 50+ years
5. Storozhnytsya	4	19 June 2019	1 x 18-29 years; 2 x 30-49 years; 1 x 50+ years
6. Palad'-Komarivtsi	10	19 June 2019	7 x 31-50 years; 3 x 50+ years
7. Online (Participants in Uzhhorod)	5	4 June 2020	2 x 18-29 years; 3 x 30-49 years

Appendix B.2. Interview Information for Zakarpattia

Location	Gender	Date of Interview	Age of Participant	Sector	Position
1. Uzhhorod	Male	18 September 2018	31-49 years	Government	High-Ranking Official
2. Uzhhorod	Female	18 September 2018	31-49 years	Government	High-Ranking Official
3. Uzhhorod	Male	18 September 2018	50+ years	Academia	Director
4. Uzhhorod	Female	18 September 2018	31-49 years	Academia	Professor
5. Uzhhorod	Male	18 September 2018	18-29 years	Academia	Assistant Professor
6. Berehove	Male	19 September 2018	31-49 years	Government	High-Ranking Official
7. Berehove	Male	19 September 2018	31-49 years	Government	High-Ranking Official
8. Uzhhorod	Female	20 September 2018	31-49 years	Government	High-Ranking Official
9. Uzhhorod	Female	20 September 2018	31-49 years	Academia	High-Ranking Official
10. Uzhhorod	Female	18 June 2019	31-49 years	Non-profit	Director
11. Online (Participant from Berehove but in Lviv due to pandemic)	Male	15 May 2020	18-29 years	Private	Lawyer/Analyst
12. Online (Participant in Uzhhorod)	Female	21 May 2020	18-29 years	Non-profit	Director
13. Online (Participant in Uzhhorod)	Male	24 May 2020	30-49 years	Academia	Assistant Professor
14. Online (Participant in Uzhhorod)	Female	26 May 2020	31-49 years	Private	Journalist
15. Online (Participant in Mukachevo)	Male	27 May 2020	31-49 years	Non-profit	Analyst
16. Online (Participant in Uzhhorod)	Male	28 May 2020	31-49 years	Non-profit	Analyst
17. Online (Participant in Mizhhiria)	Male	29 May 2020	31-49 years	Private	Director
18. Online (Participant in Uzhhorod)	Male	30 May 2020	18-29 years	Non-profit	Lawyer/Activist
19. Online (Participant in Uzhhorod)	Male	1 June 2020	50+ years	Academia	Director
20. Online (Participant in Uzhhorod)	Female	2 June 2020	18-29 years	Private	Journalist/Analyst
21. Online (Participant in Vynohradiv)	Female	2 June 2020	18-29 years	Non-profit	Activist
22. Online (Participant in Uzhhorod)	Male	3 June 2020	31-49 years	Non-profit	Director
23. Online (Participant in Uzhhorod)	Male	3 June 2020	18-29 years	Academia	Analyst

Appendix C. Participants from Chernihiv

Appendix C.1 Focus Group Information for Chernihiv

Location	Number of Participants	Date of Focus Group	Ages of Participants
1. Lyubech	3	15 February 2020	1 x 31-49 years; 2 x 50+ years
2. Korobky	2	15 February 2020	All 50+ years
3. Chernihiv	8	16 February 2020	All 30-49 years
4. Chernihiv	10	18 February 2020	2 x 30-49 years; 8 x 50+ years
5. Chernihiv	10	19 February 2020	9 x 18-29 years; 1 x 30-49 years
6. Chernihiv	10	20 February 2020	All 18-29 years
7. Chernihiv	19	23 February 2020	11 x 18-29 years; 7 x 30-49 years; 1 x 50+ years
8. Nizhyn	3	25 February 2020	2 x 18-29 years; 1 x 50+ years
9. Chernihiv	9	26 February 2020	2 x 30-49 years; 7 x 50+ years

Appendix C.2 Interview Information for Chernihiv

Location	Gender	Date of Interview	Age of Participant	Sector	Position
1. Chernihiv	Female	10 February 2020	18-29 years	Non-profit	Activist
2. Chernihiv	Female	12 February 2020	30-49 years	Private	Journalist
3. Chernihiv	Male	13 February 2020	30-49 years	Non-profit	Journalist/Analyst
4. Chernihiv	Male	13 February 2020	30-49 years	Government	High-Ranking Official
5. Chernihiv	Male	14 February 2020	30-49 years	Academia	Analyst
6. Chernihiv	Male	14 February 2020	30-49 years	Non-profit	Lawyer/Analyst
7. Chernihiv	Female	17 February 2020	30-49 years	Academia	Director
8. Chernihiv	Female	17 February 2020	30-49 years	Government	Analyst
9. Chernihiv	Female	18 February 2020	50+ years	Academia	Director
10. Chernihiv	Male	18 February 2020	30-49 years	Government	High-Ranking Official
11. Chernihiv	Male	19 February 2020	30-49 years	Academia	Director
12. Chernihiv	Male	19 February 2020	30-49 years	Non-profit	Activist
13. Chernihiv	Male	21 February 2020	50+ years	Government	High-Ranking Official
14. Chernihiv	Male	21 February 2020	30-49 years	Academia	Analyst
15. Chernihiv	Male	21 February 2020	50+ years	Academia	Professor
16. Nizhyn	Male	25 February 2020	50+ years	Government	High-Ranking Official
17. Chernihiv	Male	26 February 2020	30-49 years	Non-profit	Activist/Analyst
18. Chernihiv	Male	1 March 2020	30-49 years	Government	High-Ranking Official
19. Chernihiv	Male	3 March 2020	18-29 years	Non-profit	Activist
20. Chernihiv	Male	4 March 2020	50+ years	Government	High-Ranking Official

Appendix D. Participants from Kirovohrad

Appendix D.1 Focus Group Information for Kirovohrad

Location	Number of Participants	Date of Focus Group	Ages of Participants
1. Kropyvnytskyi	3	29 June 2019	2 x 18-29 years; 1 x 30-49 years
2. Kropyvnytskyi	11	1 July 2019	All 30-49 years
3. Kropyvnytskyi	24	2 July 2019	12 x 18-29 years; 7 x 30-49 years; 5 x 50+ years
4. Kropyvnytskyi	7	3 July 2019	4 x 18-29 years; 3 x 30-49 years
5. Novoukrainka	9	11 July 2019	1 x 18-29 years; 8 x 50+ years
6. Znam'yanka	7	11 July 2019	4 x 18-29 years; 3 x 30-49 years
7. Bobrynets	12	12 July 2019	1 x 18-29 years; 11 x 50+ years
8. Mala Vyska	6	13 July 2019	5 x 18-29 years; 1 x 50+ years
9. Pervozvanivka	8	14 July 2019	1 x 18-29 years; 7 x 50+ years
10. Novomyrhorod	6	15 July 2019	3 x 18-29 years; 3 x 30-49 years
11. Kropyvnytskyi	7	16 July 2019	All 30-49 years

Appendix D.2 Interview Information for Kirovohrad

Location	Gender	Date of Interview	Age of Participant	Sector	Position
1. Kropyvnytskyi	Male	28 June 2019	18-29 years	Academia	Analyst
2. Kropyvnytskyi	Female	29 June 2019	30-49 years	Academia	Professor
3. Kropyvnytskyi	Male	2 July 2019	30-49 years	Government	High-Ranking Official
4. Kropyvnytskyi	Female	2 July 2019	30-49 years	Non-profit	Journalist/Analyst
5. Kropyvnytskyi	Male	3 July 2019	30-49 years	Academia	Professor
6. Kropyvnytskyi	Female	3 July 2019	30-49 years	Academia	Analyst
7. Kropyvnytskyi	Female	4 July 2019	30-49 years	Non-profit	Journalist/Analyst
8. Kropyvnytskyi	Female	4 July 2019	30-49 years	Government	High-Ranking Official
9. Kropyvnytskyi	Female	5 July 2019	18-29 years	Non-profit	Analyst/Activist
10. Kropyvnytskyi	Female	7 July 2019	30-49 years	Academia	Analyst
11. Kropyvnytskyi	Male	8 July 2019	18-29 years	Government	Analyst
12. Kropyvnytskyi	Male	9 July 2019	50+ years	Non-profit	Director
13. Kropyvnytskyi	Female	9 July 2019	30-49 years	Non-profit	Director
14. Kropyvnytskyi	Female	9 July 2019	30-49 years	Non-profit	Activist/Analyst
15. Kropyvnytskyi	Male	9 July 2019	30-49 years	Non-profit	Activist/Analyst
16. Kropyvnytskyi	Male	10 July 2019	30-49 years	Government	High-Ranking Official
17. Kropyvnytskyi	Female	10 July 2019	30-49 years	Non-profit	Director
18. Kropyvnytskyi	Female	10 July 2019	30-49 years	Government	Analyst
19. Kropyvnytskyi	Female	10 July 2019	30-49 years	Non-profit	Activist
20. Novoukrainka	Male	11 July 2019	30-49 years	Government	High-Ranking Official
21. Kropyvnytskyi	Male	16 July 2019	30-49 years	Government	High-Ranking Official

Bibliography

Abdelal R, Herrera Y, Johnston AI and McDermott R (2009) *Measuring Identity: A Guide for Social Scientists.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Aberbach J, Chesney J and Rockman B (1975) Exploring elite political attitudes: some methodological lessons. *Political Methodology* 2(1): 1-27.

Aberbach J and Rockman B (2002) Conducting and coding elite interviews. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 35(4): 673-676.

Adamski L (2008) Overt or subconscious nationalism? Some comments provoked by Paul Robert Magocsi's A History of Ukraine. *Polish Quarterly of International Affairs* 17(4): 99–109.

Adcock R (2006) Generalization in comparative and historical social science: the difference that interpretivism makes. In: Yanow D and Schwartz-Shea P (eds) *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn.* Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, pp. 80-96.

Adler R (2001) *Geographical Information in the Delimitation, Demarcation and Management of International Land Boundaries.* Boundary and Territory Briefing 3:4. Durham: International Boundaries Research Unit.

Agar M (2010) On the ethnographic part of the mix: a multi-genre tale of the field. *Organizational Research Methods* 13(2): 286-303.

Agnew J (1994) The territorial trap: the geographical assumptions of international relations theory. *Review of International Political Economy* 1(1): 53-80.

(2001) Regions in revolt. *Progress in Human Geography* 25(1): 103-110.

(2011) Space and place. In: Agnew J and Livingstone D (eds) *The SAGE Handbook of Geographical Knowledge.* London, UK: SAGE, pp. 316-330.

Agnew J and Corbridge S (1995) *Mastering Space: Hegemony, Territory and International Political Economy.* London, UK: Routledge.

Ahmed A and Sil R (2012) When multi-method research subverts methodological pluralism—or, why we still need single-method research. *Perspectives on Politics* 10(4): 935-953.

Alesina A and Fuchs-Schuendeln N (2007) Good-bye Lenin (or not?): the effect of communism on people's preferences. *The American Economic Review* 97(4): 1507-1528.

Altman I and Low SM (eds) (1992) *Place Attachment.* New York, NY: Plenum.

Alvesson M and Skoldberg K (2000) *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research.* London, UK: SAGE.

Amilhat-Szary A and Giraut F (2015) Borderities: the politics of contemporary mobile borders. In: Amilhat-Szary A and Giraut (eds) *Borderities and the Politics of Contemporary Mobile Borders.* London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 1-19.

Amoore L, Marmura S and Salter M (2008) Smart borders and mobilities. *Surveillance and Society* 5(2): 96-101.

Anderson B (2006) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. London, UK: Verso.

Anderson M (1996) *Frontiers: Territory and State Formation in the Modern World*. London, UK: Polity Press.

Andersson R (2014) *Illegality, Inc.: Clandestine Migration and the Business of Bordering Europe*. Oakland, CA: University of California Press.

Andrukhovych Y (2005) *Engel und Dämonen der Peripherie. Essays* (translated by Stöhr S). Berlin, Germany: Suhrkamp.

Antonsich M (2015) Nation and nationalism. In: Agnew J, Mamadouh V, Secor A and Sharp J (eds) *The Wiley Companion to Political Geography*. New York, NY: Wiley, pp. 297-310.

(2016) The 'everyday' of banal nationalism—ordinary people's views on Italy and Italian. *Political Geography* 54: 32-43.

(2020) Did the COVID-19 pandemic revive nationalism?. OpenDemocracy. Available at: www.opendemocracy.net/en/pandemic-border/did-covid-19-pandemic-revive-nationalism/ (accessed 10 July 2021).

Applebaum A (2015) *Between East and West: Across the Borderlands of Europe*. Milton Keynes, UK: Penguin Random House.

Arel D (1995) Ukraine: a temptation of a nationalizing state. In: Tismaneanu V (ed) *Political Culture and Civil Society in Russia and the New States of Eurasia (International Politics of Eurasia)*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, pp. 157-188.

(2002) Interpreting 'nationality' and 'language' in the 2001 Ukrainian census. *Post-Soviet Affairs* 18(3): 213–249.

(2018) How Ukraine has become more Ukrainian. *Post-Soviet Affairs* 34 (2–3): 186–189.

Asiwaju A (1993) Borderlands in Africa: a comparative research perspective with particular reference to western Europe. *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 8(2): 1-12.

Auyero J (2007) *Routine Politics and Violence in Argentina: The Gray Zone of State Power*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Balibar E (1998) The borders of Europe. In: Cheah P and Robbins B (eds) *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 216-233.

(2009) Europe as a borderland. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 27(1): 190-215.

Barrington L (2002) Examining rival theories of demographic influences on political support: the power of regional, ethnic, and linguistic divisions in Ukraine. *European Journal of Political Research* 41(4): 455-491.

(2018) Understanding identity in Ukraine and elsewhere. *Post-Soviet Affairs* 34(2-3): 179-182.

(2021) Citizenship as a cornerstone of civic national identity in Ukraine. *Post-Soviet Affairs* 37(2): 155-173.

Barrington L and Faranda R (2009) Reexamining region, ethnicity, and language in Ukraine. *Post-Soviet Affairs* 25(3): 232-256.

Barrington L and Herron ES (2004) One Ukraine or many? Regionalism in Ukraine and its political consequences. *Nationalities Papers* 32(1): 53-86.

Barth F (ed) (1969) *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Differences*. London, UK: Allen and Unwin.

Bassett TJ (1998) Indigenous mapmaking in intertropical Africa. In: Woodward D and Lewis GM (eds) *The History of Cartography, Volume 2 Book 3, Cartography in the Traditional African, American, Arctic, Australian, and Pacific Societies*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, pp. 24-48.

Bassin M (1991) Russia between Europe and Asia: the ideological construction of geographical space. *Slavic Review* 50(1): 1-17.

Baud M and Van Schendel W (1997) Toward a comparative history of borderlands. *World History* 8(2): 211-242.

Beck U (2006) *Cosmopolitan Vision*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Polity Press.

Beissinger M (1995) The persisting ambiguity of empire. *Post-Soviet Affairs* 11(2): 149-84.

(1997) State building in the shadow of an empire-state: the Soviet legacy in post-Soviet politics. In: Dawisha K and Parrott B (eds) *The End of Empire? The Transformation of the USSR in Comparative Perspective*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, pp. 157-185.

Bengtson V, Copen C, Putney N and Silverstein M (2009) A longitudinal study of the intergenerational transmission of religion. *International Sociology* 24(3): 325-345.

Bentz VM and Shapiro JJ (1998) *Mindful Inquiry in Social Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Berezhnaya L (2015) A view from the edge: borderland studies and Ukraine, 1991-2013. *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 34(1-4): 53-78.

Berry W, Golder M and Milton D (2012) Improving tests of theories positing interaction. *Journal of Politics* 74(3): 653-671.

Bieber F (2020) Global nationalism in times of the COVID pandemic. *Nationalities Papers*. Epub ahead of print 27 April 2020. DOI: 10.1017/nps.2020.35.

Biggs M (1999) Putting the state on the map: cartography, territory, and European state formation. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 41(2): 374-405.

Billig M (1995) *Banal Nationalism*. London, UK: SAGE.

Birch S (1995) Electoral behaviour in western Ukraine in national elections and referendums, 1989-91. *Europe-Asia Studies* 47(7): 1145-1176.

(2000) Interpreting the regional effect in Ukrainian politics. *Europe-Asia Studies* 52(6): 1017-1041.

Blee KM and Currier A (2007) Are national politics local? Social movement responses to the 2004 US presidential election. In: Joseph L, Mahler M and Auyero J (eds) *New Perspectives in Political Ethnography*. New York, NY: Springer International Publishing, pp. 156-79.

Bös M and Zimmer K (2006) When borders move: on the dynamics of border shifts in Eastern Europe. In: Eigmüller M and Vobruba G (eds) *Frontier Sociology: The Political Structuring of Space* (in German). Wiesbaden, Germany: VS Verlag, pp. 157-184.

Boeck BB (2009) *Imperial Boundaries: Cossack Communities and Empire- Building in the Age of Peter the Great, New Studies in European History*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu P (1990) The scholastic point of view. *Cultural Anthropology* 5(4): 380-391.

(1994) *Raisons Pratiques: Sur la Théorie de L'Action.* Paris, France: Seuil.

(2007) *Outline of a Theory of Practice.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu P and Wacquant L (1992) *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology.* Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Branch J (2010) 'Colonial reflection' and territoriality: the peripheral origins of sovereign statehood. *European Journal of International Relations* 18(2): 277-297.

(2011) Mapping the sovereign state: technology, authority, and systemic change. *International Organization* 65(1): 1-36.

Braun V and Clarke V (2006) Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3(2): 77-101.

Brednikova O and Voronkov V (1999) Border and social space restructuring (the case of Narva-Ivangorod). In: Brednikova O and Voronkov V (eds) *Nomadic Borders: Proceedings of the Seminar Held in Narva (12–16 November 1998)*. Working Paper 7. St. Petersburg, Russia: CISR, pp. 104–110.

Brenner N and Elden S (2009) Henri Lefebvre on state, space, territory. *International Political Sociology* 3(4): 353-377.

Breuilly J (1996) Approaches to nationalism. In: Balakrishnan G (ed.) *Mapping the Nation*. London, UK: Verso, pp. 146–174.

Brubaker R (1996) *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

(2000) Accidental diasporas and external 'homelands' in Central and Eastern Europe: past and present. Political Science Series 71. Vienna, Austria: Institute for Advanced Studies.

(2004) *Ethnicity Without Groups*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

(2005) The 'diaspora' diaspora. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28(1): 1-19.

(2009) Ethnicity, race, and nationalism. *Annual Review of Sociology* 35: 21–42.

Brubaker R and Cooper F (2000) Beyond identity. *Theory and Society* 29(1): 1-47.

Brubaker R, Feischmidt M, Fox J and Grancea L (2006) *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvania Town*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Brzezinski Z (1994) The premature partnership. Foreign Affairs. Available at: www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russian- federation/1994-03-01/premature-partnership (accessed 10 July 2021).

Bunzl M (2008) The quest for anthropological relevance: Borgesian maps and epistemological pitfalls. *American Anthropologist* 110(1): 53–60.

Bureiko N and Moga T (2019) The Ukrainian-Russian linguistic dyad and its impact on national identity in Ukraine. *Europe-Asia Studies* 71(1): 137-155.

Burghardt AF (1973) The bases of territorial claims. *Geographical Review* 63(2): 225-245.

Butler J (1993) *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex.'* London, UK: Routledge.

Campbell C (2018) Space, place, and scale: human geography and spatial history in past and present. *Past & Present* 239(1): e23-e45.

Canter D (1997) The facets of place. In: Moore GT and Marans RW (eds) *Advances in Environment, Behavior, and Design: Volume 4, Toward the Integration of Theory, Methods, Research, and Utilization*. New York, NY: Plenum, pp. 109-147.

Caporaso J (2009) Is there a quantitative-qualitative divide in comparative politics?. In: Landman T and Robinson N (eds) *The SAGE Handbook of Comparative Politics.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, pp. 67-83.

Castells M (2000) *End of Millennium: Volume 3 of the Information Age, Economy, Society and Culture*, 2nd edition. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Chabal P and Daloz JP (2006) *Culture Troubles: Politics and the Interpretation of Meaning*. London, UK: Hurst.

Chambers R (2006) Participatory mapping and Geographic Information Systems: whose map? Who is empowered and who disempowered? Who gains and who loses?. *The Electronic Journal of Information Systems in Developing Countrie*s 25(1): 1-11.

Chandra K (2001) Symposium: cumulative findings in the study of ethnic politics. *APSA-CP: Newsletter of the Organised Section in Comparative Politics of the American Political Science Association* 12(1): 7-25.

Charron A (2012) 'Through the national lens': nationality, territory, and the formation of 'Crimean-Russian' identity. Master's Thesis, University of Kansas, US.

Charron A and Diener A (2015) Political geography, new regionalism, and rescaling identity. *SAIS Review* 35(2): 13-20.

Cheskin A and Kachuyevski A (2019) The Russian-speaking populations in the post-Soviet space: language, politics and identity. *Europe-Asia Studies* 71(1): 1-23.

Coakley J (2018) 'Primordialism' in nationalism studies: theory or ideology?. *Nations and Nationalism* 24(2): 327-347.

Cohen A (1985) *The Symbolic Construction of Community*. London, UK: Routledge.

(1986) *Symbolising Boundaries: Identity and Diversity in British Cultures*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.

Condor S (2010) Devolution and national identity: the rules of English (dis)engagement. *Nations and Nationalism* 16(3): 525-543.

Connor W (1978) A nation is a nation, is a state, is an ethnic group is a …. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 1(4): 377-400.

(1994) *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Conover PJ (1991) Political socialization: where's the politics?. In: Crotty W (ed) *Political Science: Looking to the Future*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, pp. 125-152.

Conversi S (2020) The ultimate challenge: nationalism and climate change. *Nationalities Papers* 48(4): 625-636.

Cooper R (2011) *The Breaking of Nations: The Order and Chaos in the Twenty-First Century*. London, UK: Atlantis Books.

D'Anieri P (2011) Structural constraints in Ukrainian politics. *East European Politics and Societies* 25(1): 28-46.

De Blij H (2008) *Power of Place: Geography, Destiny, and Globalization's Rough Landscape*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

De Certeau M (1984) *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

De Cillia R, Reisigl M and Wodak R (1999) The discursive construction of national identities. *Discourse and Society* 10(2): 149-173.

Del Casino VJ and Hanna SP (2006) Beyond the 'binaries': a methodological intervention for interrogating maps as representational practices. *ACME—An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies* 4(1): 34-56.

Delaney D (2005) *Territory: A Short Introduction*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Delanty G and Rumford C (2005) *Rethinking Europe: Social Theory and the Implications of Europeanization*. London, UK: Routledge.

Denzin N (1978) *The Research Act in Sociology: A Theoretical Introduction To Sociological Methods,* 2nd edition. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Diener AC and Hagen J (2018) The political sociology and political geography of borders. In: Outhwaite W and Turner SP (eds) *SAGE Handbook of Political Sociology.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, pp. 330-346.

Dilthey W (1976) *Selected Writings* (translated and edited by Rickman HP). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Donnan H and Wilson T (1999) *Borders: Frontiers of Identity, Nation and State.* Oxford, UK: Berg.

Dorling D (1998) Human cartography: when it is good to map. *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 30(2): 277-288.

Doucet A and Mauthner N (2008) What can be known and how? Narrated subjects and the listening guide. *Qualitative Research* 8(3): 399-409.

Douglass W (1998) A western perspective on an eastern interpretation of where north meets south: Pyrenean borderland cultures. In: Wilson TM and Donnan H (eds) *Border Identities: Nation and State at International Frontiers.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 62-95.

Dukalskis A and Lee J (2020) Everyday nationalism and authoritarian rule: a case of North Korea. *Nationalities Papers* 48(6): 1052-1068.

Eder K (2006) Europe's borders: the narrative construction of the boundaries of Europe. *European Journal of Social Theory* 9(2): 255-271.

Ekiert G and Ziblatt D (2013) Democracy in central and eastern Europe one hundred years on. *East European Politics and Societies* 27(1): 90-107.

Elden S (2013) *The Birth of Territory.* Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Elwood S (2006) Negotiating knowledge production: the everyday inclusions, exclusions, and contradictions of participatory GIS research. *The Professional Geographer* 58(2): 197-208.

Emerson M (2001) *The Elephant and the Bear: The European Union, Russia and their Near Abroads*. Brussels, Belgium: CEPS.

Emerson RM, Fretz RI and Shaw LL (1995) *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Fearon J and Wendt A (2002) Rationalism vs. constructivism: a skeptical view. In: Carlsnaes W, Rise T and Simmons B (eds) *Handbook of International Relations*. London, UK: SAGE, pp. 52-72.

Fenton S (2007) Indifference towards national identity: what young adults think about being English and British. *Nations and Nationalism* 13(2): 321-339.

Fook J (1999) Reflexivity as method. *Annual Review of Health Social Science* 9(1): 11-20.

Fournier A (2014a) Russia as Ukraine's periphery? War and the fate of the 'external soul.' *Perspectives on Europe* 44(2): 43-49.

(2014b) From borderland to heart of Europe? Ukraine's engagement with the EU's democratic standards. In: Carey HF (ed) *European Institutions, Democratization, and Human Rights Protection in the European Periphery*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Press, pp. 111-123.

(2018) Between mob and multitude: youth ambivalence toward mass mobilization in a Ukrainian protest movement. *Demokratizatsiya: The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization* 26(1): 55-82.

Fox JE and Miller-Idriss C (2008) Everyday nationhood. *Ethnicities* 8(4): 536-63.

Friedrichs J and Kratochwil F (2009) On acting and knowing: how pragmatism can advance international relations research and methodology. *International Organization* 63(4): 701–731

Frye T (2015) What do voters in Ukraine want? A survey experiment on candidate ethnicity, language, and policy orientation. *Problems of Post-Communism* (62)5: 247-257.

Fujii LA (2012) Research ethics 101: dilemmas and responsibilities. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 45(4): 717-723.

(2015) Five stories of accidental ethnography: turning unplanned moments in the field into data. *Qualitative Research* 15(4): 525-539.

(2017) *Interviewing in Social Science Research: A Relational Approach*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Gadamer HG (1976) *Philosophical Hermeneutics* (translated and edited by Linge DE). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Geertz C (1973) *The Interpretation of Cultures.* New York, NY: Basic.

Gellner E (1965) *Thought and Change.* Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press.

(1983) *Nations and Nationalism*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

George AL and Bennett A (2005) *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Gerring J (2007) *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Gibson C (2014) Language or dialect?: The politicisation of language in central and Eastern Europe. *Tropos* 2(1): 32-40.

Gielis R and Van Houtum H (2012) Sloterdijk in the house! Dwelling in the borderscape of Germany and the Netherlands. *Geopolitics* 17(4): 797-817.

Glenn D (2009) The power of everyday life: political scientists, taking their cue from anthropologists, try fieldwork. *Chronicle of Higher Education,* 25 September, pp. B13–B14.

Goettlich K (2019) From frontiers to borders: the origins and consequences of linear borders in international politics. PhD Thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, UK.

Gogol Bordello (2013) *We rise again.* YouTube. Available at: https://youtu.be/AU-uzWUzE40 (accessed 25 July 2021).

Gomart T (2006) *The EU and Russia: The needed balance between geopolitics and regionalism*. Russie.Nei.Visions Working Paper 10b. Paris: Institut Français des Relations Internationale. Available at: www.ifri.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/gomartwsanglais.pdf (accessed 18 July 2021).

Goode JP (2020) Guest editor's introduction, 'everyday nationalism in world politics: agents, contexts, and scale.' *Nationalities Papers* 48(6): 974-982.

Goode JP and Stroup DR (2015) Everyday nationalism: constructivism for the masses. *Social Science Quarterly* 96(3): 717–739.

Goode JP, Stroup DR and Gaufman E (2020) Everyday nationalism in unsettled times: in search of normality during pandemic. *Nationalities Papers*. Epub ahead of print 22 May 2020. DOI: 10.1017/nps.2020.40.

Gottmann J (1973) *The Significance of Territory*. Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia.

Gradirovsky SN (1999). Rossiia i postsovetskie gosudarstva: Iskushenie diasporal'noi politikoi. *Diaspora* 2-3. Available at: http://www.archipelag.ru/ru_mir/rm-diaspor/diaspor-politic/iskus/ (accessed 10 May 2021).

Graziano M (2018) *What is a Border?*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Gregory D (1994) *Geographical Imaginations.* Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

Groat L (ed) (1995) *Giving Places Meaning*. London, UK: Academic Press.

Guest G, MacQueen K and Namey E (2012) *Applied Thematic Analysis*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

Guillaume X (2013) Criticality. In: Salter M and Mutlu C (eds) *Research Methods in Critical Security Studies: An Introduction*. New York, NY: Routledge, pp. 29-32.

Guillemin M and Gillam L (2004) Ethics, reflexivity, and 'ethically important moments' in research. *Qualitative Inquiry* 10(2): 261-80.

Gupta A and Ferguson J (1992) Beyond 'culture': space, identity, and the politics of difference. *Cultural Anthropology* 7(1): 6-23.

Gustafson P (2001a) Meanings of place: everyday experience and theoretical conceptualizations. *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 21(1): 5-16.

(2001b) Roots and routes: exploring the relationship between place attachment and mobility. *Environment and Behavior* 33(5): 667-686.

Gustafsson K and Hagström L (2018) What is the point? Teaching graduate students how to construct political science research puzzles. *European Political Science* 17: 634–648.

Häkli J (1999) Cultures of demarcation: territory and national identity. In: Herb GH and Kaplan DH (eds) *Nested Identities: Nationalism, Territory, and Scale*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, pp. 123-149.

(2015) The border in the pocket: the passport as a boundary object. In: Amilhat-Szary A and Giraut (eds) *Borderities and the Politics of Contemporary Mobile Borders*. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 85-99.

Haberman S (1973) The analysis of residuals in cross-classified tables. *Biometrics* 29(1): 205-220.

Hall P (2003) Aligning ontology and methodology in comparative politics. In: Mahoney J and Reuschemeyer D (eds) *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, pp. 373-406.

Hannah M (2000) *Governmentality and the Mastery of Territory in Nineteenth-Century America*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Haraway D (1988) Situated knowledges: the science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective. *Feminist Studies* 14(3): 575-599.

Harley JB (1989) Deconstructing the map. *Cartographica: The International Journal for Geographic Information and Geovisualization* 26(2): 1-20.

Harley JB and Laxton P (2001) *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Hartshorne R (1958) The concept of geography as a science of space from Kant and Humboldt to Hettner. *Annals of the Association of American Geography* 48(2): 97-108.

Harvey D (2005) *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Harvey W (2011) Strategies for conducting elite interviews. *Qualitative Research* 11(4): 431-441.

Hastrup K and Olwig KF (1997) Introduction. In: Olwig KF and Hastrup K (eds) *Siting Culture: The Shifting Anthropological Object*. London, UK: Routledge, pp. 1-14.

Hay R (1998) Sense of place in developmental context. *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 18: 5-29.

Hearn J (2007) National identity: banal, personal and embedded. *Nations and Nationalism* 13(4): 657-674.

Herb GH (1999) National identity and territory. In: Herb GH and Kaplan DH (eds) *Nested Identities: Nationalism, Territory, and Scale*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, pp. 9-30.

Herbst J (2000) *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Herzog L (1990) *Where North Meets South: Cities, Space, and Politics on the U.S. Mexico Border*. Austin, TX: Center for Mexican American Studies.

Hester S and Housley W (2002) *Language, Interaction and National Identity*. London, UK: Routledge.

Heyman J (1994) The Mexico-United States border in anthropology: a critique and reformulation. *Journal of Political Ecology* 1(1): 43-66.

Hibou B (2004) Conclusion. In: Migdal J (ed) *Boundaries and Belonging: States and Societies in the Struggle to Shape Identities and Local Practices*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 339-357.

Hirsch F (1997) The Soviet Union as a work-in-progress: ethnographers and the category nationality in the 1926, 1937, and 1939 censuses. *Slavic Review* 56 (2): 251–278.

(2000) Toward an empire of nations: border-making and the formation of Soviet national identities. *Russian Review* 59(2): 201-226.

Hirst P and Thompson G (1996) *Globalization in Question*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Hnatiuk O (2004) Between East and West. In: Makarska R and Kerski B (eds) *Ukraine, Poland and Europe: European Identity at the New EU Eastern Border*. Osnabrück, Germany: Verlag, pp. 91-115.

Hobsbawm EJ (1992) *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

(1997) *On History*. London, UK: New Press.

Holloway I and Todres L (2003) The status of method: flexibility, consistency and coherence. *Qualitative Research* 3(3): 345-357.

Hopf T and Allan B (2016) *Making Identity Count: Building a National Identity Database*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Horvath R (2014) The Euromaidan and the crisis of Russian nationalism. *Nationalities Papers* 43(6): 819-839.

House J (1982) *Frontier on the Rio Grande: A Political Geography of Development and Social Deprivation*. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press.

Howlett M (2021) Looking at the 'field' through a Zoom lens: methodological reflections on conducting online research during a global pandemic. *Qualitative Research*. Epub ahead of print 16 January 2021. DOI: 10.1177/1468794120985691.

Hrushevsky M (1984) *The Traditional Scheme of 'Russian' History and the Problem of a Rational Organization of the History of the Eastern Slavs, From Kievan Rus' to Modern Ukraine: Formation of the Ukrainian Nation*. Cambridge, MA: Ukrainian Studies Fund Harvard University, pp. 355-364.

Hrytsak Y (2004) On sails and gales, and ships sailing in various directions: post-Soviet Ukraine. *Ab Imperio* 1: 229-254.

Hubbard P (2005) Space/place. In: Atkinson D, Jackson P, Sibley D and Washboune N (eds) *Cultural Geography: A Critical Dictionary of Key Concepts*. London: I.B. Tauris, pp. 41-48.

Humphrey C (1988) Rural society in the Soviet Union. In: Sacks MP and Pankhurst JG (eds) *Understanding Soviet Society*. London, UK: Routledge, pp. 53-70.

Huntington SP (1996) *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.

Ignatieff M (1993) *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*. New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

Isaacs R and Polese A (eds) (2016) *Nation Building and Identity in the Post-Soviet Space: New Tools and Approaches*. Farnham, UK: Ashgate.

Jennings MK, Stoker L and Bowers K (2009) Politics across generations: family transmission reexamined. *The Journal of Politics* 71(3): 782-799.

Jones R (2007) *People/States/Territories: The Political Geographies of British State Transformation*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

(2012) *Border Walls Security and the War on Terror in the United States, India, and Israel*. London, UK: Zed Books.

Jones R and Merriman P (2009) Hot, banal and everyday nationalism: bilingual road signs in Wales. *Political Geography* 28(3): 164-173.

Kaiser RJ (1994) *The Geography of Nationalism in Russia and the USSR*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

(2002) Homeland making and the territorialisation of national identity. In: Conversi D (ed) *Ethnonationalism in the Contemporary World, Walker Connor and the Study of Nationalism*. London, UK: Routledge, pp. 229-247.

Kaiser RJ and Nikiforova E (2006) Borderland spaces of identification and dis/location: multiscalar narratives and enactments of Seto identity and place in the Estonian-Russian borderlands. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29(5): 928-958.

Kapiszewski D, MacLean L and Read B (2015) *Field Research in Political Science: Practices and Principles*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Kappeler A (2001) Rußlands frontier in der frühen neuzeit. In: Asch RG, Voß WE and Wrede M (eds) *Frieden und Krieg in der Frühen Neuzeit. Die europäische Staatenordnung und die außereuropäische Welt* (in German). Munich, Germany: Wilhelm Fink, pp. 599-613.

Kedourie E (1994) *Nationalism*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, Inc.

Keith M and Pile S (1993) *Place and the Politics of Identity*. London, UK: Routledge

King G, Keohane R and Verba Slangu (1994) *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Klinghoffer AJ (2006) *The Power of Projections: How Maps Reflect Global Politics and History.* Westport, CT: Praeger.

Knight DB (1982) Identity and territory: geographical perspectives on nationalism and regionalism. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 72(4): 513-541.

Knott E (2015a) Everyday nationalism: a review of the literature. *Studies on National Movements* 3. Available at: www.snm.nise.eu/index.php/studies/article/view/0308s (accessed 10 January 2021).

(2015b) Kin-states and kin majorities from the bottom-up: developing a model of nested integration in Crimea and Moldova. PhD Thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, UK.

(2019) Beyond the field: ethics after fieldwork in politically dynamic contexts. *Perspectives on Politics* 17(1): 140-153.

Kohn H (2005) *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in its Origins and Background.* Social Science Classics Series. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers.

Korablyova V (2021) Contemporary Ukraine: borderland-bloodland-neverland?. In: Pearce SC and Sojka E (eds) *Cultural Change in East-Central European and Eurasian Spaces*. Springer International Publishing, pp. 17-32. Epub ahead of print 6 March 2021. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-030-63197-0_2.

Korostelina K (2011) Shaping unpredictable past: national identity and history education in Ukraine. *National Identities* 13(1): 1-16.

(2014) *Constructing the Narratives of Identity and Power: Self-Imagination in a Young Ukrainian Nation.* Plymouth, UK: Lexington Books.

Korzybski A (1948) *Science and Sanity: An Introduction to Non-Aristotelian Systems and General Semantics,* 3rd edition. Lakeville, CT: The International Non-Aristotelian Library Publishing Company.

Kostovicova D and Glasius M (2011) *Bottom-Up Politics: An Agency-Centred Approach to Globalisation*. Hampshire, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kotenko A (2010) Povernennia prostoru. *Ukrains 'kyi humanitarnyi ohliad* 11: 45-60.

Kozelsky M (2010) *Christianizing Crimea: Shaping Sacred Space in the Russian Empire and Beyond.* DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press.

Kristof L (1959) The nature of frontiers and boundaries. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 49(3): 269-282.

Kratochwil FV (1986) Of systems, boundaries, and territoriality: an inquiry into the formation of the state system. *World Politics* 39(1): 27–52.

(2008) Constructivism: what it is (not) and how it matters. In: Porta DD and Keating M (eds) *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 80-98.

Kravchenko V (2010) *Kharkiv/Kharkov: The City on Ukrainian-Russian Borderland*. Vilnius, Lithuania: EHU Press.

(2016) Ukraine: history confronts geography. In: Liikanen I, Scott J and Sotkasiira T (eds) *The EU's Eastern Neighbourhood: Migration, Borders, and Regional Stability*. New York, NY: Routledge, chapter 2.

Krueger RA (1994) *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research,* 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Kubicek P (2000) Regional polarisation in Ukraine: public opinion, voting and legislative behaviour. *Europe-Asia Studies* 52(2): 273-94.

Kubik J (2013) From transitology to contextual Holism: a theoretical trajectory of postcommunist studies. In: Kubik J and Linch A (eds) *Postcommunism from Within: Social Justice, Mobilization, and Hegemony.* New York, NY: New York University Press, pp. 27-94.

Kulyk V (2013) Language policy in Ukraine: what people want the state to do. *East European Politics and Societies* 27(2): 280-307.

(2014) Ukrainian nationalism since the outbreak of Euromaidan. *Ab Imperio* 3(1): 94-122.

(2016) National identity in Ukraine: impact of Euromaidan and the war. *Europe-Asia Studies* 68(4): 588-608.

(2018) Shedding Russianness, recasting Ukrainianness: the post-Euromaidan dynamics of ethnonational identifications. *Post-Soviet Affairs* 34(2-3): 119-138.

(2019) Identity in transformation: Russian-speakers in post-Soviet Ukraine. *Europe-Asia Studies* 71(1): 156-178.

Kuromiya H (1998) *Freedom and Terror in the Donbas: A Ukrainian-Russian Borderland, 1870-1990s*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Kuzio T (2000) Nationalism in Ukraine: towards a new framework. *Politics* 20(2): 77-86.

(2001) Identity and nation-building in Ukraine: defining the 'Other'. *Ethnicities* 1(3): 343-365.

(2002) Nationalism in Ukraine: towards a new theoretical and comparative framework. *Journal of Political Ideologies* 7(2): 133-161.

(2006) National identity and history writing in Ukraine. *Nationalities Papers* 34(4): 407-427.

(2015a) A new framework for understanding nationalisms in Ukraine: democratic revolutions, separatism and Russian hybrid war. *Geopolitics, History, and International Relations* 7(1): 30-51.

(2015b) Competing nationalisms, Euromaidan, and the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 15(1): 157-169.

Laitin D (1998) *Identity in Formation*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Lamont M and Molnár V (2002) The study of boundaries in the social sciences. *Annual Review of Sociology* 28: 167-195.

Lankina T (2007) 'Fragmented belonging' on Russia's western frontier and local government development in Karelia. Representation, Equity and Environment Working Paper Series. Working Paper 30. Washington, DC: World Resources Institute.

Lankina T and Getachew L (2011) Mission or empire, word or sword? The human capital legacy in postcolonial democratic development. *American Journal of Political Science* 56(2): 465-483.

Lankina T, Libman A and Obydenkova A (2016) Authoritarian and democratic diffusion in post-communist regions. *Comparative Political Studies* 49(12): 1599-1629.

Lee A and Schultz K (2012) Comparing British and French colonial legacies: a discontinuity analysis of Cameroon. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 7(4): 365-410.

Lefebvre H (1991) *The Production of Space* (translated by Nicholson-Smith D). Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Lepyavko S (2005) Veykyi Kordon i dola ievro- peis'koï tsyvilisatsiï v kontseptsii Valtera Preskota Veba. *Ukrains 'kyi humanitarnyi ohliad* 11: 46-65.

Lichterman P (2002) Seeing structure happen: theory-driven participant-observation. In: Staggenborg S and Klandermans B (eds) *Methods of Social Movement Research.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 118-45.

Liikanen I, Scott J and Sotkasiira T (eds) (2016) *The EU's Eastern Neighbourhood: Migration, Borders, and Regional Stability*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Liu JH and Hilton D (2005) How the past weighs on the present: social representations of history and their role in identity politics. *British Journal of Social Psychology* 44(4): 537–556.

Löw M and Weidenhaus G (2017) Borders that relate: conceptualizing boundaries in relational space. *Current Sociology Monograph* 65(4): 553-570.

Locke KD, Golden-Biddle K and Feldman MS (2008) Making doubt generative: rethinking the role of doubt in the research process. *Organization Science* 19(6): 907–18.

Lovell N (1998) Introduction: belonging in need of emplacement?. In: Lovell N (ed) *Locality and Belonging.* New York, NY: Routledge, pp. 1-22.

Low SM (1992) Symbolic ties that bind: place attachment in the plaza. In: Altman I and Low SM (eds) *Place Attachment.* New York, NY: Plenum, pp. 165-185.

Lukermann F (1964) Geography as a formal intellectual discipline and the way in which it contributes to human knowledge. *Canadian Geographer* 8(4): 167-172.

Magosci PR (1985) *Ukraine: A Historical Atlas.* Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

(2002) *Roots of Ukrainian Nationalism.* Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Magocsi PR and Pop I (eds) (2005) *Encyclopedia of Rusyn History and Culture*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Malanchuk (2005) Social identification versus regionalism in contemporary Ukraine. *Nationalities Papers* 33(3): 345–68.

Mann M (1984) The autonomous power of the state: its origins, mechanisms, and results. In: Hall JA (ed) *States in History*. Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell, pp. 109-36.

Mann R and Fenton S (2009) The personal contexts of national sentiments. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 35(4): 517-534.

Marcos-Marné H (2015) Nacionalismo y etnicidad: marcos analíticos, aportaciones más recientes y principales puntos de encuentro. *Revista de Estudios Políticos* 168: 319–343.

Marshall T (2015) *Prisoners of Geography: Ten Maps That Tell You Everything You Need to Know About Global Politics*. London, UK: Elliott and Thompson Ltd.

Martin T (2001) *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Union, 1923-1939*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Martinez O (1994) The dynamics of border interaction. In: Schofield C (ed) *Global Boundaries: World Boundaries*, volume 1. London, UK: Routledge, pp. 1–15.

Massey D (1995) The conceptualization of place. In Massey D and Jess P (eds) *A Place in the World*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 45-85.

Maxwell A (2020) Primordialism for scholars who ought to know better: Anthony D. Smith's critique of modernization theory. *Nationalities Papers* 48(5): 826-842.

McGlynn J (2020) United by history: government appropriation of everyday nationalism during Vladimir Putin's third term. *Nationalities Papers* 48(6): 1069-1085.

Mekdjian S (2015) Mapping mobile borders: critical cartographies of borders based on migration experiences. In: Amilhat-Szary A and Giraut F (eds) *Borderities and the Politics of Contemporary Mobile Borders*. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 204-223.

Mikecz R (2012) Interviewing elites: addressing methodological issues. *Qualitative Inquiry* 18(6): 482-493.

Migdal J (2004) Mental maps and virtual checkpoints: struggles to construct and maintain state and social boundaries. In: Migdal J (ed) *Boundaries and Belonging: States and Societies in the Struggle to Shape Identities and Local Practices*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 3-25.

Mill JS (1843/1872) *The System of Logic,* 8th edition. London, UK: Longmans, Green.

Miller-Idriss C (2009) *Blood and Culture: Youth, Right-Wing Extremism, and National Belonging in Contemporary Germany*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Milo D (1992) Introduction I: the perception of space. In: Barnavi E (ed) *A Historical Atlas of the Jewish People*. New York, NY: Schocken Books, pp. vi-ix.

Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine (MTOT) (2021) Number of registered IDPs as of April 13, 2020. Available at: www.minre.gov.ua/page/kilkist-zareyestrovanyh-vpo-stanom-na-13-kvitnya-2020-r (accessed 10 July 2021).

Morgan D (1996) Focus groups. *Annual Review of Sociology* 22(1): 129-152.

Morris J, Polese A, Seliverstova O and Pawlusz E (eds) (2018) *Informal Nationalism after Communism: The Everyday Construction of Post-Socialist Identities*. London, UK: I.B. Tauris.

Motyl AJ (2010) The social construction of social construction: implications for theories of nationalism and identity formation. *Nationalities Papers* 38(1): 59-71.

Mudimbe VY (1988) *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy, and the Order of Knowledge*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Muller JZ (2008) Us and them: the enduring power of ethnic nationalism. *Foreign Affairs* 87(2): 18–35.

Muro D (2015) Ethnicity, nationalism and social movements. In: Della Porta D and Diani M (eds) *The Oxford Handbook of Social Movements*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, pp. 185–199.

Murphy AB (2010) Identity and territory. *Geopolitics* 15(4): 769-772.

Neal A (2013) Empiricism without positivism: King Lear and critical security studies. In: Salter M and Mutlu C (eds) *Research Methods in Critical Security Studies: An Introduction*. New York, NY: Routledge, pp. 42-45

Neocleous M (2003) Off the map: on violence and cartography. *European Journal of Social Theory* 6(4): 409-425.

Neumann IB (1997) *Uses of the Other: 'The East' in European Identity Formation*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Newman D (2003) On borders and power: a theoretical framework. *Journal of Borderland Studies* 18: 13-25.

Nicholson C (2017) The role of collective memory in protracted conflict. *Culture & Psychology* 23(2): 217-233.

Niemi R and Hepburn M (1995) The rebirth of political socialization. *Perspectives on Political Science* 24(1): 7-16.

Nyíri P (2009) Extraterritoriality. Foreign concessions: the past and future of a form of shared sovereignty. Espaces Temps. Available at: www.espacestemps.net/articles/extraterritoriality-pal-nyiri/ (accessed 20 May 2021).

Özkirimli U (2003) The nation as an artichoke? A critique of ethnosymbolist interpretations of nationalism. *Nations and Nationalism* 9(3): 339–355

O'Loughlin J (2001) The regional factor in contemporary Ukrainian politics: scale, place, space, or bogus effect?. *Post-Soviet Geography and Economics* 42(1): 1-33.

O'Loughlin J, Toal G and Kolosov V (2017) The rise and fall of 'Novorossiya': examining support for a separatist geopolitical imaginary in southeast Ukraine. *Post-Soviet Affairs* 33(2): 124-144.

Odushkin O (2000) Political subcultures in Ukraine: historical legacy and contemporary divides, extreme movements and ideological preferences of eastern and western Ukrainians as indicators of hidden antagonism. *Polish Sociological Review* 132: 411-45.

Onuch O and Hale H (2018) Capturing ethnicity: the case of Ukraine. *Post-Soviet Affairs* 34(2-3): 84-106.

Onuch O and Sasse G (2016) The Maidan in movement: diversity and the cycles of protest. *Europe-Asia Studies* 68(4): 556-587.

Osipian AL and Osipian AL (2012) Regional diversity and divided memories in Ukraine: contested past as electoral resource, 2004–2010. *East European Politics & Societies* 26(3): 616–642.

Paasi A (1996) *Territories, Boundaries and Consciousness: The Changing Geographies of the Finnish-Russian Border*. New York, NY: John Wiley and Sons.

(1998) Boundaries as social processes: territoriality in the world of flows. *Geopolitics* 3(1): 69-88.

Pacione M (1978) Information and morphology in cognitive maps. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 3(4): 548-568.

Pader E (2006) Seeing with an ethnographic sensibility: explorations beneath the surface of public policies. In: Yanow D and Schwartz-Shea P (eds) *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, pp. 161–75.

Parker N (2009) From borders to margins: a Deleuzian ontology for identities in the postinternational environment. *Alternatives* 34(1): 17–39.

Parker N and Adler-Nissen R (2012) Picking and choosing the 'sovereign' border: a theory of changing state bordering practices. *Geopolitics* 17(4): 773-796.

Parker N and Vaughan-Williams N (2012) Critical border studies: broadening and deepening the 'lines in the sand' agenda. *Geopolitics* 17(4): 727-733.

Peirce CS (1934) *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce, Volumes 5-6*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Peisakhin L (2012) In history's shadow: persistence of identities and contemporary political behavior. Working Paper 2012/272. Madrid, Spain: Center for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences (CEACS).

(2015) Cultural legacies: persistence and transmission. In: Schofield N and Caballero G (eds) *The Political Economy of Governance: Institutions, Political Performance and Elections*. Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, pp. 21-39.

Pickles J (2004) *A History of Spaces: Cartographic Reason, Mapping, and the Geo-Coded World*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Pirie P (1996) National identity and politics in southern and eastern Ukraine. *Europe-Asia Studies* 48(7): 1079-1104.

Plokhy S (2004) Kozako- znavstvo bez kordoniv: notatky na koryst' porivnial'noho analizu. *Ukraïns'kyi humanitarnyi ohliad* 10: 63-84.

(2007) *Ukraine's Quest for Europe: Borders, Culture, Identities*. Saskatoon, SK: Heritage Press.

Pohorila N (2016) Political and national identity in Ukraine's regions: where does the center fit?. *Political Science Review* 4(1): 18-32.

Polese A, Morris J, Pawlusz E and Seliverstova O (eds) (2018) *Identity and Nation Building in Everyday Post-Socialist Life*. London, UK: Routledge.

Polese A, Seliverstova O, Kerikmae T and Cheskin A (2020) National identity for breakfast: food consumption and the everyday construction of national narratives in Estonia. *Nationalities Papers* 48(6): 1015-1035.

Pop-Eleches G and Robertson G (2018) Identity and political preferences in Ukraine—before and after the Euromaidan. *Post-Soviet Affairs* 34(2-3): 107-118.

Pop-Eleches G and Tucker J (2017) *Communism's Shadow*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Prescott JRV (1965) *The Geography of Frontiers and Boundaries*. London, UK: Allen and Unwin.

President of Russia (2021) Article by Vladimir Putin 'on the historical unity of Russians and Ukrainians.' President of Russia Publications. Available at: www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/66181 (accessed 25 July 2021).

Putnam R (2001) *Bowling Along*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

Ragin CC (1989) *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Rajaram PK and Grundy-Warr C (eds) (2007) *Borderscapes: Hidden Geographies and Politics at Territory's Edge*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Reid A (2015) *Borderland: A Journey Through the History of Ukraine*. London, UK: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

Relph E (1976) *Place and Placelessness*. London, UK: Pion Limited.

Riabchuk M (1992) Two Ukraines? *East European Reporter* 5(4).

(2002) Ukraine: One State, Two Countries. Eurozine. Available at: www.eurozine.com/ukraine-one-state-two-countries/ (accessed 10 June 2021).

(2015) Dvi Ukraïny: kinets' ambivalentnosti. Krytyka 4. Available at: www.krytyka.com/ua/articles/dvi-ukrayiny-kinets-ambivalentnosty?page=3 (accessed 10 June 2021).

Rico G and Jennings MK (2012) The intergenerational transmission of contending place identities. *Political Psychology* 33(5): 723-742.

Roeder P (1991) Soviet federalism and ethnic mobilization. *World Politics* 43(2): 196-232.

Roth WD and Mehta JD (2002) The Rashomon effect: combining positivist and interpretivist approaches in the analysis of contested events. *Sociological Methods and Research* 31(2): 131-73.

Rudnytskyi S (1994) The Ukrainian question from the point of view of political geography. In: Rudnytskyi S (ed) *Chomu my hochemo samostiinoi Ukrainy?*. Lviv: Svit, pp. 93-206.

Rumford C (2006) Theorizing borders. *European Journal of Social Theory* 9(2): 155-169.

(2012) Towards a multiperspectival study of borders. *Geopolitics* 17(4): 887-902.

Rymarenko YI (1995) *Natsional'nyi rozviy Ukrainy: problemy i perspektyvy*. Kyiv: Yurinkom.

Sack R (1986) *Human Territoriality: Its Theory and History*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Safran W (2005) The Jewish diaspora in a comparative and theoretical perspective. *Israel Studies* 10(l): 36-60.

Sahlins P (1998) State formation and national identity in the Catalan borderlands during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In: Wilson T and Donnan H (eds) *Border Identities: Nation and State at International Borders*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Said E (1978) *Orientalism*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.

Sakwa R (2015) *Frontline Ukraine: Crisis in the Borderlands*. London, UK: I.B. Tauris.

Salter MB (2012) Theory of the /: the suture and critical border studies. *Geopolitics* 17(4): 734-755.

(2013) Research design: introduction. In: Salter M and Mutlu C (eds) *Research Methods in Critical Security Studies: An Introduction*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Samokhvalov V (2015) Ukraine between Russia and the European Union: triangle revisited. *Europe-Asia Studies* 67(8): 1371-1393.

Sapiro V (2004) Not your parents' political socialization: introduction for a new generation. A*nnual Review of Political Science* 7: 1-23.

Sasse G (2007) *The Crimea Question: Identity, Transition, and Conflict*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

(2010) The role of regionalism. *Journal of Democracy* 21(3): 99-106.

Sasse G and Lackner A (2018) War and identity: the case of the Donbas in Ukraine. *Post-Soviet Affairs* 34(2-3): 139-157.

(2019) War and state-making in Ukraine: forging a civic identity from below?. *Ideology and Politics* 12(1): 75-98.

Sassen S (1996) *Losing Control? Sovereignty in an Age of Globalization*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

(2015) Bordering capabilities versus borders: implications for national borders. In: Amilhat-Szary A and Giraut (eds) *Borderities and the Politics of Contemporary Mobile Borders*. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 23-52.

Schama S (1995) *Landscape and Memory*. London, UK: Harper Collins Publishers.

Schatz E (2009) Introduction: ethnographic immersion and the study of politics. In: Schatz E (ed) *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power*. Chicago, UK: Chicago University Press, pp. 1–22.

Schmoller J (2020) The talking dead: everyday Muslim practice in Russia. *Nationalities Papers* 48(6): 1036-1051.

Schnapper D (1998) *Community of Citizens: On the Modern Idea of Nationality* (translated by Rosée S). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

Schwartz-Shea P and Yanow D (2012) *Interpretive Research Design: Concepts and Processes*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Scott JC (1998) *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

(2009) *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Seawright J and Gerring J (2008) Case selection techniques in case study research: a menu of qualitative and quantitative options. *Political Research Quarterly* 61(2): 294-308.

Seegel S (2012) *Mapping Europe's Borderland: Russian Cartography in the Age of Empire*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Selasi T (2014) Don't ask where I'm from, ask where I'm a local. TEDGlobal. Available at: www.ted.com/talks/taiye_selasi_don_t_ask_where_i_m_from_ask_where_i_m_a_local (accessed 20 July 2021).

Seliverstova O (2017) Consuming national identity in western Ukraine. *Nationalities Papers* 45(1): 61-79.

Shapiro MJ (2003) Nation-states. In: Agnew J, Mitchell K and Toal G (eds) *A Companion to Political Geography*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, pp. 271-288.

Shain Y (2005) *The Frontier of Loyalty*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Shekhovtsov A (2013) The 'Orange Revolution' and the 'sacred' birth of a civic-republican Ukrainian nation. *Nationalities Papers* 41(5): 730-743.

Shevel O (2002) Nationality in Ukraine: some rules of engagement. *East European Politics and Societies* 16(2): 386-413.

(2009) The politics of citizenship policy in new states. *Comparative Politics* 41(3): 273-291.

(2011) The politics of memory in a divided society: a comparison of post-Franco Spain and post-Soviet Ukraine. *Slavic Review* 70(1): 137-164.

Shklar L (1999) Ethnonational aspects of national state development in Ukraine. *International Journal of Sociology* 29(3): 49-65.

Shulman S (1998) Competing versus complementary identities: Ukrainian-Russian relations and the loyalties of Russians in Ukraine. *Nationalities Papers* 26(4): 615-632.

(2002) Sources of civic and ethnic nationalism in Ukraine. *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 18(4): 1-30.

(2004) The contours of civic and ethnic national identification in Ukraine. *Europe-Asia Studies* 56(1): 35-56.

(2005) National identity and public support for political and economic reform in Ukraine. *Slavic Review* 64*(*1): 59-87.

Simmons ES and Smith NR (2017) Comparison with an ethnographic sensibility. *PS: Political Science and Politics* 50(1): 126–30.

(2019) The case for comparative ethnography. *Comparative Politics* 51(3): 341–59.

Skey M (2011) *National Belonging and Everyday Life.* Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Small ML (2009) 'How many cases do I need?' On science and the logic of case selection in field-based research. *Ethnography* 10(1): 5-38.

Smith A (1996) Culture, community, and territory: The politics of ethnicity and nationalism. *International Affairs 72*(3): 445-458.

(1998) *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism.* New York, NY: Routledge.

(2009) *Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach*. London, UK: Routledge.

Smith G (1999) *The Post-Soviet States: Mapping the Politics of Transition*. London, UK: Arnold.

Smith D, Herlihy P, Viera A, Kelly J, Hilburn A, Robledo M and Dobson J (2012) Using participatory research mapping and GIS to explore local geographic knowledge of Indigenous landscapes in Mexico. *Focus on Geography* 55(4): 119-124.

Snyder T (2010) *The Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

(2015) Edge of Europe, end of Europe. The New York Book Review. Available at: www.nybooks.com/blogs/nyrblog/2015/jul/21/ ukraine-kharkiv-edge-of-euro (accessed 30 May 2021).

Soja E (1971) *The political organization of space*. Commission on College Geography Resource Paper. Washington, DC: Association of American Geographers.

(1996) *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and other real-and-imagined place*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Solchanyk R (1994) The politics of state building: centre-periphery relations in post-Soviet Ukraine. *Europe-Asia Studies* 46(1): 47-68.

Soss J (2006) Talking our way to meaningful explanations: a practice-centered view of interviewing for interpretive research. In: Yanow D and Schwartz-Shea P (eds) *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, pp. 161-182.

Spruyt H (1994) *The Sovereign State and its Competitors: An Analysis of Systems Change*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Squire V (2015) Reshaping critical geopolitics? The materialist challenge. *Review of International Studies* 41(1): 139-159.

Stokes M (1998) Imagining 'the south': hybridity, heterotopias and Arabesk on the Turkish–Syrian border. In: Wilson T and Donnan H (eds) *Border Identities: Nation and State at International Frontiers*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 263-288.

Strandsbjerg J (2010) *Territory, Globalization and International Relations: The Cartographic Reality of Space*. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Strauss A and Corbin J (1990) *Basics of Qualitative Research*. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE.

Strauss M (2015) Nations outside their borders: how extraterritorial concessions reinforce sovereignty. In: Amilhat-Szary A and Giraut (eds) *Borderities and the Politics of Contemporary Mobile Borders*. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 53-67.

Subtelny O (1995) Russocentrism, regionalism, and the political culture of Ukraine. In: Tismaneau V (ed) *Political Culture and Civil Society in Russia and the New States of Eurasia*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, pp. 189-208.

Surak K (2012) Nation-work: a praxeology of making and maintaining nations. *European Journal of Sociology* 53(2): 171-204.

Sutherland C (2012) *Nationalism in the Twenty-First Century: Challenges and Responses*. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Szporluk R (2001) The making of modern Ukraine: the western dimension. *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 25(1/2): 57-90.

Tägil S, Gerner K, Henrikson G, Johansson R, Oldberg I and Salomon K (1977) *Studying Boundary Conflicts: A Theoretical Framework*. Lund, Sweden: Esselte Studium.

Tagliacozzo E (2016) Jagged landscapes: conceptualizing borders and boundaries in the history of human societies. *Journal of Borderland Studies* 31(1): 1-21.

Takach A (1996) In search of Ukrainian national identity: 1840–1921. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 19(3): 640-659.

Taras R, Filippova O and Pobeda N (2004) Ukraine's transnationals, far away locals, and xenophobes: the prospects for Europeanness. *Europe-Asia Studies* 56(6): 835–856.

Ther P (2013) Regionalism and border studies in modern Europe: the case of upper Silesia in context. *Studies on National Movements* 1: 17-49.

Thompson A (2001) Nations, national identities and human agency: putting people back into nations. *The Sociological Review* 49(1): 18-32.

Till K (2001) Returning home and to the field. *Geographical Review* 91(1–2): 46–56.

Tilley C (1994) *A Phenomenology of Landscape: Places, Paths and Monuments.* Oxford, UK: Berg.

Tilly C (1984) *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Titarenko L (2009) Belarus: a borderland civilization or civilization outskirts? Sociological reflection. *LIMES: Cultural Regionalistic*s 2(1): 64-81.

Torpey J (2000) *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship, and the State*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Troebst S (2003) Introduction: what's in a historical region? A Teutonic perspective. *European Review of History/Revue européenne d'Histoire* 10(2): 173-88.

Tuan Y (1977) *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience.* Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Tuathail G (1996) *Critical Geopolitics*. London, UK: Routledge.

Turner FJ (1920) *The Frontier in American History.* New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company.

United Nations (UN) (2021) International migration 2020 highlights. Report by the Population Division of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). New York, NY: United Nations Publication.

Van Schendel W (1993) Easy come easy go: smugglers on the Ganges. *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 23(2): 189-213.

Van Maanen J, Sørensen JB and Mitchell TR (2007) The interplay between theory and method. *Academy of Management Review* 32 (4): 1145-54.

Vasylova V (2012) Euroregions in Ukraine-Romania-Republic of Moldova area: expectations, experience and prospects. CES Working Papers, pp. 878-886. Available at: www.ceswp.uaic.ro/articles/CESWP2012_IV4_VAS.pdf (accessed 10 July 2021).

Von Hagen M (1995) Does Ukraine have a history?. *Slavic Review* 54(3): 658-673.

(2009) Revisiting the histories of Ukraine. In: Kasianov G and Ther P (eds) *Laboratory of Transnational History: Ukraine and Recent Ukrainian Historiography*. Budapest, Hungary: Central European University Press, pp. 25-50.

Vucetic S and Hopf T (2020) Everyday nationalism and making identity count. *Nationalities Papers* 48(6): 1000-1014.

Wacquant L (2003) Ethnografeast: a progress report on the practice and promise of ethnography. *Ethnography* 4(1): 5-14.

Wallerstein I (1974) *The Modern World-System*. New York, NY: Academic Press.

Waltz K (1979). *Theory of International Politics*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Wedeen L (2002) Conceptualizing culture: possibilities for political science. *American Political Science Review* 96(4): 713-28.

(2010) Reflections on ethnographic work in political science. *Annual Review of Political Science* 13: 255-272.

Weick K (2016) Constrained comprehending: the experience of organizational inquiry. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 61(3): 333-346.

Weinreich P, Bacova V and Rougier N (2003) Basic primordialism in ethnic and national identity. In: Weinreich P and Saunderson W (eds) *Analysing Identity: Cross-Cultural, Societal and Clinical Contexts*. Hove, UK: Routledge, pp. 115–169.

Wellings K, Branigan P and Mitchell K (2000) Discomfort, discord and discontinuity as data: using focus groups to research sensitive topics. *Culture, Health & Sexuality* 2(3): 255–267.

Whitman RG and Wolff S (2010) Much ado about mothing? The European Neighbourhood Policy in context. In: Whitman RG and Wolff S (eds) *The European Neighbourhood Policy in Perspective*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 3-28.

Wilcox (2004) Culture, national identity, and admission to citizenship. *Social Theory and Practice* 30(4): 559-582.

Wilkinson S (1998) Focus group methodology: a review. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 1(3): 181-203.

Wilson TM and Donnan H (1998) *Border Identities: Nation and State at International Frontiers.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Wimmer A (2013) *Ethnic Boundary Making: Institutions, Power, Networks.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Wittenberg J (2006) *Crucibles of Political Loyalty: Church Institutions and Electoral Continuity in Hungary*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Wolczuk K (2007) Whose Ukraine? Language and regional factors in the 2004 and 2006 elections in Ukraine. *European Yearbook of Minority Issues* 5: 521-547.

Wolff L (2010) *The Idea of Galicia: History and Fantasy in Habsburg Political Culture*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Wood D (1992) *The Power of Maps*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Yakovenko N (2000) Early modern Ukraine between East and West: projecturies of an idea. In: Matsuzato K (ed) *Regions: A Prism to View the Slavic-Eurasian World, Towards a Discipline of 'Regionology.'* Sapporo, Japan: Slavic Research Center at Hokkaido University, pp. 50-69.

Yanow D (2006) Thinking interpretively: philosophical presuppositions and the human sciences. In: Yanow D and Schwartz-Shea P (eds) *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, pp. 5–26.

Yanow D and Schwartz-Shea P (eds) (2006) *Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.

Zevelev I (2001) *Russia and its New Diasporas*. Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Zhurzhenko T (2002) The myth of two Ukraines: a commentary on Mykola Riabchuk's 'Ukraine: One State, two Countries'?. Eurozine. Available at: www.eurozine.com/the-myth-of-two-ukraines/ (accessed 20 May 2021).

(2010) *Borderlands into Bordered Lands: Geopolitics of Identity in Post-Soviet Ukraine*. Stuttgart, Germany: Ibidem Press.

(2014) From borderlands to bloodlands. Eurozine. Available at: www.eurozine.com/from-borderlands-to-bloodlands/ (accessed 1 July 2021).

(2019) The proliferation of borders in the post-Soviet space: Ukraine and beyond. In: Löwis SV (ed) *Controversial Spaces in Ukraine: Political Discourses, Literary Representations and Cartographic Visualizations*. Göttingen: Wallsein Verlag, pp. 47-72.

Zaller J (1992) *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Zarubinsky O (2005) Ukraine's transition to an established national identity. Speech on Ukraine's Quest for Mature Nation Statehood Roundtable VI. Washington, DC, 27-28 September 2005. Available at: www.usukrainianrelations.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=87&Itemid=50 (accessed 15 May 2021).

Zelensky V (2021) Tweet: Ukraine is Europe. Twitter. Available at: twitter.com/ZelenskyyUa/status/1393495853256560641?s=20 (accessed 20 July 2021).