AMERICAN RUSYNS:
THE SLAVIC MOTIVE OF THE AMERICAN CULTURAL LANDSCAPE.
THE EXPERIENCE OF DISCURSIVE DESCRIPTION

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Abstract

The discursive practices of describing American Rusyns presented in the works of English-speaking researchers are considered. There are two types of descriptions of the discourse of American Rusyns: discursive-social descriptions and discursive-confessional descriptions. The English-language nominations of Rusyns are considered as elements of frontier semantics. The code of the Rusyn culture integrates with the hierarchically organized American system of communicative codes, forming the semiotics of the American cultural landscape. The American Orthodox discourse becomes part of the American frontier, within which a special language of contact of linguistic consciousnesses is created, which is the basis of a diversified American identity.

Descriptions of Rusyns allow, on the one hand, to focus attention on how an ethnic group produces a place, on the other hand, to observe the features of the created metalanguage of the description of Rusyns, to determine how a place is produced with the help of linguistic activity.

Keywords: *Rusyn, Carpatho-Russian, American cultural landscape, Kenneth Burke's theory of identification, American Rusyn, Rusyn identity, theory of communicative identity*

Rezumat

În articol, sunt analizate practicile discursive de descriere a rusinilor americani, prezentate cu lux de amănunte în lucrările cercetătorilor anglofoni. În acest caz, se atestează două tipuri de descrieri ale discursului rusinilor americani: discursivo-sociale şi discursivo-confesionale. Codul culturii „rusin" se integrează în sistemul american de coduri comunicative, sistem organizat ierarhic, care prezintă amplu peisajul cultural american. Discursul ortodox american este luat drept unul de tranziție, un limbaj special de contact al „conştiinţelor lingvistice", care stă la baza unei identităţi americane diversificate.

Descrierile rusinilor permit, pe de o parte, să fie elucidat modul în care un grup etnic îşi crează un spațiu. Pe de altă parte, aceasta ne face să observăm trăsăturile limbajului creat de rusini, să determinăm modul în care acesta din urmă contribuie la formarea destinului grupului etnic nominalizat.

Cuvinte-cheie: *rusin, ruşii din Carpați, peisaj cultural american, teoria lui Kenneth Burke despre identificare, rusin american, identitatea rusinilor, teoria identităţii comunicative*

1. Problem Statement. Research Methodology

Ruthenians or Rusyns are the inhabitants of an area in the heart of Europe, North and South of the Carpathian Mountains. The territory of Bastia, also known as Subcarpathian Russia, stretches in the neighbouring parts of Ukraine, Slovakia and Poland (Firczak, 2002).

The Rusyn identity as an ethnic, national identity has been discussed in the scientific studies of historians, linguists, sociologists with an emphasis on the localization of Rusyns as an ethnos in the historical and linguistic-cultural space (Бабенко и Орлова/Babenko & Orlova, 2015), (Дронв/Dronov, 2015), (Дронов/Dronov, 2012), (Дронов/Dronov, 2007), (Кокайсл/Kokajsl, 2018), (Миронов/Mironov, 2018), (Миронов/Mironov, 2013), (Суляк/Suljak, 2006), (Шевченко/Ševčenko, 2010). V. N. Kozulin believes that the process of identity formation among Rusyns is impossible to be called complete, because it is hampered by a number of factors:

1) the lack of uniform codified norms of the language (there are three variants of the literary language and two alternative alphabets (based on Cyrillic);

2) heterogeneity of modern Rusyn national and cultural orientations (the author identifies four cultural Rusyn orientations — pro-Slovak, pro-Russian (Russo- or Moskvophile), pro-Ukrainian and pro-Hungarian (Magyarophile);

3) territorial dispersion (territories of residence: Ukraine, Slovakia, Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Moldova, Russia, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand);

4) confessional factor;

5) the religious factor also does not contribute to consolidation, since there are both Greek Catholics and Orthodox among the Rusyns [6].

The aspect of the influence of the confessional factor on the preservation of ethnic and cultural identification of Rusyns is considered in the works by G.Y. Mironov (Миронов/Mironov, 2018, pp. 55-58). The process of ethnocultural identification is supported by a sequence of ethnonyms with a root element of Rus- (primarily, the ethnonym Rusnak), showing ethnolanguage features associated with the East Slavic languages.

The Rusyn ethnonymy, considered attentively by researchers, is distinguished by its multivariability which is probably explained by the multiplicity of the territories of residence of the Rusyn ethnos. The polyphony of territorial communications caused endo-ethnonymic polyreference (plurality of ethnic self-names), the need to overcome which was pointed out in the archpastoral message to the faithful on the eve of the all-Slovak population census of 1940.

The Greek Catholic Bishop of Presovsky, Pavel Goidich (1888-1960), calling on the Rusyns to be called Rusyns during the census, affirmed: "...our people get along with different names: Rusyn, Rusnak, Russian, Subcarpathian Ross, Ukrainian, etc., which splits and weakens us without any basis..." (*Распоряженія Епархіальнаго…*, 2015, p. 70).

Endoethnonymic polyreference is a structural element of the Rusyn metalanguage of describing an ethnos as a self-referential system, according to N. Luhmann's concept, constantly distinguishing itself from the external environment. Self-reference implies self–reproducibility. It is the ability to create a self-description, reproducing the description itself in this process. An element of such a system is the communication (interaction) of people who build a self–referential process. It is the actual communication that leads to the construction of the system. The ability of the Ruthenian polyterritorial autopoeic system to organize itself in a multiplicity of communications demonstrates its quality as a self-referential system to model its order through the construction of internal structures by its own system processes.

The properties of the Rusyn self-referential system are evident in the description of the features of the formation of the Rusyn diaspora in the USA at the end of the XIXth century, presented in the work of Yu.G. Akimov and K.V. Minkova (Акимов и Минкова/Akimov & Minkova, 2016). By the end of the XIXth century, the Rusyn community of the USA possessed integral features of the diaspora: group identity, high social homogeneity, confessional organization. As for the confessional component of the Rusyn community, the church and parochial organizations occupied a significant place in its life which distinguished this community from the Italian and Polish immigrant groups of the Great Wave.

The adaptation of Rusyns to the cultural landscape of America is due to their English-language nominations, which are an element of the frontline semantics. "If we talk about the self–identification of migrants belonging to different ethnic groups, then the unifying component of their peculiar, non-identical pictures of the world is the component of frontier semantics, which requires its user, first of all, to be able to feel the value of land - the value of the place, the land that took (for a European who set foot on the land of America, or the one who remained "in the rear", "behind", in the past tense), but never in the "past" (for a Russian migrant)" (Halina *et al.*, 2019, p. 4). Within the framework of the semiotic concept, the code of Rusyn culture as a secondary sign system integrates with the hierarchically organized American system of communicative codes, forming the semiotics of the American cultural landscape. One of the components of the American Rusyn semiotic code is the nomination system through which Rusyns are identified in the context of the American cultural landscape.

2. Research

Semiotic localization of Rusyns in the American cultural landscape is carried out on the basis of the identification process as understood by Kennot Burke (Burke, 1969, p. 23). K. Burke argues that the need for identification arises from the category of "separation" a priori given to the

human life cycle: people are born and exist as biologically separate beings, which determines their desire to identify themselves through communication to overcome the separation. Social subjects feel the ambiguity of separation and, at the same time, identity with others: we are "simultaneously connected and separated, at the same time we are a separate substance and consubstantial with another" (*idem*, p. 21). Identification, according to the concept of K. Burke, includes three types of processes or states:

1) the process of designating something (someone) according to certain properties;

2) the process of association and dissociation;

3) the product or final product of identification is a state that agrees the existence of one thing, phenomenon with the existence of others.

The theory of identification of K. Burke is consistent with the theory of the American frontier F. The central position of this theory is the influence of contacting cultures on each other according to the melting pot model in which languages, lifestyles, and everyday cultures are melted down. "The peculiarity of American institutions is that they are forced to adapt to the transformations of an "expanding people" (Khalina et al., 2019, pp. 53-54), part of which is the introduction into the semiotic system of the American language of the nominations of newly arriving ethnic groups "expanding" this system. This is one of the characteristic features of American semiosis.

The terminological definitions of Rusyns, respectively, their location in the American cultural landscape, are part of the semiotic processes that characterize the vital activity of the American society. One of the practices of the discursive description of Rusyns is the semantic and terminological identification of American Rusyns in English-language studies, among which discursive-social descriptions and discursive-confessional descriptions are distinguished.

Discursive-social descriptions identifying American Rusyns were selected from the studies of Paul Robert Magochi (1989), Thomas Peter (1996), Alexandra Bank (2020).

P. R. Magochi presents three levels of identification of American Rusyns, respectively, three options for integrating the Rusyn diaspora with the American cultural landscape:

1) localization – identification of the territory of residence in the USA;

2) general ethno-identification – identification with other ethnic migrant groups in the USA;

3) communicative-identification, "personalized" for the Rusyn migrant group.

In the Discursive descriptions of American Rusyns, P.R. Magochi includes the following units:

a) *New York City and northeastern New Jersey; southern Connecticut; the Binghamton-Endicott-Johnson City triangle in south central New York; Cleveland*

and Youngstown, Ohio; Gary and Whiting, Indiana; Detroit and Flint, Michigan; and Minneapolis, Minnesota (residence identifiers in the USA); - units;

b) *Carpatho-Russian, Lemko, Ruthenian, Byzantine* or *Slavish, Hunkies* (identifying the ethno-communicative group of the nomination) (Krindatch, 2020).

The main territories of the Rusyns' consolidation in the USA include *New York and northeast New Jersey; southern Connecticut; the Binhamton-Endicott-Johnson urban triangle in south central New York; Cleveland and Youngstown, Ohio; Gary and Whiting, Indiana; Detroit and Flint, Michigan; and Minneapolis, Minnesota. As general characterological features of an ethnic group, the attributes of 'national minority', 'achieved autonomy or self-government', 'degree of political autonomy', 'simply considered a branch of Ukrainians' are distinguished. The semiotic definition of Rusyns in the American cultural landscape is carried out using the terms Carpatho-Rusyns (Carpatho-Russians), Lemko, Ruthenians, Byzantines or Slavs, Handsome (Hunks).*

T. Peter identifies American Rusyns through two types of linguistic descriptions: the description of identity and the description of linguistic self-identification: *a) non-existent sense of ethnic identity; Slavic ancestry; Carpatho-Rusyns; Eastern rite Catholic priests; Orthodoxy; ethnic identity; b) Rusyn; Rusnak; Ruthene; Ruthenian; Carpatho -Russian; Carpatho-Ruthenian; Carpatho-Ukrainian; Lemko.* The description of identity reproduces a nationally discrete variant of the identification of Rusyns in the American cultural landscape: *'a non-existent sense of ethnic identity'; 'Slavic origin'; 'Carpatho-Ruthenians'; 'Catholic priests of the Eastern Rite'; 'Orthodoxy'; 'ethnic identity'.* The description of linguistic self-identification is a sequence of signs that not only quantitatively increase the lexical composition of the American English language, but also expand the American semiosphere and conceptosphere, replenishing it with meta-elements *Rus-, Ruth-, Russ-, Carpath.*

The ethnonyms *Rusyn; Rusnak; Little Russian; Carpatho-Russian; Carpatho-Ruthenian; Carpatho-Ukrainian;* Lemko in the context of the American cultural landscape demonstrate the multiplicity of understandings and perceptions of one's own identity and semantic mission. In addition, the nominations *Carpatho-Russian* and *Carpatho-Ukrainian* become equivalent concepts, semantically differentiating the same denotation of *'Rusyns',* determining the interchangeability of the meta-elements *-Russian and -Ukrainian* and demonstrating their semantic secondary role in relation to the primary element, which in the discursive description is an element correlated with the differential seme 'place', or 'location'.

In the study by A. Bank, linguistic descriptions characterize American Rusyns in the focus of two positions: a) national identification *(East Slavic stateless nation, nationstateless nations, Carpatho-Rusyns, Rusnaks, Carpatho-Russians, Ruthenians, Rusyns)*; b) territorial identification *(Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut (Carpatho-Rusyn Society).* In the focus of national identification, the complex concept of the "East

Slavic stateless nation" is actualized. The intersection of conceptual sets 'East Slavic stateless nation'. 'stateless nations" gives rise to the possibility of a binary (to some extent, dual interpretation: the ethnonyms "Carpathian-Rusyns", "Rusnaks", "Carpathian-Russians", "Ruthenians", "Rusyns" can be considered not only as different signifiers of one signified "Rusyn nation", or "nation of Rusyns", but also as a terminological sequence reflecting the diversity of ethnic groups that make up the Rusyn nation. In case of acceptance of the truth (truthfulness) of the second interpretation, the listed number of nominations representing elements of the American geographical landscape, as American locations of the Rusyn nation: *Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut (Carpatho-Rusyn Society)*. In the light of the concept of stateless nations proposed by the author, the spatially clarifying (expanding) syntagma Carpatho-Rusyn Society (*Carpatho -Rusyn Society*) can be considered as a form of "state" identification of Rusyns.

Along with the practice of discursive-social descriptions of American Rusyns presented in the works of P. R. Magochi, T. Peter, A. Bank, we can talk about Rusyn discursive-confessional descriptions that take place in the publications of Alexei Krindach, Coordinator of Research of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America (Peters, 1996).

Analyzing the presence of a confessional orthodox discourse in the cultural American landscape, A. Krindach represents a certain confessional network structure, which includes the Carpatho-Russian Diocese (Carpatho-Russian Diocese), the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese (Greek Orthodox Archdiocese), the Orthodox Church in America (Orthodox Church in America), the Serbian Orthodox Church (Serbian Orthodox Church), the Romanian Archdiocese (Romanian Archdiocese), the Russian Orthodox Church abroad (Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia), the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Ukrainian Orthodox Church) [19]. The Confessional American Orthodox discourse in its structure recreates the picture of the world of Orthodox migrants, taking into account their original geolocation – the ancestral homeland: Greece, Serbia, Romania, Russia, Ukraine. In this regard, the Diocese of Rusyn is identified more specifically: not by the nomination of the territory of the original residence, but by the nomination characterizing the relief of the territory – the Carpathians.

The American Orthodox discourse becomes a part of the American frontier, within which a special language of contact of linguistic consciousnesses is created, "contributing to the creation of a complex American identity and forming a unique national character of American verbal culture" (Khalina et al., 2019, p. 105).

English plays a significant role in the linguistic design of the worldview of the representative of the Carpatho-Ruthenian branch of the American Orthodox discourse (see Table 1):

Jurisdiction	Average % of English used as language of *liturgy*	Average % of English used as language of *sermon*	Average % of English used by *the church choir*
US nationwide for all jurisdictions together	73	81	67
Albanian Diocese	45	85	15
Antiochian Archdiocese	94	97	93
Bulgarian Diocese	68	68	63
Carpatho-Russian Diocese	96	100	94
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese	66	87	49
Patriarchal Parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church	77	85	74
Orthodox Church in America including:	85	87	83
- Territorial dioceses	95	96	97
- Romanian Episcopate	32	32	27
- Bulgarian Diocese	71	78	57
- Albanian Diocese	89	97	81
Vicariate for Palestinian Orthodox Christian Communities	63	69	57
Russian Orthodox Church outside of Russia	49	57	47
Romanian Archdiocese	25	23	24
Serbian Orthodox Church	47	57	39
Ukrainian Orthodox Church	52	58	49

Table 1: *Average percentage of English language use in parishes of various Orthodox jurisdictions*

From the point of view of the use of the English language, A. Krindach divides all Orthodox jurisdictions in America into three categories:

1) the use of English exclusively as the language of the liturgy and sermon;

2) the use of English as the dominant language in divine services, with a significant presence of other languages: a) non-English languages are not inferior to English in importance in worship, they may even dominate as the languages of the liturgy and sermon; b) various non-English languages remain at least as important as English, or even dominate as the languages of liturgy and preaching. The first group includes three Churches that use almost exclusively English as the language of liturgy and preaching: the Diocese of Carpatho-Ruthenia, the Archdiocese of Antioch and the Orthodox Church in America (OCA). The second group includes the Patriarchal Parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church, the Bulgarian Diocese, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese and the Vicariate of the Palestinian Orthodox communities.

The third group consists of four jurisdictions: the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Albanian Diocese and the Romanian Archdiocese (Krindatch, 2020).

The church for some of the migrants of the American frontier becomes a place of strength of ethnic culture (see Table 2):

Jurisdiction	
US nationwide: for parishes of all jurisdictions together	4.0
Albanian Diocese	6.6.
Antiochian Archdiocese	1.6
Bulgarian Diocese	4.8
Carpatho-Russian Diocese	2.4
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese	4.9
Patriarchal Parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church	4.0
Orthodox Church in America including:	2.6
- Territorial dioceses	1.5
- Romanian Episcopate	7.5
- Bulgarian Diocese	4.
- Albanian Diocese	4.15
Vicariate for Palestinian Orthodox Christian Communities	5.5
Russian Orthodox Church outside of Russia	5.8
Romanian Archdiocese	8.1
Serbian Orthodox Church	6.7
Ukrainian Orthodox Church	5.6

Table 2: *Indicator of the strength of ethnic culture: from 0*
(lack of ethnic culture) to 10 (very strong ethnic culture)

Based on the analysis results concerning the strength of ethnic identity in local parishes, correlated with the use of the power of the English language in church life, the Romanian Archdiocese (index value 8.1), the Albanian Archdiocese (6.6) and the Serbian Orthodox Church (6.1) are the three jurisdictions with the greatest presence of ethnic culture in their parishes. The Archdiocese of Antioch (index value 1.6), the Carpathian-Ruthenian Diocese (2.4) and the Orthodox Church in America (2.6) are jurisdictions where "ethnic elements" are not particularly significant.

3. Conclusions

The discursive and semantic analysis of the English-language material made it possible to determine the location of the Rusyns in the American cultural landscape, the frontier in its semantic parameters. The main practices of describing Rusyns – discursive-social descriptions and discursive-confessional descriptions – create an idea of the rules of identification of the Carpathian-Rusyn communicative community in the communication space of the American frontier. In American culture, identity tends to be located in a person viewed as a separate and discrete entity. The linguoterminological

identification of American Rusyns determines the formation of collective identity in the process of linguistic place-making, feelings of emotional attachment and the politics of belonging.

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