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Tusovka died
– long live *tusovka*!

*Post-Soviet culturally polyphonic youth
groupings in L'viv (Ukraine)*

Since the publication of Hilary Pilkington's studies¹ there has appeared no other detailed research of that range devoted to youth (sub)cultures on the territory which used to be the Soviet Union. Moreover, in spite of the growing interest of social sciences in multicultural, transnational and transcultural youth all over the world, the analogous involvements of urban youth in the post-Soviet space remain a kind of *terra incognita* in the field of the post-communist studies. Meanwhile, the current climate of continuing social and political transformation in the newly independent post-Soviet Ukraine benefits the rapid processes of making and remaking cultural identities on the basis of new and old models emanating both from within and outside the present geographic borders of this post-colonial² successor state.

Contemporary urban youth as an object of socialisation into the uncertain reality of the post-communist 'risk society'³ find themselves in a situation unimaginable to the majority of their Soviet counterparts two decades ago: they can (seemingly) unrestrictedly choose, experiment and play with patterns of their identity. They are free to construct, reconstruct, reinvent – or negate by means of mocking, parodying or even brutal vulgarising – the elements of their earlier and present socio-cultural 'Selves'. They do this not just in order to find some adequate foot-holds which can be used in practical aims,

for example, for adaptation to the conditions of post-Soviet wild market economies – they do this also in the hope of conjuring up some positive points for orientation in the moral ambivalence of the ‘anomic’ post-Soviet society.

Ethnic representations and discourses have been important for urban youth cultures in Ukraine as much before as after declaration of the country’s independence. However, in the new societal and political reality after 1991 the role of ethnicity and its cultural identifiers became much more accentuated in the ‘nationalising’⁴ post-Soviet society. Nation-building processes launched by Ukrainian political elites imply reconstruction and reinvention of a distinctive Ukrainian national identity which in practice (especially in West Ukraine) often means the introduction of essentialised ethnic Ukrainian values, traditions and cultural markers into the official discourses and popular consciousness. As a consequence – and the recent events of the Orange revolution are in line with this conclusion – it is still right to assume that ‘there is as yet only limited evidence to suggest that the post-Soviet borderland states are on the threshold of entering such a post-national era in which national and ethnic identities have been superseded by understandings of cultural difference based on a broader and more inclusive vision of political community.’⁵

However, according to the view represented in the paper, there is evidence that at the grass-root level there might be a space or spaces (even if limited and unstable) for various national/ethnic/cultural identity projects diverging from those depicted in official rhetoric. In these urban “neutral zones” new inclusive groupings built along multiple cultural, ethnic, national and even transnational lines⁶ can appear. It is rightfully suggested that such groupings can with most probably be found among youth⁷.

The Western-Ukrainian borderline city L’viv where the field work (together with Erik Olsson) was conducted in 1998–2003, is well known as the ‘Ukrainian Piedmont’, as a stronghold of Ukrainian ethnonationalism. At the same time, despite evident tendencies to ethnic homogenisation of the city’s population after 1945, it still includes Russian (or, rather, Russian-speaking), Polish and Jewish com-

munities which are quite visible in the public sphere, even if they are not numerically large. In the city the ethnification of identity politics has become both the official course and the everyday reality after 1991. Simultaneously the voices of non-formal youth groupings constructing their cultural identities from a wide range of local Eastern-Galician, Russian, 'Soviet' and global/western models are also heard here — quite distinctively, even if sporadically. Existence of such world-open youth — who can be probably called 'creols'⁸ or even 'locals with a transnational orientation'⁹ — and the public spaces where they can perform, is one of the conditions for the emergence and affirmation of new types of inclusive solidarity¹⁰ in the everyday reality of the independent Ukraine.

The present paper is an endeavour to introduce fresh data about and find a proper theoretic focus for just one, but extremely important and meaningful, dialogue resulting in the creation of 'contact zones'¹¹ or 'neutral arenas of interaction'¹² for identity negotiations taking place in L'viv. It is, namely, a dialogue with the 'significant Other' whose part in the post-Soviet Ukraine is, quite predictably, played by 'Russia'¹³ and by discourses, codes and practices of 'Russianness' in their numerous variants.

The data for the present study were gathered during three-years long field observations, from nearly 40 in-depth interviews with young people, mostly students at high schools and universities in L'viv, from other relevant persons and local media sources. The respondents were asked to reflect on a quite wide spectrum of topics — their own life stories in the context of the cityscape of L'viv, everyday experiences of contacts with various ethnic groups, understanding of the respondents' own identity, communication in peer groups etc. The material revealed that issues of ethnic/national/language representations and constructions of a group identity against or towards the 'significant Russian Other' were important for all these young people. Simultaneously, it must be stressed that processes of ethnification in L'viv are obviously paralleled with de-ethnification which makes discussion about cultural plurality and multiethnicity in the urban youth milieu quite a complicated issue. The abundance of raw data together with the elusiveness of models for their interpretation have however contributed to the describing rather than analysing

style of the present study – a shortcoming which hopefully can be overcome in the course of further investigation.

Subcultural youth in a public space of L'viv: the first impression

During sunny days, from spring till late autumn, one is likely to see this youth at the central city square. They sit in relaxed poses on the stone benches next to the monument to Taras Shevchenko, a prominent poet and the sacral symbol for the Ukrainian nation. They look different: guys with long hair and jeans jackets, girls in jeans, chequered shirts and bright long skirts, with unusual leather decorations hanging from their necks; short-trimmed sinister-looking youngsters in heavy boots; some youngsters wearing scout emblems; some having imaginatively clipped or shagged hair and pins and other metal decorations on their baggy clothes; quite a few look exotic and even scary while others are dressed and trimmed tidily and without extravagance.

The youth of L'viv definitely seem to enjoy the company of friends – or as they usually call it, *tusovka*¹⁴ – in this fine and spacious public place. They chat in groups about nothing and everything switching between Ukrainian and Russian, mixing catchy Galician dialectisms with 'cool' English phrases. It seems as if everyone knows each other: one often shakes hands, cuddles and cheers plenty of people when approaching his or her small group of friends sitting on the far end of the long stone bench. People of all kinds and from all over L'viv, even from the distant suburbs like Syhiv, come here to hang around and it is therefore a place for many spontaneous encounters.

These informal meetings are mostly quite peaceful, but sometimes a sudden aggressiveness breaks out. When it happens the conflicting parties normally leave the place by the monument and move to a nearby back-street for a 'talk'. The city police looks with suspicion on these gatherings and sometimes the patrols scatter the youngsters arguing, in the best tradition of the Soviet times, that they look improper and drink beer at the vicinity of the sainted national symbol. But after a short break the young people return once again to *Sheva* or *Zhaba*, 'the Frog', as they call this place (since the monument's surface very soon turned greenish).

The *Zhaba* probably has a particular meaning for these young people. In the Soviet times their peers would never get the idea of gathering like this just beside the now dismantled monument of Lenin, which was situated in the same square. At least they did it not for hanging around, but for taking part in official ceremonies. At the monument to the prominent Ukrainian poet, however, they feel themselves free to converse and to show themselves. It is probably possible to interpret this freedom of negotiation of one's identity and absence of rigidly prescribed identity choices as the signs of a gradual defeat of the totalitarian legacy, but they are also a part of wider trends. They are the crucial modalities of existence in the unpredictable, constantly changing 'global village'.

Subcultural youth in L'viv: who is who

A hallmark of transition times is, among others, that commonly accepted notions and codes of how to perform in public life are contested and ambiguous. In this case one can easily notice that even though Ukrainian has been a much more commonly accepted language in public spheres in West Ukraine than in the Russified Eastern regions, and even though it now also has a strong legislative support, there are still many arenas in L'viv where other languages and, respectively, identities, can prevail. Moreover, it can be assumed that in a situation of a significant – and until 1991 cultivated – ethnic, cultural and language closeness between 'We' and the 'significant Other', there are no either clear or taken-for-granted notions on what it means to be a Ukrainian or what exactly distinguishes Ukrainians from Russians in their everyday life. In certain situations, even nationally conscious Galician Ukrainians might use Russian as a cultural marker since this is dictated by belonging to particular occupational or social circles.¹⁵ To be a part of the Western Ukrainian society implies for the young people that they not only have to grasp what it means to be a Ukrainian and behave like a Ukrainian in social and cultural terms, but also how to cope with quite significant Russianness. Both Russian and Ukrainian codes as symbolic capital have – each in its own way – their advantages in social interaction and are attractive as identity sources. Defining a principal 'demarcation line' between these codes is a difficult enterprise. When young people meet and socialise, they

in fact seldom stick to clear-cut Russian or Ukrainian codes in any predictable way. On the contrary, they demonstrate a sufficient degree of flexibility in interaction and, therefore, in accommodation of ethnic identifiers.

As it was pointed out by some of the young L'viv residents we spoke with, there could be many reasons for this kind of flexibility especially among youth whose native language is Russian. One of the obvious reasons to switch into Ukrainian in public places can be customary conformism and reluctance to look provocative in the eyes of the Ukrainian-speaking majority. On the other hand, stubborn usage of Russian in every public context by a L'viv inhabitant, even if the person does not see any political message in his or her choice of everyday language of communication, is likely to be interpreted by others as threatening, as a manifestation of post-Soviet presence of suppressing, 'imperial' and politically unfriendly 'Other'. When perceived as such, overt public manifestations of Russian cultural codes and language are likely to be viewed with considerable suspicion and even animosity. However, when this affiliation is not too much evident, when it is safely confined within private life and the semi-private sphere of 'purely cultural' production, the Russianness usually does not provoke negative reactions among the youth. On the contrary, the urban variant of middle-class Russianness with its – proclaimed or real – intellectualist inclinations and openness to modern urban trends often functions as a quite attractive code among young people of different ethnic origins, especially among those with certain sub-cultural orientations. In fact, the less traditional and more flexible forms of urbanity in L'viv are in some ways ethnified as those 'Russian ones'. However, the opposite processes of de-ethnicisation take place as well – ethnic Russian codes can be considered as attributes of certain professional spheres (for example, middle-scale business) or social groups (for example, army officers).

The field of youth subcultures in L'viv comprises various globally spread movements and formations. Most of them are represented in the Western world as well as in the post-communist European countries and Russia, but they have obvious specificity in the local conditions of this Western Ukrainian city. Incorporating the global cultural trends into the intimacy of urban neighbourhoods with their

specific history and topography, they represent important factors in creation of context-abundant implosive locality¹⁶ of L'viv cityscape.

Relying on the statements of the young respondents and the author's own experience of this field, two big subcultural groups of youth can be distinguished in L'viv: *neformaly* and *gopnyky*. The so-called *neformaly* milieu includes different youth groupings and assemblies. The predecessors of *neformaly* during the Soviet time perceived themselves, and were generally perceived by others, as part of an all-Union youth underground milieu or ambiguous non-formal meta-community (known as the *Sistema*) comprising young people with oppositional or, at least, unconventional views. Their subcultural identities not merely interplayed with analogous 'global' youth movements in the West, but were forged as a reaction to discourses and practices of Soviet 'formality' and 'normality'. In post-Soviet times *neformaly* were fragmented in different groupings with the common characteristic of being outside the 'formal', or institutionally organised, youth environment, many of them in opposition to the 'normalising' practices of the post-Soviet states in the spheres of culture and ethnic politics. In many cases the contemporary *neformaly* in L'viv are equivalent to the classic subcultural formations of youth in the West, such as punks, hippies, skinheads, goths, rasta according to their styles and musical preferences. The issue of such a relatively new for the post-Soviet space youth group as skinheads will be outlined separately.

Another larger subcultural grouping to be discussed here is street-gangs called in Ukrainian *gopnyky* or *gopy*, who as a certain subcultural – suburban – type became visible in the public sphere of L'viv, as in other big cities all over the former Soviet Union, during *perestroika*. In the conditions of L'viv both subcultural milieus represent quite an extensive social-cultural field in which have taken place dialogue with and contestation of both Russianness and modernising 'Western' cultural influences (as far as 'West' and 'Europe' are also considered as 'significant Other' both in official discourses and in subcultural youth milieus). However, *neformaly*, being a more "intellectually oriented" milieu than *gopnyky*, the street-fighters, are more intensely and consciously drawn into this dialogue/contestation.

Neformaly: different affiliations, common networks

The geographical location of L'viv at the western border of the former Soviet Union was an important reason why 'rock'n'roll was played in L'viv in those times, when on the other territories of our former motherland people just sporadically heard about it', as the author of a brochure entitled *History of L'viv Rock'n' roll* writes¹⁷. In the same manner as Tallinn, Leningrad and Moscow, L'viv used to be a Mecca for hippies and for other *Sistema* people from all over the Soviet Union, at least it was so until the mid-seventies. Initially the crowds of young rock fans chose (probably being quite conscious about paradoxical nature of their choice) to gather for improvised concerts of local rock groups in a yard of the former Carmelite monastery, situated just next to the building of the Communist Party's regional committee. However, the Party bosses were soon informed about these *neformaly* sessions in the vicinity, and stopped them by their usual method of arranging systematic police raids in the 'suspicious place'.

One of the oldest and most famous hippies in L'viv, Alik Oli-sevych, said in his interview that

'Almost all the time the persecutions against rock music and neformaly were most severe in L'viv. In other places, for example in Tallinn and Moscow, the authorities were less vigilant, but in L'viv in the early 80s the youth who listened and played rock and who didn't dress themselves as decent Soviet citizens, were immediately accused of anti-Sovietism. L'viv and the Western Ukraine have always been special regime territory under special Party and police control, and accusations of Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism, clericalism and pro-western propaganda were the most common here.'

From this and other narrations, one gets the impression that it was not only excitement and solidarity with other *Sistema* members, but also the conditions of severe police control in the city that made the *Sistema* people from L'viv travel extensively all over the Soviet Union. Thereby they got new acquaintances and became part of a *Sistema* network spreading to Russia as well as other Soviet republics. Given such circumstances and the fact that youth subcultural movements and styles flourished in the main Russian and Russified cities, it is not surprising that it was the Russian language which prevailed in

non-formal youth milieus as the Soviet Union-wide *lingua franca*. Moreover, the *Sistema* identity implied a sharing and manifesting of quite unorthodox spiritual-cultural orientation, which usually correlated with the family background of these young people. The *Sistema* folk and their later incarnation – *neformaly* – often originated among the urban intelligentsia and the families of white collar workers, and to be an offspring of those families often meant, in its turn, to be of Russian origin or at least to belong to the Russian-speaking part of the Western Ukrainian society.

Despite its involvement in an all-Union *Sistema* network, the ‘non-formal’ milieu in L’viv has nonetheless always had its local peculiarities when it comes both to composition and qualitative characteristics, which was emphasised in several interviews with representatives of this sphere:

‘Hippies are not numerous here. Satanists are quite distinguishable, but not numerous either, they are simply better able to distinguish themselves visually. They look a bit like metalists – long hair, black skin jackets. Though there are many satanists who don’t expose themselves at all – they are those “real ones”. Three, four years ago the most powerful non-formal movement in L’viv was grunge – Nirvana and other groups, you know. Long hair, grunge-rock. Now we have more punks and skins here. However, punks are not so numerous as skins. Skins are powerful here, in Western Ukraine. And it’s easy to distinguish them by their appearance: bold heads, white braces, heavy boots. ... As for punks, they are definitely not eye-catching in L’viv. They realise themselves rather in rude behaviour than in rude looks. And often their behaviour is not so aggressive or tough as a punk is supposed to be. Sometimes it’s easy to take a punk for a normal person because they don’t wear cock combs and safety-pins. They usually simply have very shaggy hair, in a Sex Pistols style, they wear casual clothes and they are fans of punk-rock. That’s all. [Iura]

‘I knew here those guys among the satanists who were very closely connected to those in Moscow. For them it was very serious, for them it was not just for fun. They have been looking for old books and manuscripts on black magic, and they have practiced it. But the majority

of satanists in L'viv are just posers, they just like to look sinister in the eyes of the public.' [Pasha]

'They say sometimes that here in L'viv we just copy western youth styles. Yes, to some extent it's true – at least the first impacts came from there, but here they mixed with our local colour. We had more pressure from the KGB and police here, that's why those styles were not so bright and overt, as they were, for example, in Moscow. Hippies wore very bright, very remarkable clothes there. Here we couldn't. ... Here we have fewer women and girls in non-formal movements too. More girls formed part of non-formal groups in Moscow, in Piter [*St Petersburg*]. Approximately half the hippies there were women. And in L'viv they were a bit younger and usually they became hippie just for one season – they wore hippie clothes just on summer vacations, just for fun.' [Alik Olisevych]

– Were there *stiliagi*¹⁸ in L'viv? [Eleonora]

– There did exist such a movement, but they were not exactly *stiliagi* ... and we didn't have them as a group in L'viv. They were in mass in Kyiv. They were called rockably. Yeah, *rockably*, *rockabil*-music, as well. They were cool chaps! [Jeen]

– My dad used to be a *rockabil*! My parents hung around in Virmenka, they met each other there. And they slapped me when I listened to disco. [Toma]

– I used to be a *rockabil*. Wow! I had such a hair-cut, à la Elvis Presley, I had such a long bright jacket, such very narrow green trousers, such pretty shoes with long tips ... There were some *rockably* in L'viv, but just a very few.' [Jeen]

From the field observations and these narratives one can conclude that many spectacular youth styles represented in L'viv were less visible and overtly expressed. This was not only due to police control, which was allegedly stronger in Western Ukrainian L'viv than in many other (former) Soviet cities, but also because the conservative, traditionally oriented mores of the Ukrainian majority here were in many cases much more severe moral censors than police repression. A limited participation by girls in non-formal youth movements and styles as well as the fact that there was only a very narrow group of

emulators of the 'Russian-packed' *stiliagi* trend in L'viv, seems to support the latter observation. However, intensive involvement in the personal contact networks stretching to distant Russian and Baltic 'youth capitals' has allowed *neformaly* in L'viv if not to express their styles without limitations, so at least to be well-informed about what is going on among the like-minded in other parts of the USSR and even abroad.

As has been remarked, *neformaly* have participated in all-Union subcultural networks whose fragments survived the disintegration of the USSR as a political entity. This implies that young urbanites with an interest in some kind of alternative cultural movement expressed in style, music and quite often also in ideological preferences, got in touch with each other and strove to communicate in spite of distance and the lack of financial means. Partly due to the lack of interest in, or indifference to, ethnic affiliations, which among underground youth was real, as well as proclaimed, but primarily due to the need for a *lingua franca*, people of different nationalities connected to this network as a rule used the Russian language which for all of them was both understandable and 'perfectly normal'.¹⁹ This Russian-speaking network later on re-grouped according to the demands of the new times, and became even more fragmented and difficult to define. Several informants mentioned however that they still kept connections with *neformaly* acquaintances from Russia. In one of the interviews Alexandr, a well-known L'viv rock-musician and an admirer of Russian rock music, told how he managed to keep connections with other musicians from for instance Russia:

'I send messages and records via so called couriers as well. These people travel for free everywhere, hitchhiking, for example. So, I pass my records via such people, and they bring me records of other non-commercial bands. So, it's the way of keeping connections with Russia.'

He was asked if he himself is used to travel like this:

'Yes. There are two ways of doing it. The first way is to catch one of these large trucks, which we call 'dogs', and the second way is to go by electric trains without paying for ticket. In every city *neformaly* will help you to find a place where you can stay over night gratis²⁰. In Mos-

cow they even organised a special course for people who live such a life, they try to popularise it, but such a course is just a profanation.'

On the other hand, the strong position of Russian and Russianness does not mean that Ukrainian language and other Ukrainian cultural codes have been neglected among Soviet predecessors of *neformaly* in L'viv:

'From the beginning songs were sung mostly in Russian, and there were two reasons for this: a powerful explosion of rebellious music of anti-totalitarian character from Moscow and Leningrad, and, on the other hand, the pathologic dominance of our native folklore kitsch on TV and radio. But step by step the songs were becoming Ukrainian-speaking; besides the [music band] "Koop", the "999" band came to work in this direction ... and later on the "Apteka" band created the first "wide-scale" programme in the native[Ukrainian] language²¹.'

The legendary L'viv rock-group in the 1970s, *Vuiky*²², also sang their caustic songs, in which they overtly mocked Soviet ideals and phraseology, in Ukrainian. The name of the group was itself an allusion to the scorned rural and semi-rural, 'aboriginal' population of Western Ukraine:

'The name of the group itself told the red lords: "You disdainfully call the west- Ukrainian people *vuiky*, you scorn our language, our culture, you trample us down into dirt, but we, *vuiky*, here we are! We, but not you, find a response in thousands of young hearts and teach them to love people, and our motto is... "A dog shits on Communist Party!", "A dog shits on the red clover!"'²³

On the eve of the dissolution of the USSR, Ukrainian rock music, especially the unconventional Ukrainianophone L'viv bands *Braty Gadiukiny*, *Plach Eremii* and a bit later *Mertvyi Piven'*, became popular and recognised among various *neformaly* groupings all over Ukraine. Thereby, the rebellious 'national' potential of the Ukrainian language made it attractive for the underground circles of young people in the West Ukraine to a no lesser extent than English - a language associated with 'corrupting western mass culture' and therefore regarded as a provocative means of expression (however, as Alik Olisewich

maintained, English-style slang had never been as popular among hippies in L'viv as it was in Moscow or St Petersburg). These two controversial languages – one as a language of the 'Ukrainian bourgeois nationalists', and the other as a token of the 'corrupting western influence' – both used to be highly suspicious in the opinion of Soviet officialdom in the West Ukrainian region and because of this quite attractive for unconventional young artists and contestant youth circles. However, it looks as if Ukrainian and English as bases of colloquial slang in situations of everyday interaction are not at present sufficiently competitive in the urban subcultural milieus dominated by the Russian *lingua franca*.

Some of the informants were asked about the 'nature' of *neformaly* nowadays and if they could explain the present motives for using Russian in *neformaly* groupings. Some voices:

'I can't say a lot about the nationalities of *neformaly*, but surely they speak mostly Russian. Those who come to sit near Zhaba can converse in Ukrainian beyond this place. It's true: Ukrainian language is not mature enough, so to speak, and the non-formal slang in Ukrainian is not possible just now. It will appear later, but it will appear anyway – especially in the West Ukraine. The more Ukrainian rock music we have, the more communication in Ukrainian will be developing among *neformaly*.' [Kirill]

'There exists a special category of *neformaly*. Not those elder ones, who are *neformaly* by their spirit and convictions, those who really stand for their ideals – sometimes too naughty and spoiled, but on the other hand, independent and free. There were such times, those people strove to be independent and to feel themselves independent, and this is why they founded the *neformaly*-movement. And now, too, there are people who propagate their more or less acceptable tastes and ideas in music, in clothes. But there are also other *neformaly*, who are sure that the basis of *neformalism* is to speak Russian everywhere.' [Igor]

'I have experience of conversing with them [the *neformaly*], but I don't like them, frankly speaking. They are the extreme. There are a lot of clever people among them, but...' [Marko]

It was obvious that for this polite and intelligent student activist, a Galician Ukrainian, the issue of *neformaly* was a bit 'ticklish'. He was then directly asked why he did not like them. After a passage about the, for him, generally inappropriate world-view orientations of *neformaly*, Marko at last confessed:

'And that was another reason why I drew away from them: really, there are many Russian-speaking youngsters there. My impression is that *neformaly* culture is a phenomenon of Russian origin, and *neformaly* perceive the surrounding world from the point of view of Russian-biased persons.'

The respondents were also asked who are the people dominating in *neformaly* companies – are they Russians or Ukrainians?

'Russians! Even if they are Ukrainians they are Russian-speaking ones. Russian is considered to be the *neformaly* language – it's more common. However, if Ukrainian were a prestigious language *neformaly* would speak it, why not.' ['Farsh']

Because Ukrainian was established as the official national language and as such (at least in principle) implemented and promoted from above, some of the *neformaly* in L'viv simply lost interest in it. This is logical due to the rebellious stances of *neformaly*: they often find excitement in opposing themselves to everything they consider as having a tint of 'formality' or 'officialdom'. Hence, Russian, as the officially less privileged (especially in the West Ukraine) language, began in some sense to replace Ukrainian as the language of contestation. When using Russian in public places or in a company of peers, one also demonstrates his/her disagreement with conventions of the 'mainstream society'. However, when some *neformaly* too overtly express admiration of Russian cultural phenomena in their own milieu, and when their claims for the superiority of Russian 'high culture' are too loud, it definitely provokes negative reactions not only among Ukrainians, but also among some of the more moderate Russian-speaking youth:

‘They [*neformaly*] are mainly a Russian-speaking milieu, but as for their nationalities, they are as Russian, as I am [referring to his Polish ancestry]. They are of mixed origin, and they have nothing in common with Russians, half of them were Jews, the greatest part of them have already emigrated to Israel or to America. But they all were extremely keen on their Russianness, they defended everything that they considered as Russian. But they did it only because they didn’t want to find a common tongue with Ukrainians – that’s all. As for me, I could become an ardent defender of my Russian language and of my partial Russian identity only in the event that I would be seriously persecuted for it, if, for example, somebody dismissed me from my job for my semi-Russian origin. Only in this case, I think, could I have a moral right to raise my voice against *raguls*²⁴. But, you see, these people were simply keen on having a friendship against, not with, somebody.’ [Oleg]

In the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, the most popular place where *neformaly* gathered became *Virmenka* (or *Armianka* in Russian) – a coffee house in *Virmens’ka* street in the city centre. One of the habitués recalls the old good times when ‘international *tusovka*’ gathered there:

‘Virmenka, it is in general a phenomenon of *tusovka*. It was, in principle, international, and mostly Russian-speaking. Perhaps, because of this, when the independent Ukrainian state appeared, this *tusovka* in fact ceased to exist. But Alik [Olisevych – see above], for example, has always been a cosmopolite, he took part in the international movements, but he’s never felt ashamed that he is Ukrainian, he spoke Ukrainian wherever it was possible. He never felt ashamed because of his Ukrainianness. I’ve recently heard such statements: “That was just an assemblage of *moskals!*”²⁵ But just recall these years, in 1987 no-one could speak of an independent Ukraine. ... If now thousands say they were born in embroidered Ukrainian shirts, it’s not true.’²⁶

In the beginning of the 1990s *Virmenka* in fact lost its appeal and popularity among Lviv youth. This international *neformal’naiia tusovka* fragmented into a number of smaller groups and dispersed to various meeting-places. Another famous *Virmenka* habitué made the following comment on this fragmentation:

‘And then [after 1991] a lot of different places appeared where people could gather. In parallel [with Virmenka] a “point” at Zhovtnevyi passage existed – it was called “At Aunt Tania’s for coffee”. It was the university’s point. But mostly Ukrainian-speaking youth gathered there from the very beginning. Probably, that was of meaning. . . . Eventually, the need for dissident clubs, for well-known kitchens, disappeared. Many of those people went in to politics. Here, in Virmenka, young people still meet – but they already have their own history.’²⁷

Some of these habitual meeting-places are by now history. Some of the youth subcultural styles faded or lost their appeal, almost all of them became commercialised and their visual representations simplified. The ‘international *tusovka*’ in Lviv scattered; ‘specialisations’ and divisions of youth groupings and, accordingly, of meeting places became obvious. At the end of the 1990s, the new generation of *neformaly* – mainly youngsters with a quite vague sphere of interests – hung around at the monuments to Taras Shevchenko and Adam Mickewicz. The ‘older *tusovka*’ – many of them Ukrainian-speaking youth seriously engaged in rock-music and art – chose the numerous cafés and clubs in the city centre. Values, orientations and, one can say, generational experience of these two groups of *neformaly* are so different, that the only reason to consider them actors belonging to the same cultural milieu is their dissimilarity with the almost equally undefined ‘majority of society’.

However, quite successful endeavours to (re)consolidate *neformaly* as a youth subcultural movement have been recently made. One of them was initiated in a 1993 meeting of *neformaly* near Shypit waterfall, in the Carpathians. Views about this meeting differ fairly widely, but the fact is that annually several dozens of *neformaly* from the West Ukraine, other Ukrainian regions, from other places of the former USSR and even from other European countries come to meet each other in this tranquil picturesque place:

‘It was in 1997. It was cool, really. We lived in tents, in the evening folk lit fires, and there was one huge, common fire. Everyone came there: Czechs, Poles, some from Germany, some from Russia. From Byelorussia too, from Donetsk, Zaporizzhia. . . Played guitars, sang in English, in Ukrainian and Russian. Danced too, took each other by the hand,

formed a circle - it was like a pagan cult, like an appeal to the Sun and Nature... Some painted, some made bracelets of beads, some smoked dope ... Exchanged music records, addresses too. Some became friends and later on travelled to visit each other...' [Oleg, Tania]

So it seems that it is too early to reach conclusions about the alleged decline of the post-Soviet *neformaly* network²⁸. Youth subcultural milieu changed both quantitatively and qualitatively, it became more cynical and pragmatic – but so did the whole post-Soviet society. New, ‘Western’ vectors of interest are establishing themselves in the wake of the fall of the Iron Curtain. However, *neformaly* as a certain multicultural milieu and non-conformist discourse of post-Soviet urban youth survives first and foremost due to continuing contacts with peers from other parts of the socio-cultural space which used to be ‘the common motherland’. In these conditions a necessity for a common symbolic sphere and common language maintains. The role of such a ‘neutral’ common language among *neformaly* is at present again played by the ‘neutral’ Russian in its subcultural slang variants – even in L’viv, where the Russian language when used in other public spheres, can evoke among the same young people a range of emotional responses which are very far from neutral.

Skinheads in L’viv: multicultural xenophobes

Hilary Pilkington quite rightly noticed that simultaneously with the collapse of the totalitarian Soviet Union, its quite integral youth culture also disintegrated in step with it. The cause, at least as regards *neformaly*, is that it was a united ‘system’ only in its alternative status capacity – its existence relied on opposition to practices foisted on youth by the totalitarian regime and conservative everyday mores and discourses of the ‘majority’. Suddenly, the ‘international *tusovka*’ in L’viv was crossed by a range of sentiments and ambiguities, and all those ethnic, language and cultural tensions which for many years had been latent in folklore and collective historical memory in the region, became open to exposure by different kinds of movements.

One of the novelties not known in L’viv before 1991 is the skinheads (*skinny, skinhedy*). Being a skinhead in Eastern Europe is something quite different from being a skinhead in for instance Sweden, Britain

or Germany, though the basic features of this youth formation are the same everywhere. As is known, this subcultural formation is inspired in its appearance and bellicose zeal by military traditions putting emphasis on warlike features, overt masculinity and patriotic exaltation. It seems that this style was imported into the West Ukraine first and foremost via contacts with Polish peers, among whom the first skinheads appeared a bit earlier than in L'viv.²⁹ For the present investigation the following information confirmed later by several other *neformaly* is of interest:

'After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, everything began. Skins [*skiny*], appeared. There are some skins whom I personally don't regard as skins, because they are simply people who like military jackets, bold heads and a big gang which if it's needed will demonstrate to everyone who is strongest here. And military boots too. But the real skins in L'viv are all former punks. In the 80s they were simply punks, then they became Nazi-punks [*natspanki*], and then they turn into skinheads. They are divided in two camps now – one of them is the oi-skins [*oi-skiny*], cool chaps, I like them, they are cool, those oi-skins. They defend us if we [i.e. *neformaly*] are about to be attacked. But the others are fascists. They fight with everyone, with *gopnyky* [street-gangs], with hairy ones [*neformaly*], with Arabs. Especially they hate Arabs. And in Kyiv, skins fight with the Russian-speakers. Frankly speaking, all our L'viv skins are former Russian-speakers. Skins from Kiev came and said to them: "Fuck, shame on you, you call yourselves patriots and you still blab in Russian?" So in three months they improved their Ukrainian, and now they all speak Ukrainian. And earlier, in the beginning of the 90s, there was such a pressure on Russians! [Jeen]

It is not insignificant that right-wing skinheads, as Jeen attests, have found support among Russian-speaking youngsters in L'viv. In a situation when the rejection and breaking of values inculcated by the Soviet system is on the way, the officially proclaimed ideological principles of 'internationalism and friendship between peoples' faded as well. They gave in many cases place – according to the logic of inversion – to exclusivist stances and hostility towards certain ethnic groups. Often it seems that Russophone youth were the most passionate in their rejection of Soviet moral principles in order to

avoid the stigma of ‘otherness’ and ‘out-of-date’. The animosity of these youngsters toward different ethnic groups – including also Russians and Russian-speakers transformed into a new minority – can be in general terms explained as an expression of spontaneous aggressiveness rooted in depressing everyday reality and in searching after visible and definite enemies. However, the skinheads’ sphere of presentations seems to be an odd mixture of different discourses and reactions. One such reaction is evoked by the ideas of Ukrainian extreme right movements with their hostility towards all *moskals*. Another one might be, among others, a logical consequence of the institutionalised two-faced Soviet practice of dealing with ethnic issues: internationalism and ethnic equality were officially proclaimed, but simultaneously hierarchy of nationalities (with Slavs – especially Russians – as superior, and Jews, Asian and Caucasian peoples as inferior) used to be admitted tacitly.

The situation is complicated by the evident admiration for Nazi symbols in the right-wing skinhead movement. It is conspicuous however that very few of the ardent ‘skins’ in Lviv have ever had the chance or sufficient diligence to read the works of national-socialist theoreticians (Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*, for example). This subcultural style has indeed gained its popularity not so much due to the propagation of Nazi ideology³⁰. What makes skinhead style attractive for some of the boys (and even girls) in Lviv is, on the one hand, its strong, militant, masculine appeal and, on the other hand, excitement springing from breaking moral conventions. The most obvious targets of the ‘skins’ Nazi-like image and activities are elderly people, veterans, the moralising old-fashioned ‘Stalinist generation’ which survived the Second World War. For skinheads they are the people who embody the worst characteristics of *homo soveticus* and who are to be blamed for the present misery of everyday life in the first instance.

Quite paradoxically, the xenophobic skinhead movement came as an exported youth style in the wake of the general openness of the post-Soviet society toward western cultural products. No less paradoxical is the fact that, as Jeen’s story proves, skinhead groupings attract more culturally flexible and ‘world-opened’ Lviv youth, many of them initially Russian-speaking (one of our respondents claimed even that he

knew some skinheads studying at the recently opened faculty of international relations at Lviv University!). Is it one of the amusing facets of globalization that young xenophobes are themselves multicultural? In view of this a statement by Les Back (originally about racial representations among youth in London) is highly relevant: “[T]he emergence of de-centred subjectivities . . . while providing important sites for cultural contest, does not necessarily produce progressive outcomes.”³¹

There is no opportunity to elaborate the theme of skinheads in this brief picture of youth subcultural styles in Lviv, but once again the complexity of the present multicultural situation in Lviv youth environment must be stressed. National, ethnic, quasi-ethnic and language issues seem to form an emotional and cognitive substrate nourishing both constructive and destructive youth subcultural activity in this part of the world.

Street gangs: not so much Russianised

The present subcultural youth environment in Lviv also includes a notorious category of young people known as the *gopnyky*, *gopy* (this name usually applied to them by the *neformaly*) or *patsany* (the name they prefer themselves). This category of youth is roughly equivalent to what in western sociological literature is known as ‘youth street gangs’. The typical media-portrait of *gopnyky* used to be a dull aggressive mass of teenagers originating from former rural families who moved to Lviv en masse as cheap labour for the expanding industries.³² The common stereotype portrait of a *gop* used to be a short-cut primitive boy in baggy trousers and flat cap, recognisable also by his aggressive behaviour and abundant use of obscene Russian slang³³ – in other words, the Russianised semi-criminal type. This often gave a pretext to see in such male youth mobs a typical post-Soviet plague rooted particularly in Russian cultural substrate.

The appearance, customs, attitudes as well as origins of *gopnyky* are not, however, as homogenous as it is often depicted in post-Soviet media. One of the present young leaders of a nationalist organisation in Lviv, a young man with higher education who as a teenager used to be a member of such a street gang (*raion*), said in interview that some youth groupings of this type showed in quite many cases features of the patriotic Galicians:

‘In that period, in 1986, a range of such groupings in L’viv had bright features of national orientation. Of course, they were concentrated not in those central districts of L’viv, where the majority of Russian-speakers live, but at the outskirts. There used to be a rajon called Vatican in the end of Kulparkivs’ka street. They used to go collectively to the church on Sundays and they were even seen wearing shirts with traditional Ukrainian embroideries on some holidays. Other *raiony* could call them *raguli* and *byky*³⁴ because of this, and in those times they regarded regular attacks on this *raion* as a matter of honour.’ [Taras]

One can suspect that Taras could hardly be impartial when describing the street milieu in which he grew up. It is quite possible that he gave us a romanticised picture of “simple-mannered, but open-hearted nationally conscious street-fighters” which may be said to parallel the popular image of similar young street-fighters from pre-war L’viv – ‘*batiary* with a heart of gold’. There are, however, other pieces of evidence from our field-observations which give a notion about the cultural/language heterogeneity of these youth groupings:

Iuliia and Pasha, our respondents, were attacked. It occurred on Easter day and the perpetrators were a drunken gang, wounding Iuliia with an empty bottle smashed on her head. Iuliia and Pasha described this case to us in a very emotional way, and we asked them about their attackers. Were they Russian-speaking or Ukrainian-speaking? ‘Both’, Pasha said. ‘Such a manner doesn’t depend on which language people talk. They were simply stupid drunken bastards of whom we have so many here. They don’t pay attention to Easter day or to the fact that there are girls in the company that they attack.’

Hence, some tokens of ethnic and linguistic heterogeneity can be distinguished even in this L’viv youth milieu. But Taras stressed also that ethnic affiliation had never been a factor of first-rank significance in these male groups. The most important factor defining the position of a young man in the group was his individual traits such as fighting abilities, allegiance to his friends, knowledge of group customs, reliability, and so forth. However, conflicts and tensions related to ethnic affiliations also occurred in this milieu:

‘There were some cases when people left the *raion* they belonged to before, and joined another one, because in this new *raion* there were either more Ukrainians or more Russians, so that there they could feel themselves more comfortable with people of the same nationality.’ [Taras]

The prevalence of people of certain ethnic and language affiliations in a certain *raion*, drew upon a range of consequences manifesting themselves in the shape of overlapping identity patterns. The same respondent pointed to an interesting detail indicating that quite a different ethos was uppermost in the central, mainly Russian-speaking, and peripheral, Ukrainian-dominated *raiony*:

‘It must be stressed that great popularity and power in the central *raion* was acquired by those guys who could “lead talks”³⁵. They could resolve many problems by way of talking. It means that they could keep in their memory such an endless range of slang expressions, of group laws and customs that they could easily resolve any conflict without fight. A loser in such a battle of words was usually cruelly beaten by his own fellows. It was an art of manipulation, and those central *raion*, which were not distinguished by such fighting abilities like *raion* from the outskirts, were often winners in these conflicts. I’d like to stress that the best talkers all were of non-Ukrainian origin. I witnessed many conflicts where such tough talking won the day over strength and courage.’

The street gangs are by their nature a kind of power-articulating network striving to keep control over particular parts of the city. It is however significant in both our observations and interviews, that the activities, group customs and image of these youth groups appeal to youngsters of both Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian origin and it may therefore be suggested that some tokens of multicultural orientation are (or at least have been) evident among this youth ‘subcultural tribe’ too.

Conclusions

In the view of Peter Niedermüller, which is supported by a fair number of social researchers, the state of identity work in the post-communist area is likely to be quite gloomy:

‘There is a general social philosophy in Eastern Europe based on various thoughts like (a) struggle against globalization, (b) nationalism, (c) cultural homogeneity, (d) separation based on diversity, (e) preservation of difference against others, (f) a mosaic-like order of the world. This philosophy says, the only therapy against the infected world of socialism, and at the same time the only help in this dangerous situation of transition is the returning to the national roots, to the “natural” order of this world, to knit together ethnic and cultural homogeneity, moral order and symbolic purity.’³⁶

Indeed, in conditions of acute societal crisis, economic recession and political turbulence people often tend to over-value the protective comfort of their own national group.³⁷ During the fieldwork one could hear from the youth the opinions about the unacceptability of joining *neformaly* because of their ‘Russianness’. It also happened that *neformaly* themselves in interview situations expressed opinions about, for example, language politics which were far from tolerant. However, their own milieu and their own peer groupings called *tusovka*, provide them with quite wide opportunities to exercise bilingualism and a multiplicity of cultural codes. Of course, the situation of youth in L’viv looks dull if compared with the vivid picture of multicultural and transcultural milieus of subcultural youth in European cosmopolitan capitals. One must, however, take into account the fact that at present the restricted informational network, the practical difficulty of travelling abroad and the very limited access to electronic means of communication all puts obstacles in the way of the growth of multicultural influences among youth to no less an extent than did the Iron Curtain, police violence and moral pressure of ‘decent publics’ several decades ago. Another factor creating obstacles to ‘world-openness’ in local subcultural youth milieus is a significant flow of well-educated, creative and skilled Galician youth abroad and to the capital city, Kyiv. However, despite the obstacles, the tendency to incorporate and re-think cultural codes from both the East (Russia) and the West (Europe and USA) is still quite strong among L’viv ‘non-formal’ youth.

The most immediate response is given to more familiar – and simultaneously more contradictory – codes of Russian language and Russianness, i.e. a party which has become Ukraine’s ‘signifi-

cant Other'. Despite all prognoses, the Russian language, in spite of legislative suppression, has not disappeared from the public spheres in 'nationalistic' Lviv. Instead, its usage became, one can say, more specialized, confined to several particular public spheres whose actors are not confined to ethnic Russians or native Russian-speakers. There it keeps its 'imperial' status both as a socially advantageous and culturally 'neutral' language and as a *lingua franca* understandable to all, and in subcultural youth milieu it additionally has a touch of the language of urban contestation. Accordingly, instead of being assimilated into the locally constructed Galician variants of Ukrainian ethnonational identity, where Ukrainian language and Ukrainian cultural and institutional models should prevail, the youngsters of Lviv begin to seek some reference points in their more economically stable and politically powerful northern neighbour (embodied in the image of Moscow and especially of the 'European' St Petersburg). Russia seems to be perceived not so much (or not only) as a kind of archenemy cherishing imperialist ambitions towards Ukraine, nor as an imaginative promised land one strives to identify oneself with. Instead Russia is rather being constructed as an exciting place of 'tourist interest'³⁸, as a counterweight to the alleged provincialism of everyday life in Lviv. Obviously, such a view unavoidably actualises arguments about 'high culture' in its Russian variant and reintroduces in a slightly modified form discourses of Russian cultural imperialism, but at the same time such objectivisation probably has its positive sides too. It can give better preconditions for cultural contacts and tolerance than the xenophobic rhetoric, currently popular among part of Galician youth, which promotes boundary constructions and exclusion on ethnic grounds. Analogous rethinking of 'the West' is on the way, but this issue deserves a special consideration in a separate study.

The post-Soviet Ukraine suddenly found itself drawn into the currents of post-modernity where grand narratives and inculcated 'standard' identities gradually lose their attraction and mobilising power. Titanic (Sisyphian?) institutional efforts to construct commonly accepted national identity go parallel with stubborn personal negotiations of identity and identifications. It seems that at least the younger generation comes – reflectively or intuitively – to the insight that, as Peter Caws put it, '... if there is a need for an identity of one's

own (which is not quite obvious...), the best place to look for it may not be a single culture of any kind, minority or otherwise.³⁹

Some trends that can be called multicultural or culturally polyphonic were present in the urban youth milieu long before *perestroika* and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Young people have rarely grown up in culturally – and socially – homogenous families; later on they encountered semi-private arenas of urban youth subcultures which in their turn were culturally plural and polycentric. However, the multiplicity of cultural/ethnic discourses and practices appearing today among subcultural youngsters is different from the earlier one. It is more ambivalent, unstable and fragile, on the one hand, and more reflective, on the other. Reactions to cultural mixture differ drastically – as I have tried to demonstrate, they can range from active identification with it (the majority of *neformaly* groupings) to predominant indifference towards different ethnocultural codes in one's milieu of peers (*gopnyky*) and even to its active rejection – but at the same time growth on its substrate (*skinny*).

The theme of cultural syncretism (or 'polyglossia' and 'polyphony') as condition of ethnocultural diversity and plurality of identity sources⁴⁰ among urban youth in the former post-Soviet socio-cultural space is in acute need of investigation. One needs however to choose properly the analytical tools for the analysis and to problematise the issue of adequate theoretical frame for it. What kind of multicultural situation(s) are we dealing with (if any)? To what extent could the concepts of multiculturalism, hybridity, 'cultures in-between'⁴¹, 'creolization'⁴² etc. be applied to it? What differences exist between post-Soviet and 'western' multicultural situations in youth milieu? Do some unique multicultural processes go on in the post-soviet space? Do they imply elaboration of some special 'ethnic structures of feeling'⁴³? Can we, together with Andrew Wilson, assume the existence of 'a substantial middle ground between Ukrainian and Russian identities'⁴⁴ in the sphere of youth cultures? These questions urgently need to be addressed as the cultural polyphony opens intriguing and somewhat frightening horizons for societies from both sides of the former Iron Curtain: '...multicultural identity, not a pancultural one: nobody is going to be at home everywhere. But it is one of the rewards of postmodernity to have many homes, not just one.'⁴⁵

Notes

1. Pilkington, Hilary *Russia's Youth and its Culture. A Nation's Constructors and Constructed*, London and New York: Routledge 1994; Pilkington, Hilary; et al. *Looking West? Cultural Globalization and Russian Youth Cultures*, University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press 2002.
2. In the collective study *Nation-Building in the Post-Soviet Borderlands* by Smith, Graham et.al. (eds), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1998, pp. 3–9, the authors discuss in details the possibility of application of the term 'post-colonialism' to the politic-economic situation in the former Soviet 'borderland' (i.e. non-Russian) republics. See also similar discussion in Riabchuk, Mykola *Vid Malorosii do Ukraïny: paradoksy zapiznilogo natsiietvorennia*, Kyiv: Krytyka 2000a., Riabchuk, Mykola *Dylemy ukrains'kogo Fausta: Gromadians'ke suspil'stvo i 'rozbudova derzhavy*, Kyiv: Krytyka 2000b.
3. Beck, Ulrich *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*, London: Sage 1992.
4. Brubaker, Rogers *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996, pp. 79–107.
5. Smith et.al. (eds) 1998, p. 1.
6. See Golbert, Rebecca 'Transnational Orientations from home: Constructions of Israel and Transnational Space among Ukrainian Jewish Youth', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, vol. 27, no. 4, 2001, pp. 713–731.
7. Vertovec, Steven 'Conceiving and researching transnationalism', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 22(2), 1999, p. 451; see also: Ålund, Alexandra 'Multiculturalism, Youth and Ethnic Identity', in Junefelt K.; Peterson, M. (eds) *Cultural Encounters in East Central Europe*, Stockholm: Forskningsrådsnämnden 1998.
8. Riabchuk 2000a, 2000b.
9. Golbert 2000, p. 725.
10. Ålund, Alexandra 'Etnicitetens mångfald och mångfaldens etniciteter. Kön, klass, identitet och ras'. in Olsson E. (ed.) *Etnicitetens gränser och mångfald*, Stockholm: Carlssons 1999, p. 68.
11. Back, Les *New Ethnicities and Urban Culture. Rasisms and Multiculture in Young Lives*, London: UCL Press 1996.
12. Ehn, Billy 'Youth and Multiculturalism', in Palmgren C.; Lövgren, K.; Bolin, G. (eds) *Ethnicity in Youth Culture. Report from a Symposium in Stockholm, Sweden, June 3–6 1991*, Stockholm: Youth Culture at Stockholm University 1992, p. 142.
13. Kuzio, Taras 'Identity and Nation-Building in Ukraine: Defining the "Other"', *Ethnicities*, vol. 1(3), 2001, p. 346.
14. Hilary Pilkington who investigated phenomenon of *tusovka* among youth in Moscow, defined it as 'a distinct form of youth cultural activity and the basic unit of central Moscow youth cultural activity' (Pilkington 1994, p. 234). According to my and Erik Olsson's field material, this is rather a name for different peer groupings of unstable composition which regularly meet in certain places to hang around and to converse.
15. More detailed about it in: Olsson, Erik; Havrylyuk [Narvselius], Eleonora *East, West and What Next? Identity Formation Among Young People in Post-Soviet Lviv*, Stockholm: Södertörns Högskola 2003.
16. Appadurai, Arjun *Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press 1996, pp. 164–5.

17. Peretiat'ko, Iurii *Istoriia l'vivs 'kogo rok-n-rolu. Spetsvyypusk zhurnaln 'Fira'*, Lviv: Fira 1994, p. 2.
18. *Stiliagi* refers to a popular youth style, a distant reminiscence of the British 'teddy boys', reintroduced during the *perestroika* by the Russian rock'n'roll groups Bravo and Brigada S (see Pilkington 1994).
19. Rogers Brubaker outlined aptly, even if controversially, this aspect of Russianness and Russian language as its main feature: "Russianness" suffused the entire state; it was too big, too general to be encoded in the system of institutionalized nationality as one among many. Russianness, like "whiteness" in the US, was in a sense invisible; it was experienced not as a particular nationality but as the general norm, the zero-value, the universal condition against which other nationalities existed as particular, and particularist, "deviations". (Brubaker 1996, p. 49)
20. The informant here uses the Russian expression *vpisat'*, 'to write in', as a denomination for this procedure.
21. Peretiat'ko 1994, p. 15.
22. This local Galician word means 'countryside old or middle-aged man' or 'old uncle'.
23. Peretiat'ko 1994, p. 8.
24. Referring to people of peasant or provincial origin, it is one of the most frequent offensive labels applied to the 'indigenous' Galician Ukrainians in West Ukraine.
25. The wide-spread word *moskal* is a derogatory nickname for Russians and Russian-speakers in Ukraine.
26. Gorelyk 1998.
27. Ibid.
28. Hrytsenko, Oleksandr 'Tusovka', in *Narysy ukrains'koï populiarnoi kul'tury*, Kyiv 1998, p. 710.
29. Compare in Jędrzejewski, Michał *Młodzież a subkultury. Problematyka edukacyjna*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo akademickie 'Zak' 1999, p. 179. As some of our respondents pointed out, in the case of Lviv, where the great majority of young people can only dream about having regular access to the internet or satellite TV channels, the most reliable sources of fresh information about 'global' youth fashions and trends become the acquaintances coming back from trips abroad: 'Well, one sometimes is lucky to go abroad, sticks there for half a year, for example, then one comes back and the needed information is simply pumped, suckled out of him', as Jeen told us. At the same time he rejected youth magazines and TV as a possible significant source: 'Fuck them all! The freshest information comes from those who return from abroad'.
30. Katrine Fangen in her study of right-wing skinheads in Norway came to the conclusion that '[t]his fantasy world with its warrior-like images and proletarian style, seems for some members to be more important than the political standpoints of the ideology'. See Fangen, Katrine 'Right-Wing Skinheads – Nostalgia and Binary Oppositions', *Young. Nordic Journal of Youth Research*, vol. 6, no. 3, 1998, p. 35.
31. Back 1996, p. 72.
32. Such a policy was widespread in the former socialist East- and Central European states – see, for example, Dziegiel, Leszek 'Towns and Cities in the Communist Poland', in Dziegiel, L. (ed.) *Popular Culture of Central Europe in the Process of Change*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego 2000, pp. 85–95. Accordingly, the groups of such youth were typical for city landscape in the countries of the former socialist block.

33. See also Khoma, Iryna 'Gop? Stop! Abo pro zhyttia-buttia odnogo sotsugrupuvania...', *Ĭ. Pokolinnia i molodizhni subkul'tury*, no. 24, 2002.
34. Another derogatory nickname for the Western Ukrainians considered being of rural origin.
35. The expression *vesti bazar* is a Russian slang expression meaning 'to talk in the slang of criminals (*fenia*) fluently and to negotiate in it in conflict situations'. *Fenia* itself is a kind of Russian slang typical of the criminal world all over the former Soviet Union.
36. Niedermüller, Peter 'Politics, Culture and Social Symbolism. Some Remarks on the Anthropology of Eastern European Nationalism', *Ethnologia Europaea*, vol. 24, 1994, pp. 30–31.
37. Hroch, Miroslav 'From National Movement to the Fully-Formed Nation: The Nation-Building Process in Europe', in *Becoming National: A Reader*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press 1996, p. 71.
38. Bauman, Zygmunt 'From Pilgrim to Tourist – or a Short History of Identity', in Hall S.; du Gay, P. (eds) *Questions of Cultural Identity*, London: SAGE 1996.
39. Caws, Peter 'Identity: Cultural, Transcultural, and Multicultural', in Goldberg, D. Th. (ed.) *Multiculturalism: a Critical Reader*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers 1997, p. 376.
40. Vertovec, Steven 'Multi-multiculturalisms', in Martiniello M. (ed.) *Multicultural Societies and the State: a Comparison of Two European Societies*, Utrecht: European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations 1998, pp. 25–38.
41. Bhabha, Homi 'Culture's In-Between', in Hall S.; du Gay, P. (eds) *Questions of Cultural Identity*, London: Sage Publications 1996, pp. 53–60.
42. Hannerz, Ulf *Transnational Connections: Culture, People, Places*, London: Routledge 1996.
43. Appadurai 1996, p. 153.
44. Wilson, Andrew 'Elements of a Theory of Ukrainian Ethno-National Identities', *Nations and Nationalism*, vol. 8(1), 2002, p. 31.
45. Caws 1997, p. 386.

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